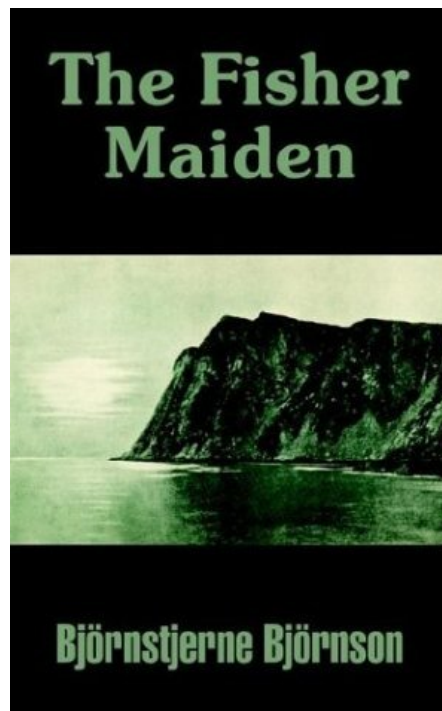




The Fisher Maiden

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson

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The Fisher Maiden Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson

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The Fisher Maiden Details

Date : Published (first published 1868)

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From Reader Review The Fisher Maiden for online ebook

Ingrid M. says

read this for class, and i actually liked the ending!

Herdís Marie says

Fin liten fortelling om en ivrig kunstnersjel. Det er ikke alltid jeg synes det er så lett å sympatisere med karakterer som lar sine egne forestillinger og sinnstemninger gå utover andre, men Petra er både så sjarmerende og så hjelpeløs overfor sitt kunstnersinn at man kan ikke annet enn å føle og lide med henne.

Foruten hovedpersonen, satte jeg også pris på diskusjonen om kunstens (i form av skuespillets) plass i en religiøs setting, og hvordan det å gi seg hen til kunsten ikke skal være uforenlig, men tvert imot forenlig, ikke bare med ens egen karakter, men også med en tro, her da spesifikt en kristen tro. Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson tar her oppgjør med et tema som fremdeles (dog kanskje i litt andre settinger) finnes i den religiøse diskusjon i dag. At han var forut for sin tid i dette henseende er det ingen tvil om.

Jerry Pogan says

A poetically written book about a peasant fisher girl who becomes an actress.

Scott Cox says

Bjørnson won the 1903 Nobel Prize for literature for his 19th century Norwegian "peasant" novels, of which the "The Fisher Maiden" best exemplifies. This was an engaging novel which dealt with modernism in the way of traditional relationships.

Jareed says

"To see the peasant in the light of the sagas and the sagas in the light of the peasant"

-(Bjørnson, n.d.)

Bjørnstjerne Martinius Bjørnson

Bjørnson, born Bjørnstjerne Martinius Bjørnson(1832-1910), declared this to be the principal literary method of his vast creative activity in language, for aside from being awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1903 (which is interesting for he was sitting in the Norwegian Nobel Committee, the body that awarded the said accolade, from 1901-1906) and having been known for being an ardent Norwegian left-wing adherent who wrote the present Norwegian National Anthem, was known for his, *Peasant Tales*, a series of works portraying the Norwegian peasantry with intimate and loving knowledge, much like this one, The Fisher

Girl.

The writing framework classified under the peasant tale is not unique to Bjørnson, or in European Literature. What magnificently demarcated Bjørnson from his contemporaries and predecessors was his writing perspective. Others wrote from an outside perspective undeniably fraught with artificial sentimentality predicated on a condescending attitude. Most perspective writing from 'without' have been severely criticized for their fundamental failure to unveil the factual nature of what they were writing about. They fail in a fundamental level for no legitimate grounding exists to write a sound rendering. They were not simply immersed. But Bjørnson had that grounding. He reveled in it, and that made all the difference. Bjørnson himself was of the peasant stock, his formative years were defined by living in an ungrateful soil whose stubbornness rooted in its primal nature to resist cultivation is second only to the tenacity displayed the peasantry to plow the field. By his personal history, he was able to epitomize the peasantry. In the words spoken by his characters, the reader is continuously made to realize the subtle depth of unexpressed feelings festooned by a naïve and honest understanding of a world beyond reach and of comforts absolutely ungraspable. Whether from a self-imposed sense of inadequacy or innate pride, the characters are identified only by laconic utterances of genuine sincerity.

One will find that *The Fisher Girl* does not stray from the descriptions I have written above, if anything, it is ineludibly evocative of Bjørnson's said style.

The Fisher Girl recounts the failed love between Pedro Olsen, (from the line of Peer his grandfather, and Peter, his father) a soul who by the desire of paternal rigidity to impose a conventional trade in life instead lost his purposefulness, and Gunlaug, whose nature dictated the necessity to have something to care for, you would know outright, they were a perfect match. But it is not their story that is told. When Gunlaug's father dies, she leaves the town, only to comeback, quite unexpectedly as she had left, with a daughter, whose paternity would seem to be in question albeit the man whence she came from is subtly unequivocal. What is recounted here is Petra's history. *The Fisher Girl's* story.

It tells of how, not by wickedness but by pure honest indecisiveness and helplessness, Petra agrees to the simultaneous engagement to three men, which stirs the town enough to chase her out and run her mother out of business. She was labeled, derogatively, 'the Fisher Girl'. She travels to evade the people and the title and in so doing, she falls in love with the stage, with drama. But Petra's road to success is under construction. And she will, in her earnest desire to play in the stage find that gossip travels light years faster than success.

In Petra's search for her calling, the conversations are defined by terseness, but one can always feel that she always wants to say more, to mean more, and she does, for her brevity often speaks for itself. In Petra's excursions, troubles, and love for the drama, Bjørnson's style comes to life. In her desire to rise above the title, *The Fisher Girl*, Bjørnson shows us the inescapable struggle of the peasant life, how Petra incrementally whisks away the naivety and inadequacy to set forth a critical moment in life, and always, one can feel, in all its inadequacy, Petra's sincerity. Inevitably, you get caught in this peasant tale, and in her struggle for liberation from the derogation given her by naivety, when Petra's title, 'The Fisher Girl' is said not for the three men she fished in engagements but nobly recalled because of her incomparable gifts in the celebrated stage, one will find, that life is not so unfair after all.

Other work by Bjørnstjerne Martinius Bjørnson:
A Happy Boy

This book forms part of my reading list on Nobel Prize for Literature Laureates

This review, along with my other reviews, has been cross-posted at imbookedindefinitely

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Andreea H says

I just hate the way the female protagonist is portrayed: undecided and having these weird inexplicable behavioural shifts. This just contributes to the stereotypical view of women as indecisive beings who screw men around.
