



Jackleg Opera: Collected Poems, 1990 to 2013 (Io Poetry Series)

Bj Ward

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BJ Ward, an award-winning poet whose poetry and essays have been featured on *National Public Radio* and in publications such as *The Sun Magazine*, *TriQuarterly*, *The Literary Review*, and the *New York Times*, has brought together in one volume the fruits of his labor spanning over twenty years. Winner of the 2014 Paterson Award for Literary Excellence, this rich collection of thoughtful and often ironic reflections reveals both the reverence and irreverence of human experience. *Jackleg Opera* contains material from Ward's three previous books *Landing in New Jersey with Soft Hands*, *17 Love Poems with No Despair*, and *Gravedigger's Birthday*, as well as thirty-five new poems that are reminiscent of the clear simple style of Poet Laureate Billy Collins.

Under the Elm

We left the party, walked / beneath a moon that seemed / more a spotlight than night, / until we found a tree.
/ We pressed against it / and the grass rose against us, / the sky continued to darken, / and soon days, weeks,
migrations, / and metamorphoses passed / as we kissed ourselves out / of our bored lives. / Us--two thousand
miles away now, / the grass still growing wild around our feet.

"In poems that both honor and transcend his blue-collar roots, BJ Ward blends poignancy and humor with downright good storytelling, and takes his place among the brightest voices of his generation."--Stephen Dunn, winner of the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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