



A FALL 2019 RELEASE

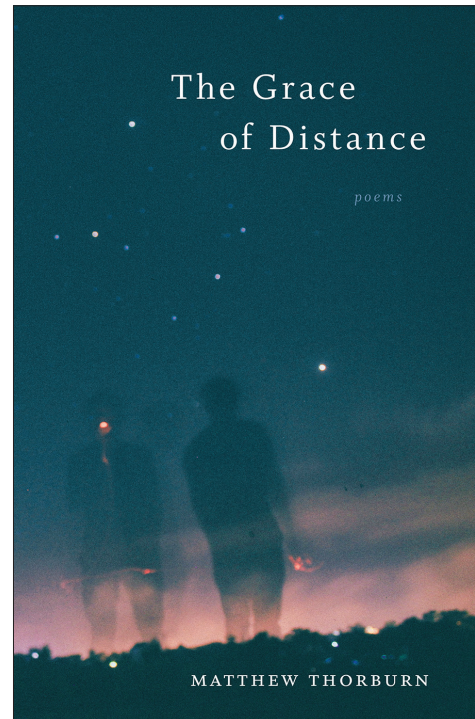
The Grace of Distance

Poems

by **MATTHEW THORBURN**

In *The Grace of Distance*, his poignant, far-traveling new collection of poems, Matthew Thorburn explores the ways in which we try to close the distances we experience in modern life—between doubt and faith, between cultures, between ourselves and those we love. He seeks to name, and find, that elusive, essential sense of connection humanity hungers for. In one poem, a boy places a bell in the hollow of a tree so someone might find it. In others, an overworked baker wishes for an annunciation of her own, while a man calls down into a well until another voice calls back. Set in China and America, in the present and the distant past, Thorburn's poems examine both Eastern and Western ideas of spirituality, looking closely at the ways we can lose faith, then sometimes find it again. The poems also confront the unbridgeable distances we must live with and the perhaps surprising grace they can provide—a greater sense of perspective, understanding, and peace—even as our lives move in the only direction they can, away from the past.

MATTHEW THORBURN is the author of seven collections of poetry, including *Dear Almost*, winner of the Lascaux Prize in Collected Poetry. He lives in New Jersey with his wife and son.



AUGUST 2019 | 80 pages, 5 ½ x 8 ½ | 978-0-8071-7076-2 | Paper \$18.95
ebook available | LSU Press Paperback Original | Poetry

Barataria Poetry | Ava Leavell Haymon, Series Editor

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