



# Advance Praise

for *To Embroider the Ground with Prayer*

“ These poems abound in humor, heartbreak, and intellect. This is a first collection to justly rejoice in. Scollon’s variety of tones, her verbal textures, and the atmosphere of her landscapes are like Turner’s watercolors; they bleed and they transfix. Her subject matter—fundamental moments that embody the beauty, absurdity, and anguish of our human existence—put me in mind of Thomas Hardy in their heartfelt intensity. Never a touch over inflated, or faint or merely equitable, Scollon’s metaphors hit the mark with a precise ping of recognition, and in poem after poem—out of the authenticity of her speaking and the caliber of her craft—the rhapsodic arrives. ”

—Gray Jacobik

“ Teresa J. Scollon’s poems speak to the mysteries of our coming and going on Earth and our always-fraught abiding. She has a marvelous ear for the poetry of what seems at first humdrum—the wry pleasantries of the Midwest and the feeling lodged in the enormous land. The poignancy of the poems is always genuine, resting as it does on the fulcrum of tenderness and the mortal awareness of life’s on-goingness. The strength in her language is mirrored in the strength of the narratives and moments she so deftly relates. ”

—Baron Wormser

“ The poems in *To Embroider the Ground with Prayer*, with their focus on a midwestern farming community, will remind you of the long American literary tradition that takes small-town life as its subject. There are comic portraits and unsettling revelations. But all together the poems give off such warmth and light—the light of clarity, the warmth of affection—that at times you will forget that you are reading a book of grief. Teresa J. Scollon’s is a welcome new voice in our poetry. ”

—Mark Jarman

“ I love this book and the world it creates. Teresa J. Scollon has the storyteller’s sensibility of E. A. Robinson. She also has a particular brand of restraint that opens her poems into mystery in a way that leaves me either breathless or laughing. She ends the poem ‘Catechism’ with: ‘Let mystery / be mystery; let all the explanations be ridiculous; / let us be together in the distance between.’ Scollon’s voice is clear, solid, rich, and funny. There’s no poetizing, no sloppiness, nothing that isn’t true and nothing that isn’t poem. ”

—Fleda Brown

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