

Classic Poetry Series

Jens Peter Jacobsen
- poems -

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Jens Peter Jacobsen(1847-1885)

Jens Peter Jacobsen (7 April 1847 – 30 April 1885) was a Danish novelist, poet, and scientist, in Denmark often just written as "J. P. Jacobsen" and pronounced "I. P. Jacobsen". He began the naturalist movement in Danish literature and was a part of the Modern Breakthrough.

Jacobsen was born in Thisted in Jutland, the eldest of the five children of a prosperous merchant. He went to school in Copenhagen and was a student at the University of Copenhagen in 1868. As a boy, he showed a remarkable talent for science, in particular botany. In 1870, although he was already secretly writing poetry, Jacobsen adopted botany as a profession. He was sent by a scientific body in Copenhagen to report on the flora of the islands of Anholt and Læsø.

Around this time, the discoveries of Charles Darwin began to fascinate him. Realizing that the work of Darwin was not well known in Denmark, he translated *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* into Danish.

When still young, Jacobsen was struck by tuberculosis which eventually ended his life. His illness prompted travels to southern Europe.

Literary works

Jacobsen's canon consists of two novels, seven short stories, and one posthumous volume of poetry - small, but enough to place him as one of the most influential Danish writers.

Prose

The historical novel *Fru Marie Grubbe* (1876, Eng. transl.: *Marie Grubbe. A Lady of the Seventeenth Century* 1917) is the first Danish treatment of a woman as a sexual creature. Based upon the life of an authentic 17th century Danish noblewoman, it charts her downfall from a member of the royal family to the wife of a ferryman, as a result of her desire for an independent and satisfying erotic life. In many ways the books anticipates the themes of D. H. Lawrence.

Jacobsen's second novel *Niels Lyhne* (1880, English translation 1919) traces the fate of an atheist in a merciless world: his lack of faith is "tested" by tragedies and personal crises until he dies in war, disillusioned but unrepentant.

Jacobsen's short stories are collected in *Mogens og andre Noveller* (1882,

translated as *Mogens and Other Tales*, 1921, and *Mogens and Other Stories*, 1994). Among them must be mentioned *Mogens* (1872 - his official debut), the tale of a young dreamer and his maturing during love, sorrow and new hope of love. *Et Skud i Taagen* (A Shot in the Fog) is a Poe-inspired tale of the sterility of hatred and revenge. *Pesten i Bergamo* (The Plague of Bergamo) shows people clinging to religion even when tempted to be "free men". *Fru Fønss* (1882) is a sad story about a widow's tragic break with her egoistic children when she wants to remarry.

Mogens og andre Noveller and *Niels Lyhne* were both highly praised by Rainer Maria Rilke in his letters to Franz Xaver Kappus, translated as *Letters to a Young Poet*.

Poetry

The poems of Jacobsen are more influenced by late romanticism than his prose. Many of them are wistful, dreamy and melancholic but also naturalistic. Most important is the great obscure poem *Arabesque* to a Hand-drawing by Michel Angelo (about 1875) the idea of which seems to be that art is going to replace immortality as the meaning of life. They significantly inspired the Danish symbolist poetry of the 1890s.

Legacy

Unlike many of his colleagues Jacobsen did not take much interest in politics, his main interests being science and psychology. He is primarily an artist: his ability to create "paintings" and arabesque-like scenes both in his prose and his poetry (which has sometimes been criticized as "mannered") is one of the secrets of his art. It has been said that his novels are a presentation of various snapshots rather than tales of action.

In spite of his not very extensive oeuvre Jacobsen's international influence has been quite strong. In Germany both his novels and poems were widely read and they are known to have influenced Thomas Mann, as well as the Englishman D. H. Lawrence. Jacobsen's works also greatly inspired Rainer Maria Rilke's prose: in Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet*, he claims that he always has two books with him - the Bible and the collected works of Jacobsen. Jacobsen also influenced many other authors of the turn of the 20th century, including Henrik Ibsen, Sigmund Freud, Hermann Hesse, Stefan Zweig, and T. E. Lawrence, who all commented on his work.

He also had a musical influence: Frederick Delius's *Fennimore* and Gerda and

Arnold Schönberg's Gurre-Lieder are based upon themes from Jacobsen's book.

Afsted Min Baad!

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Alle De Voksende Skygger

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Alle Smaablomster Trip, Trip, Trip

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Arabesk. Til En Haandtegning Af Michel Angelo

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Asali [i]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Asali [ii]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Asali [iii]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Asali [vi]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Asalis Have

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Begejstring

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Bryllupssang

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Der Hjælper Ej Drømme

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Det Bødes Der For

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Det Er Stævnemødets Time

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Digterliv

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Drøm!

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Drømmeidealet

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Du Kalder Mig Tavs Og Melankolsk

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Efteraar

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Ellen [i]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Ellen [ii]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

En Arabesk

Jens Peter Jacobsen

En Bøn

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Evig Og Uden Forandring

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Farer Hen, I Tomme Drømme!

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Farvel!

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Fjern

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Forbi

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Fred

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Frostsne

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Genrebillede

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Grækenland

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Gud, Frels Mig Dog!

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Har Dagen Sanket Al Sin Sorg

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Herverts Død

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Hjemad

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Hvad Brød Jeg Mig Vel

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Hvi Gjækker Mig Livet Stedse!

Jens Peter Jacobsen

I Drømmenes Land

Jens Peter Jacobsen

I Seraillets Have

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Irmelin Rose

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Jeg Kan Ej Sidde Lig En Heldig Fisker

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Jeg Vil Ej Dø

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Kveld

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Lad Mig Ej Dø!

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Lad Vaaren Komme, Mens Den Vil

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Landskab [en Vidtstrakt Hede Med Mossede Sten]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Landskab [stille, Du Elskede Kvinde!]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Løft De Klingre Glaspokaler

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Lys Over Landet

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Marine

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Med Store Tanker Har Jeg Levet

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Min Lykkes Borg

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Mod Dæmring

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Monomanie

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Motto

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Naar En Gang

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Nævner Min Tanke Dig

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Nat

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Polka

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Rim

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Saa Er Nu Da Jorden En Kobbertyr

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Saa Standsed

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Sejerssang

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Signe

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Silkesko Over Gylden Læst

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Solnedgang [ren Og Klar Stod Himlens Hvalte Bue]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Solnedgang [signe, Sig Mig Hvorfor Skuer]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Solnedgang [svømmende Skyer, Dejlige Cyclader]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Stemninger I

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Stemninger II

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Straaler, Mine Drømmesale!

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Taarnvægtersang

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Til Asali [i]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Til Asali [ii]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Til Asali [iii]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Til Asali [iv]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Til Asali [v]

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Til Klitten

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Til Min Moder

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Til Strengeligen

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Vaar

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Ved Asalis Grav

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Viger Bort!

Jens Peter Jacobsen

Vil Du

Jens Peter Jacobsen