



String

Poems

MATTHEW THORBURN

A book-length sequence of poems, Matthew Thorburn’s *String* tells the story of a teenage boy’s experiences in a time of war and its aftermath. He loses his family and friends, his home and the life he knew, but survives to tell his story. Written in the boy’s fractured, echoing voice—in lines that are frequently enjambed and use almost no punctuation—*String* embodies his trauma and confusion in a poetic sequence that is part lullaby, part nightmare, but always a music that is uniquely his.

MATTHEW THORBURN is the author of eight poetry collections, including *The Grace of Distance*, a finalist for the Paterson Poetry Prize, and the book-length poem *Dear Almost*, which won the Lascaux Prize.

PRAISE FOR *STRING*

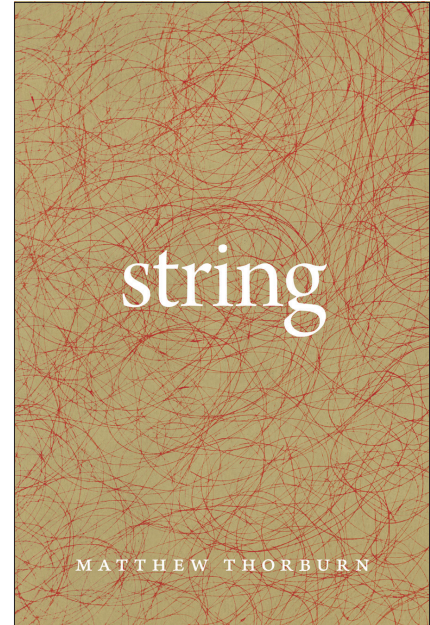
“*String* is a stirring bravura performance, a love song and a song of war, a chronicle of damage, a testament to our capacity for perseverance.”—Michael Dumanis

“Matthew Thorburn’s *String* is a harrowing and tender unraveling of trauma, in which the brutal (dis)memberments of war are (re)membered through the point of view of a young boy. Here, string functions as mending, as artful stitching of the liminal—both a doing and an undoing, a narrativization of erasures through stories that are both silenced and then sung.”—Lee Ann Roripaugh

“No book has moved me as much as *String*, epic in scope but intimate as a lullaby. These poems remind us that life is not about the wish our hope makes as we toss a coin; it’s not that one side of the coin is despair and one side joy; it’s the constant flipping of the coin as it falls and the music it makes ringing against the sides of the empty well.”—Rhett Iseman Trull

After the Bomb

Bits of paper swirled behind my eyes
some with treble clefs with quarter
or half notes Uncle Albert penciled
years ago no longer a waltz a serenade
but the hum that follows fell
over his charred blue armchair
one arm blown off the chandelier
a spray of powdery glass
burnt carpet turning white under
paper flakes fake snow the night’s
first faint stars twinkling overhead
because no ceiling now no roof.



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