



Bluestone: New and Selected Poems

James Lasdun

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A generous selection that shows the poet James Lasdun at his lyrically inventive best

Two men grapple with jumper cables, trying "to make a stand // in this last corner of our realm; machinery . . ." A man on his way to see his therapist encounters a female police officer in an elevator and feels himself regressing to "the original essence, the masculine / criminal salt." A teenager is tricked into eating a spoonful of lime pickle by his girlfriend's father. An Englishman in the Catskills ponders the nature of exile, is chased by yellow jackets, gets a haircut. James Lasdun's subjects are often quotidian—but his treatment of them never is. Under his transformative gaze, the familiar becomes strange, the local becomes foreign, and the minor becomes epic.

Lasdun has been winning acclaim since his first collection, 1988's *A Jump Start*—Helen Vendler has lauded his ability to give "brisk shape to contemporary and classical events"; *The New York Times* has praised the "sharp, slicing imagery" of his work. Now, in *Bluestone*, which selects from all three of his previous collections and includes poems from his fourth, *Water Sessions*, previously available only in the U.K., readers will be able to appreciate the full sweep of this capacious talent: his delicate wit, his gift for invention, his keen observational eye. It is a gathering that affirms Lasdun's position as, to quote Anthony Hecht, one of "the most gifted, vivid, and deft poets now writing in English."

Bluestone: New and Selected Poems Details

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Kali says

Thank you to Goodreads First Reads for allowing me the opportunity to receive this book for free.

More of a 3.5

I thoroughly enjoyed this collection. Although all of the poems are written beautifully, some were a little too lyrically for my tastes. (My favorite being either "Vanishing Points" or "Dog Days.")

Carrie says

Amazing collection of erudite poetry that captures both English and American sensibilities and landscape. Lasdun has an amazing knowledge and understanding of the natural world and is totally tuned in to the details of his surroundings. He is able to extrapolate meaning about human experience from these details in stunning ways. Origin seems to be a theme throughout but he also considers legacy and what (if any) impact we leave behind.
