

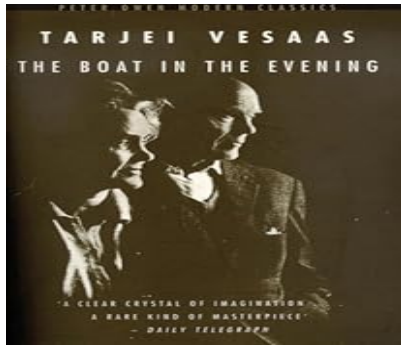
The Boat in the Evening By Tarjei Vesaas Some are rather abstract (your heart lies by the roadside while the ocean has crept up to the house and a boat taps the wall) some extremely concrete (clearing the way through snow and fog on a winter morning observing the return of the cranes to a hidden pond awaiting a meeting in snowfall) all are wise and deftly expressive. Tarjei Vesaas Het proza van Tarjei Vesaas heb ik leren kennen via de strak en mooi uitgegeven ontwerpen van de hand van Bas Van Vuurde van zowel "Het IJspaleis" als "De Vogels" bij Lebowski Publishers. Ik herinner me dat de uitgever besloten had de boeken van Vesaas opnieuw uit te geven door een tip van Karl Ove Knausgård die hem als de "beste Noorse schrijver ooit" bestempelde. Het deed mij vaaglijk denken aan "Le Spleen de Paris - Petits poèmes en prose" van Baudelaire zeker qua sfeer en taalgebruik zonder de personages uit de zelfkant van de maatschappij dan. "Het laatstgenoemde verwijst als is het slechts zijdelings in één woord naar de Noorse variatie van het "Tristan en Isolde" verhaal waar aan het einde de liefde sterker blijkt dan de dood en die gedachte veruitwendigd wordt in de klimplanten die van het ene graf in het andere naar elkaar toe groeien. Tarjei Vesaas Impressionistic and yet naturalistic this release from Archipelago publishing house presents a work of Tarjei Vesaas one of Norway's most honored authors as yet unavailable in translation. I was particularly taken by an evening in which the narrator sits motionless as a tussock (even more so because tussocks to respond to breezes) in order to watch the dance of the cranes. Tarjei Vesaas Earning its author a third nomination for the Nobel Prize this tale centers on a crane colony arriving at its breeding ground to play out a delicate drama ending with the rarely observed ceremony of the ritual dance. Unfolding in a series of delicate sketches that record the changing moods of human experience this story is at once pervaded by a sense of melancholy and a sensuous appreciation of nature. What we have here is a consciousness asking unanswerable questions a contemplative look at existence a stream of emotions settling one over the other like falling snow - amazement fear curiosity love tranquillity turmoil grace. Instead of a continuous narrative we have elegant and spare brushstrokes of china ink dancing across the page in a pulsing rhythm of light and darkness we have the beating heart of a consciousness larger than the individual an awakening / attuning to the long lifespan of stone to the the migratory habits of cranes to the tidal waves of the ocean. Vesaas is the boatman guiding his craft through the meanders and rapids of innocent years passionate years toiling years searching years tired years searching through this - his last published novel - to gain the shores of peaceful river: The shining tranquil river glides out with its burdens. It is the evening of a long journey and the poet shares with us the richness and the wisdom of his experience in almost transparent sparkling words that have been polished like gemstones over the grindstone of memory. As usual I have to borrow from his own talent in order to better express these feelings: The things one says usually seem to be left lying about on the floor like a pair of lop-sided shoes - while the things one wanted to say feel like birds in flight. yet words is all I have to take your heart away as the Bee Gees told me so many years ago and my heart beats this time to the rhythm of the long-legged dance and beating wings of blue cranes majestic creatures who come visiting from far away countries to teach a young boy about the beauty and the danger and the fleeting nature of happiness. They are not birds they are ourselves when we have passed between the millstones crossed the thorny wastes gone through the fire undertaken wondrous journeys and given away our heart to things unworthy of it - with the resulting humiliation unto death. Then we clothe ourselves in the proud guise of the crane and sail through the world away from the fleshpots to find a familiar marsh utter wild shrieks and invent frenzied gestures. The most famous sequence in the book reminds me of Dionysian mysteries in ancient Greece explains my fascination for Vesaas through the vital connection he maintains with the mineral and natural world his Zen like capacity to extract energy and contentment from sunrise and snow and flowing water a connection that has been alienated in me through long years among cement towers my eyes glued to an electronic screen. I have become suspicious even of my tendency to over analyse the texts in my reviews to reach for far-fetched connections in order to impress my friends with my sophistication and my knowledge of trivia. (I went to wikipedia to get some research done after reading about the dancing cranes from In the Marshes and on the Earth looking up Bacchus : 'Dionysus is represented by city religions as the

protector of those who do not belong to conventional society and thus symbolizes everything which is chaotic dangerous and unexpected everything which escapes human reason and which can only be attributed to the unforeseeable action of the gods. He is also called Eleutherios (the liberator) whose wine music and ecstatic dance frees his followers from self-conscious fear and care and subverts the oppressive restraints of the powerful. The translator of his work did a great job capturing the rhythm and the tonality of his phrasing and I envy his compatriots first for being able to walk in the poet's footsteps and secondly for being able to read his novels in the language they were written). Here's an idea of some of the stories: The first story sets the tone: a young boy maybe ten years old experiences the 'endless drudgery' of working with his father -- "He of the few and sharp words. With a kind of overwhelming sensitivity and a bare lyricism that recalls the Japanese haiku Vesaas immerses the reader in a series of visual progressions where man is witness to his own emotions like he is to the impassivity of the natural world that imposes the rhythm and repose of his existential ruminations. A child hidden behind the marshes observes a crane colony perform a dance a drifter avoids the river in order not to see his reflection a man battles against his heart to express its true feelings because he doesn't want to get hurt a boat is silently waiting on the shore for the right person to guide its way down to the open sea. As I slowly went through the pages of this contemplative novel taking my time to savor the texture of Vesaas' imagistic pilgrimage through the essence of mankind's soul I had the feeling to be in limbo somewhere between the recollection of a hazy dream and a vision of life from the clarity of an all-seeing afterworld. I seldom remember having felt so serene and full of anticipation at once eager to see what awaits in the dark without being afraid of the unknown just trusting my arms to be strong enough to embrace my fate with every fiber of my being. This book—which is both and neither novel and story collection—is a small wonder: small because it is modest in aim and style and because it is short wonder because it is a wonder. To say that Vesaas accomplishes the same wonderworking in *Spring Night* *The Ice Palace* or *The Bridges* as in *The Boat in the Evening*—and with greater precision and that those novels are novels proper with a current of story to carry them downstream is only to say that there are different kinds of books in the world and that that is as it should be and that you should read all four of them. It may not do so and becomes crammed with memories heavy with images saving itself by clinging to straws like the mooring rope and the slight familiar smell of the mooring rope in rain. His mastery of the nynorsk language *landsmål* (see Norwegian language) has contributed to its acceptance as a medium of world class litera Tarjei Vesaas was a Norwegian poet and novelist: After World War II he finds the bodies of five German soldiers dead in the woods. A young boy sits up with his mother in the evening waiting for his father to come home - hopefully not drunk: Other stories are of him watching cranes dance as he lies hidden in a marsh and of puppy love. I liked this passage: "Words can cause trouble like large rocks in one's path. Wrong again: Words can turn into dark chasms unbridgeable for a whole lifetime: We know very little about the power and destructiveness of words: no/ Tarjei Vesaas Sketches of lyrical introspection where man and nature fuse to become one entity. The prose is apparently simple.

Fragile humanity alone in the undying magnitude of nature. Instants of crystalline clarity of word and deep psychic significance: Simple eloquence and beauty shaped into thought-series like drops of water rapidly following one another down a leaf each in graceful expression of subtle design, More series of prose poems than the novel I had taken it for originally but there's a certain thematic arc holding things together. Not for nothing the vignettes are numbered in a specific order, Each of Vesaas' books starting with *The Ice Palace* earned him a nobel prize nomination but he never got one and died just after this last work was published. Na zowel "Het IJspaleis" als "De Vogels" allebei verhalen die beklijven volgde onvermijdelijk "De boot in de avond" op het leeslijstje. Onmiddellijk herken je de spaarzame schrijfstijl van Vesaas: de korte zinnen de accurate beschrijvingen van de natuur en de omgeving waarin de personages zich voortbewegen. Maar tegelijk is het o zo anders dan de twee vorige boeken, Soms neemt het ook de vorm van een gedicht aan met een kantlijn die inspringt en stukjes die zich visueel onderscheiden van de rest van de tekst: In "De verspilde dag

verdwijnt kruipend op zijn buik” bijvoorbeeld het zesde hoofdstuk uit de bundel is dat het geval en krijgt de tekst een zekere musicaliteit. In tweede instantie kan je bezwaarlijk van een roman spreken ook al vermeldt de achterflap dat het zijn meest persoonlijke 'roman' is. eerder een verzameling van korte en iets langere impressies en sfeerbeelden: Mens en natuur vloeien in elkaar over in zowat elk verhaaltje, Ontregelend tot op het punt dat je bijna fysiek ongemakkelijk wordt door hetgeen Vesaas beschrijft en zijn lezer mee laat en doet ondergaan. Want ook al wil je je niet identificeren met het personage en de gebeurtenissen toch zuigt en trekt en sleurt het proza van Vesaas je letterlijk in het verhaal: Zoals dat bij het eerder vermelde “De verspilde dag verdwijnt kruipend op zijn buik” en “Brand diep vanbinnen” het geval is. Bloedmooi zijn “Ongrijpbaar” en “Alleen al naar boven lopen en de emmer halen”, Uit het eerstgenoemde: “De geur van de eerste regen op een dunne jurk over warme huid: Zo ruikt dat wat niet kan blijven dat wat zelf niet weet dat het bestaat. Ongrijpbaar - zoals dat wat je dicht bij je zou willen hebben als je niets meer zou moeten wensen.) Verwondering moet je hebben - zoals het verlangen dat op warme dagen tussen ons opkomt in de eerste druppels van een regenbui, En Vesaas spaart één van zijn beste verhaaltjes - mijn absolute favoriet - voor op het laatst zoals het een groot artiest betaamt of het nu in boeken of op een podium is: In het voorlaatste bisnummer “De melodie” brengt hij een ode aan (zijn?) ouders en tegelijk aan de ouders van iedereen: het archetype van de ouders en een gezin met kinderen, Hoe die ouders in dat verhaal door kinderogen verbeeld worden is weergaloos en onevenaarbaar. Alleen omwille van dat verhaal is deze bundel - geen 'roman' - het aanraden waard: Herinneringen aan een leven wat achter hem ligt een bijna voltooid leven en van een bepaalde tijdloosheid gevangen in zijn woorden: Vaak erg mooi maar ook erg melancholisch en hoewel ik daarvan hou en ik die kant ook zeker in me heb was het me soms ook te veel. Ik voelde me gaandeweg vertragen en erin verdrinken alsof ik erdoor onderwater getrokken werd: Wat ook wel weer bijzonder is dat een boek dat met me kan doen. Als ik het opnieuw oppak dan lees ik het in stukken en beetjes lees ik het als poëzie dat past beter. 'De geur van de eerste regen op een dunne jurk over warme huid: Zo ruikt dat wat niet kan blijven dat wat zelf niet weet dat het bestaat, Ongrijpbaar - zoals dat wat je dichtbij je zou willen hebben als je niets meer zou moeten wensen, ' Tarjei Vesaas Bettie's BooksThe rating any status updates and those bookshelves indicate my feelings for this book: Semi biographical scenes present Norwegian rural life but it is unclear as to the era, Vesaas was born in 1897 so the coming of age sequences are more identifiable: A phenomenon described beautifully by Richard Powers in The Echo Maker, Here Vesaas presents man and nature giving personality not only to the marshes animals and a horse but also to the rocks, Almost shockingly there is a chapter recounting an episode of war so haunting and clear a reader feels as if they're present despite the poetry of the execution. All is observed by a transfixed child who has frozen into his background and become a piece of nature himself, With a kind of cinematic impressionism this novel voyages back to episodes from childhood adolescence and maturity as well as conducts speculative forays into the unknown, A profound and beautiful book it is the summation of a literary artist's first-hand experience and observation of rural life—of landscape and people. The Boat in the Evening I exist for the sake of the rivers beneath the earth. Not to understand but to be close to where it is happening: I may scare some readers away but the only way I can describe this book is as a long introspective poem told in prose fragments or cantos: There is no plot there is precious little in the way of characters and action, Tarjei Vesaas turns himself into a mirror reflecting the natural wonders of his homeland offering us the gift of wonder that makes the particular into the universal, The overall tonality is a melancholic one a silent sigh at the end of a long trip, It comes as if from far away in the interior and delivers its innermost secrets: what accompanies it on the journey? Intense desires that have subsided. My own words feel heavy footed and stumbling in trying to convey how much the prose of the Norwegian has moved and inspired me: Wrong again: Words can turn into dark chasms unbridgeable for a whole lifetime: We know very little about the power and destructiveness of words: A morning of adventure in early childhood a young boy hiding silent and scared among the grass can give meaning and strength to a whole lifetime. ' But Vesaas has no need of clever connections or academic explanations he is a vessel a boat sailing between the bones of the earth and the distant unreachable stars: He is the

burning conscience that is inside the world not the dry cold intelligence that places itself outside in order to observe and analyse, I am on the crane's own territory; I seem to have entered a sacred place where one has no right to be: He is searching for anchoring points for the safe shores that will reconcile him with the imminent darkness, Wisdom seems forever out of his grasp night unavoidable and loneliness the only certainty: It doesn't suit me; what am I to be liberated from? On the contrary I must be able to receive. The poet is wise the poet is sad the poet is terrorized by the night and the loneliness: If the cries of the cranes could be translated into human language they could probably say something like this (sung to the tune of Jacques Brel - Ne me quite pas): Please. Do something that will frighten me if you like but don't go, I will stop now before I drown this gem of a book with unnecessary explanations. I cherished every page of it some full of light others disturbingly dark and morbid: I put on more Jacques Brel on my music player added some Don McLean (Starry Starry Night. Seasons in the Sun) and forgot for a few hours that I am between four walls, I walked with Vesaas among high mountain meadows full of spring flowers and sailed on tranquil rivers towards wooded shore: The following quotes are just a few 'haiku-like' fragments of a bigger picture that is revealed patiently with each of the sketches included in the book. (the line breaks are my own the novel is presented in prose but I believe that Vesaas makes no distinction between the two forms when he builds his prose, So let me fade away and follow the spell of Vesaas words: Snowbound snowed under and trapped in the snow: This is my song and thus is my song the day is long and this is my song let me simply get snowbound and trapped in the snow. - - - Nothing is nothing the day is past it is evening and the wind is rising, - - - The heart is split in two irresolute between its desires: The world contains such infinite variety - and we need not know more about it than that, Warm rain that has a quality of great gentleness a quality of deep peace, There everything is sealed yet one sees oneself in the stone exactly as created and walks quickly past oneself with beating heart: It is far to its neighbour and there it is a stranger: - - - The air may be charged with bitter questions useless questions, They merely rest above the carrying water rest while on the move like everything else, No current halts because it is difficult to understand that intense desires are quenched, - - - Scent of the first rain on a light dress over warm flesh What of it? Or on my own light shirt. Just walking up to fetch the milk churn early one morning can be a miracle: Tarjei Vesaas [Edited 2/9/22] This Norwegian author (1897-1970) is best known for his novel The Ice Palace: The book I am reviewing was his last work written a couple of years before his death when he was 71. It's a series of vignettes - memoirs really more than short stories - of a young boy growing up. We aren't told if these were real events that happened to the author but it's likely they are true stores of his youth, " - - to shovel snow from dawn to dusk to clear a logging road that will likely fill with snow again during the night, Another story has this same theme of drudgery: even as a boy he feels it is 'not right' that his mother and father fall into bed every night from exhaustion. He falls injured into a river and drifts downstream clinging to a log for miles before he is rescued: Had it been winter rather than summer smooth and flowing but a closer appraisal will reveal a symbology akin to the most complex philosophical treatise, Identity memory loss and angst are perceived through the severity of the Norwegian landscape which is revealed as the real protagonist of this meditative narrative. Fleeting images more than words distinguish the elusive nature of Vesaas' chant to nature to the icy lakes and the endless horizon where water kisses the molten sky: Ultimately that must be what it feels like to be alive and Vesaas' words overflow with the miracle of life of creation of natural wonder. What are you waiting for? Tarjei Vesaas Tarjei Vesaas and I are alike: We see things similarly—and in a way that I hadn't understood until I read him; that I perhaps couldn't have understood without reference to his stories, Not because it is so special; perhaps it is not so special perhaps it is even ordinary—but because it feels like a wonder. Because wonder bubbles up within you as you turn the pages, Because to read it is to inhabit a world of memory your own and Vesaas's superimposed,]But the wind has blown forward twisted memories too—while it tosses the boat while the thwarts blacken, Tarjei Vesaas



Tarjei Vesaas was a Norwegian poet and novelist. Written in Nynorsk his work is characterized by simple terse and symbolic prose. His stories often cover simple rural people that undergo a severe psychological drama and who according to critics are described with immense psychological insight: Commonly dealing with themes such as death guilt angst and other deep and intractable human emotions the Norwegian natural landscape is a prevalent feature in his works, His debut was in 1923 with Children of Humans (Menneskebonn) but he had his breakthrough in 1934 with The Great Cycle (Det store spelet). Written in Nynorsk his work is characterized by simple terse and symbolic prose: His stories often cover simple rural people that undergo a severe psychological drama and who according to critics are described with immense psychological insight. Commonly dealing with themes such as death guilt angst and other deep and intractable human emotions the Norwegian natural landscape is a prevalent feature in his works: His debut was in 1923 with Children of Humans (Menneskebonn) but he had his breakthrough in 1934 with The Great Cycle (Det store spelet): His mastery of the nynorsk language landsmål (see Norwegian language) has contributed to its acceptance as a medium of world class literature[1]

He would have died of hypothermia. standing and talking with a girl in the snow. There is good writing and occasional poetry. Wrong: Words can clear the largest rocks out of the way." Good stories and an easy read. Norway woods from norwegianwoodseries.com Norwegian village from breathintravel.com Photo of the author from snl. Quiet resonance. It feels like an elegy the best elegy. Na de twee prologen weet je dat het raak is. In eerste instantie is zijn proza veel poëtischer. Het is m.i. Ingetogen en poëtisch met een licht melancholische ondertoon. Proza dat gerijpt is tot poëzie. (.) Een geur die verdwijnt als je je omdraait en zwijgt. Stilletjes verborgen op je tong achter een liefdeswoord. (.) Tarjei Vesaas 3 1/2*1968. Deze woorden en zinnen klinken mooier bij herhaling denk ik. Ja en? Of op mijn eigen dunne overhemd. Snelle kostbare ogenblikken. Een geur die verdwijnt als je je omdraait en zwijgt. Stilletjes verborgen op je tong achter een liefdeswoord. The river. To listen and to understand. On its way towards the distant ocean. Nothing more. [.] Words can cause trouble like large rocks in one's path. Wrong: words can clear the largest rocks out of the way. then it happens. then we must dance like this. For with one's eyes one may mirror the shy pure crane. The ritual will be played out in the guise of a bird. Liberation is a big word. To fill a void. Don't go. Don't go for a long time. I must see it all. Don't go. The day is long and the day is long. It is good to sleep snowbound and trapped in the snow. Outside are moonshine and wind. Yet the boat has to advance. night or day are merely shifting veils to be traversed. Advance with fierce courage. Not for the sake of men. For the sake of insoluble riddles. It utter secrecy the heart is split in two. - - - The world is large. - - - A solitary thick grove of leafy trees. And the loveliest weather. - - - It is a young girl sitting in the sunshine. A girl of course. - - - One sees only oneself in the stone. The walls in the rock are smooth yet deeply troubled. - - - A breathing space between iron hands. Soon they will be here. One must cling to ordinary things. - - - If there is a heart here it is lonely. The heart grows lonely; that is how it was created. It grows finally into its true self. Lonely. So it has even further to go. They will not be asked. Fleeting precious moments. - - - It seems so trivial but it doesn't take much. - - - The hour of becoming before full daylight. He who sleeps sins when he sleeps away this. - - - No more words now. Here is my thirsting hand. They run the gamut from the mundane to the traumatic. What else can a reader expect? Poetry in prose. Wisdom distilled in beauty. You'll find yourself in the

pages of this tiny book. Because to read it is to live and walk and wonder. Tarjei Vesaas If there is a heart here it is lonely. The heart grows lonely; that is how it was created. It grows finally into its true self.[. Memories fly in frightened flocks.[.]If only the heart could shut itself off. The reassuring smell of the commonplace.[.]One must cling to the most ordinary things. Nothing is going to happen[.]My heart expands but receives nothing. It is large and shocked by memories. {site_link}.