



This World

by

Teddy Macker

Foreword by

Brother David Steindl-Rast

“Who touches this touches a man. Incredibly moving, risk-taking, original, and deep. I was in tears a number of times while reading it. Magnificent.”

BARRY SPACKS

"Kafka felt that literature should be an ax smashing the frozen sea encasing the heart. What joy to find an old-souled young poet laying about him with that ax. Clarity and attention here meet love of language and

Love itself. Long study of the greats leads to deft improvisations on the greats' themes, devotion to 'the least of these my brothers and sisters' chief among the themes. The created realm in this poetry is not a phantasmagoria of chemical compounds, but an alchemical instrument through which divine life catches ravishing glimpses of itself. Teddy Macker is a midwife of the Spirit, and *This World* is, as Boehme has it, a string in the concert of God's joy."

DAVID JAMES DUNCAN

WHITE CLOUD PRESS
Ashland, Oregon
www.whitecloudpress.com

USD \$13.95

ISBN: 978-1-935952-39-8



9 781935 952398

Praise for This World

"Blessing is the bloodstream of the universe. Teddy Macker's poetry enters into its current with an abandon and enthusiasm that swept me along irresistibly."

—From the Foreword by Brother David Steindl-Rast

"The great and the tiny—the train passes and I see my wife's little hoop earring on the windowsill—marry effortlessly in this wise and moving debut volume. There is at its core a trembling sense of wonder grounded by a rich 'insect particularity,' by 'the lilac undersides of trout.' Many prescient lines in this necessary book recall the likes of Issa or Basho, but poet Teddy Macker communes with the storied poets of solitude from an original angle—he is not so much one of them as he is all of us."

—Chris Dombrowski, author of *Earth Again*

"Teddy Macker claims this is the kingdom we've been looking for—earth—not some other, grander place. These pungent, sometimes difficult, always thoughtful poems have great leverage. Take them to card games. Sea lions collide with old men offering figs from tobacco stained hands; the 'weird thrilling voice' of coyote barks across the table at young Maltese women. This den of image holds trouble, don't say I didn't warn you."

—Martin Shaw, author of *Snowy Tower*

This World

by

Teddy Macker

Foreword by

Brother David Steindl-Rast

for Brother David,
with reverence
and heart
Teddy Macker
October 15, 2015

White Cloud Press
Ashland, Oregon

All rights reserved. Copyright © 2015 by Teddy Macker. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means whatsoever, including graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission from the publisher.

White Cloud Press books may be purchased for educational, business, or sales promotional use. For information, please write: Special Market Department, White Cloud Press, PO Box 3400, Ashland, OR 97520
Website: www.whitecloudpress.com

Cover image based on Yoshiko Yamamoto's linoleum blockprint "Summer Oaks," printed at the Arts & Crafts Press. Copyright: Yoshiko Yamamoto, 2014.

Cover and Interior Design by C Book Services

Author photo by Karen Nedivi

First edition: 2015

Printed in the United States of America

14 15 16 17 18 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Macker, Teddy.

[Poems. Selections]

This world / Teddy Macker ; foreword by Brother David Steindl-Rast.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-935952-39-8 (paperback)

I. Title.

PS3613.A27276A6 2015

811'.6--dc23

2015007226



Foreword

Teddy Macker writes about "ordinary days," but suddenly, seen through his eyes, everything in this world turns into blessing. He fulfils W. H. Auden's "singular command": "Bless what there is for being."

What we call life—that mysterious reality, in the midst of which we woke up one day—wants simply one thing from us: it wants us to bless, yes, bless everything. The very existence of a thing is reason enough to bless and praise it.

Teddy Macker's praise rings genuine, for it is not selective. He soberly faces this world in its totality, "the poet in the prison infirmary looking out every window just to find one single tree," no less than "the sweet water of dawn," or "the kind hands of dusk." He looks with the eyes of Augustine who said: "Look at the whole: praise the whole."

He knows that our heart survives between the hammer-blows of fate "like the tongue between the teeth, that, nevertheless, remains the organ of praise." The poet R. M. Rilke put it that way, knowing that "Nowhere but in the realm of praise is there room for lament." Teddy Macker fits what we may call Rilke's job-description of a poet: Quite simply, "To praise, that's it!"

Blessing is the bloodstream of the universe. Teddy Macker's poetry enters into its current with an abandon and enthusiasm that swept me along irresistibly.

"And twenty minutes more or less
It seemed, so great my happiness,
That I was blessed and could bless."

I was able to make these words of Yeats my own, and countless readers of Teddy Macker's *This World* will, I am sure of it, feel with deep gratitude that same bliss.

Brother David Steindl-Rast