



Hemsöborna

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Hemsöborna är en roman av August Strindberg som utgavs 1887, ett år efter *Tjänstekvinnans son*. Strindberg gjorde även en dramaversion av berättelsen 1889. Boken skrevs under Strindbergs vistelse i Schweiz och södra Tyskland. De inledande raderna har blivit mycket berömda, så kallad in medias res: "Han kom som ett yrväder en aprilafton och hade ett höganäskrus i en svångrem om halsen."

Hemsöborna följer fastlänningen Carlsson som kommer till Hemsö för att hjälpa till med änkan Flods lantbruk. Det skär sig snabbt mellan Carlsson och Flods son Gusten, som tycker att Carlsson är högfärdig. Carlsson får dock ordning på lantbruket och han får idén att hyra ut ett av husen till en professorsfamilj under sommaren, vilket ger hushållet extrapengar. Carlsson förälskar sig i Ida, en av pigorna från Stockholm, men sin uppvaktning har han inget för, och nästa sommar gifter sig Carlsson med madam Flod. Den äkta sängen har dock inte mycket att erbjuda och Flod förstår snart att Carlsson är närgången mot pigorna. Hon smyger efter Carlsson en vinternatt och drar på sig lunginflammation. Under julen dör hon och när kistan ska föras till kyrkan går isen upp, kistan sjunker och Carlsson förmoras drunkna.

Hemsöborna Details

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From Reader Review Hemsöborna for online ebook

Sandrine says

A true example of Strindbergs realism and life in the Swedish archipelago at the time. Interesting and informative read about lies and scams, but i found the writing itself a little too complicated and heavy to read with the local expressions etc (read in Swedish).

Lukáš Palán says

Bom dzorno!

Tentokrat jsem vzal do ruky penis a otevrel jsem intern...jezis, to je jina story. Tentokrat jsem vzal do ruky svedskou knihu, protoze me samozrejme zajimalo, jak umi psat v zemi masovych kulicek.

Stejne jako vsechny ostatni knihy ze severu, je i tato o lidech, kteri neznali pizzu nebo Dame Jidlo, takze museli lovit candaty, plest site a stavet boudy. Neni divu, ze tam vymysleli IKEA, jen v teto knize se postavi asi tri stodoly. Tuto idylku narusi prijezd pomocnika Carlssona, ktery je ctizadostivy jako Ornella Stikova - zanedlouho ostrov vzkveta a tak dale pana krale. Jenze pak jej odmitne buchticka, protoze s nim nechce delat #metoo a pote co Carlsson zjisti, ze nejblizsi tinder schuzka je 400 mil daleko a musel by veslovat trinact let, se z vypocitavosti ozeni se starou a tlustou panimamou. Statek mu spadne do klina a konecne se i muze ucesat - protoze mu naroste hrebinek! Hihih. Jenze neni vsechno zlato co se trpyti a neni vsechno pizza co je kulaty - nasleduje tedy severska posledni tretina, ve ktere dojde na par umrti. Trochu me zamrzelo, ze v knize nebylo nic o masovych kulickach nebo hokeji, takze ve finale 7/10

Maria Svensson says

August Strindberg (1849-1912) is one of Sweden's most famous authors. He is known for his modern, realistic novels and for his contributions to the debate in the domestic politic of his home country. Serious enough...Hemsöborna is something special...the story is hilarious and was a big success already as it was released in 1887. It is by far the most fun novel I have ever read, and his portrait of Karlsson, the main character, is striking of a man who tries to be something he most certainly is not. I have not laughed out loud this much over a book since...I don't even know when...

Mark says

I read this after a trip to Sweden to get a Strindberg under my belt, and possibly because it was described as his most accessible and light-hearted book. Maybe so, but not memorable. I think it was a satire on a man who rises through ignorance, but I'm not even sure of that. Sorry, August.

Lisa says

Ambition, Charisma, Sex, Treachery!

Strindberg does what Strindbergs do. The novel is unusual for him in one respect though: it is the male protagonist who is the evil plotter, and the woman who falls victim to his ambitious gold-digging and sexual desire.

I am tempted to say he got some balance for once, as he is generally filling novel after novel with tirades against the infernal female of the species, who is both manipulative and stupid in his take on humanity. In *Hemsöborna*, one of his archipelago stories, an old woman falls for the charm of a young man called Carlsson, who comes to her island to help with the farming and eventually manages to marry her and alienate her son while chasing after the maids for his pleasure.

But Strindberg wouldn't be Strindberg if he didn't let Swedish nature appear to commit an act of destructive justice. It's a cold landscape he invites the reader to visit.

There is satire. There is brilliant social study. There is the typical descriptive genius of Strindberg. There is one of his most famous opening lines. It is vintage Strindberg.

Janelle Bailey says

24: *The People of Hemso: A Story from the Islands* by August Strindberg...pre-Sweden #5. This was reminiscent for me of John Greenleaf Whittier's "Snowbound: A Winter Idyll" in its description of this small group of people isolated from much else and from other people; in this story it's due to geography and living in the Swedish islands, while in Whittier's "Snowbound" it's primarily the weather. Carlsson makes for an interesting character as he arrives to the Widow Flod's farm, relatively unknown, hired to run things for her and her children and a couple of hired hands. Some other characterization is a little muddier; for instance, the Widow Flod, with a marriage-age son and two daughters who function more as farm/house help, rather independently, is presented as being closer to old age than more childbearing, initially. But that changes. Makes things a little confusing. Probably the most "amusing" character is the local minister, who frequently drinks more than he should, at one point forgetting completely that the event he's to bless is a wedding, starting to comment on Christmas, and understanding he deserved being laughed at in response, so stopped. The fact that his wife keeps all liquor locked, with only herself possessing a key makes perfect sense. Overall, though, this was an engaging visit with an isolated family who shared some Swedish traditions, such as fish of different kinds being consumed at all meals, and schnapps doing some of their soul-warming. I enjoyed it!

Monty Milne says

"The Red Room" was my first Strindberg, and I was disappointed...but this was far more to my taste. The narrative is crammed with lively incident and intriguing characters, all of whom are morally ambiguous. Sometimes you find yourself revising your opinions of them, or just gaining a deeper understanding of the complexity of human behaviour - no mean achievement in such a short novel. Best of all is the way the life and landscape of the nineteenth century Swedish archipelago is brought vividly to life. Oh to be Swedish and

have a summer home on a little island amongst the eider ducks, lapped by the blue Baltic...

Jamie says

This novel chronicles the life of people living on the Swedish island of Hemso. The island is so small and isolated that the church which the islanders attend, to be honest not that frequently, is found on a separate island and is virtually inaccessible during winter or in a storm. And as can be predicted, everyone on this small island knows everyone else's business and is excessively suspicious of the outsider Carlsson when he arrives.

As Carlsson works on the Flod farm, for which he was hired, he always has his eye on his next opportunity and the next chance for improvement. The farm improves greatly but Carlsson's ability to handle business dealings and anything about seafaring remain laughably inadequate – perhaps not the best idea when living on a tiny island.

The story itself here is not what makes this novel memorable, but a few hilarious scenes interspersed throughout. My favorite was when gunfire was heard as a wedding ceremony was about to begin: "the beer bottles had been piled up in the full glare of the sun, and were now cracking and spitting like machine guns, so that the froth ran out over the ground . . . farm lads stood in groups, drinking out of the bottom halves of broken bottles, and occasionally 'rescuing' open bottles which had only lost their corks." And just wait until you read where the minister finds himself at the end of the night!

Luís C. says

For once that Strindberg offers us a little good comedy, almost familiar, interrupting (almost) his anti-feminist speech, his lamentations on the life of a couple, and his religious torment, do not sulk especially our pleasure!

More than for other novels, we must consider that the subject of this one takes place in the context of Sweden at the end of the nineteenth century. If this distance in space and time was disdained by the reader / spectator, he would risk missing some of the stakes of this work. Indeed, the action is located in a popular environment of fishermen and peasants, and many are the astonishing or picturesque references to the daily life, customs, mentalities peculiar to Sweden of that time.

Hemsö is supposed to be a fishing village located in one of Sweden's micro-archipelagos. But you will have trouble finding that name exactly on an island in Sweden (there is a "Hemse" on the island of Gotland). In fact, under this name, Strindberg stages the island of Kymmendö, lost in a dust of islands in an archipelago of the Baltic Sea, southeast of Stockholm. Strindberg knew this island well for having stayed there in his youth.

The plot of the story is the arrival of a peasant, Carlsson, in a fishing village in Hemsö. He picks to fit himself into the small local company. He is very hardworking, but his naivety, his lack of knowledge of the environment in which he arrives, and the hushed hostility of the fishermen who see the unknown landed will not facilitate the achievement of this objective.

On a background always popular and funny, Strindberg scrolls in front of us a gallery of characters adorned with temperaments and personal issues a little caricature, but colorful enough for the viewer to attach to it: Mrs. Flod, widow land owner, including Carlsson covets the hand, and defends this poor Carlsson against the

gossip of his entourage; the Inspector (Customs), constantly indebted to everyone, always looking for ghost smugglers; Mrs. Styv, a fishmonger who judges a lot of things according to the price of fish; Rundqvist, valet of Madame Flod, a chronic slacker constantly lying on a bench; the hawker, certainly seller of odds and ends, but also concoctors of financial scams and tricks of land which Carlsson will be fooled; the pastor, who annoyed his parishioners by making them sing endless hymns at the office; Ida, the pretty girl from the corner, on which everyone (young and old) wants to get their hands, and more if affinity ...

The popular language and the lively and colorful reactions of the characters are constantly attracting attention, and the reversals of situations that accumulate at the end of the play seem like a farce. But the characters, well drawn and faithfully maintained to the end, the critics and ironies underlying the vices of some and sneaky schemes of others allow this work to rise to the level of comedy of manners, fun and without great metaphysical hindsight. Frequent notations on the details of everyday life add to the flavor of the show.

Sandra says

Due racconti lunghi (o romanzi brevi) scritti a distanza di vent'anni uno dall'altro, il primo è del 1887, il secondo è del 1906, completamente diversi per le atmosfere che vi si vivono, ma anche legati da una tematica che è quella della grande letteratura novecentesca.

Ho preferito il primo, un racconto naturalistico con lo sfondo della meravigliosa natura svedese, della quale ci sono descrizioni bellissime, in cui Strindberg narra gli effetti provocati su un tranquillo –pure troppo– villaggio in una delle mille isole sparse nel mare di Svezia dall'arrivo “come una bufera” del servo Carlsson in una fattoria di proprietà della vecchia signora Flod. Egli trova bestiame magro e mal nutrita, campi coltivati male, strutture decadenti, la campagna è trascurata dal personale scansafatiche e dal figlio della padrona, che preferisce la caccia e la pesca all'agricoltura. La sua ambizione sfrenata non è soddisfatta dai risultati che riesce a raggiungere con la fattoria, Carlsson mira a raggiungere ben altri fini.

Alla fine il buon senso del pastore protestante che guida la comunità di Hemso esprime il significato della storia: ci sono tanti punti di vista diversi per giudicare gli uomini; le azioni che compiamo, dalle quali veniamo giudicati, sono la nostra fortuna e la nostra croce perché realizzano i nostri scopi e gridano i pensieri inespressi, ma al contempo hanno riflessi sugli altri che le osservano e le interpretano ciascuno secondo i propri fini. Quanti “io” esistono? Uno, nessuno o centomila, verrebbe da rispondere.

Una tematica moderna, che anticipa e si ricollega al secondo racconto, Il capro espiatorio. L'avvocato Libotz è “il capro espiatorio”, la vittima innocente su cui gli abitanti di una anonima cittadina claustrofobicamente chiusa in mezzo ai monti fanno ricadere le colpe di ogni nefandezza altrui. Libotz è un uomo buono, uno che sa ascoltare, che non parla mai male degli altri, è troppo ingenuo, è vero, così tanto da plasmarsi con le sue stesse mani il ruolo di capro espiatorio. Ed è l'unico nel paese a mostrare sempre la stessa faccia, mentre i suoi amici Askanius e il procuratore Tjarne vestono e svestono abiti diversi, indossano di volta in volta maschere che camuffano all'esterno il vuoto sottostante. Si sente l'eco dei temi pirandelliani della vita come teatro in cui gli uomini sono tante “maschere nude”.

Libotz rimane sé stesso fino alla fine, e quando, al termine, abbandonato il paese, chiede: “Perché la gente aveva tanta collera con me?”, il farmacista della città gli risponde: “Queste sono cose che non si sanno mai.... Del resto la gente non sa perché ama o odia...” E così egli si allontana incontro a nuovi destini, “che presagiva ma non paventava più”, oramai rassegnato al suo ruolo di vittima sacrificale, in nome della tranquillità e della sicurezza degli altri.

E' un racconto molto triste, moderno e antico al contempo: circa trenta anni dopo, in Germania, il regime

nazista ha creato capri espiatori destinati all'eliminazione: l'ebreo, l'omosessuale, il rom. Sempre ce ne sono stati nella storia, a partire dal Cristo, l'Agnello di Dio. E sempre ce ne saranno, ogni volta in cui eventi disturbanti colpiscono l'opinione pubblica e sconvolgono gli equilibri e le certezze di un gruppo sociale.

Linda says

I've converted into a Strinberg fan and I doubt I would find much that I dislike that he wrote. This one banned him from Hemso because too many of the people recognized themselves in it. It's a novel rather than a play and it's funny instead of serious. An ambitious mainlander comes to the island as a supervisor for a farm that has gone to pot. He manages to get it on its feet and producing. But, he is ambitious and this leads him to other connivances, which would spoil the ending if I let you know. But if you like Strindberg, or if you've never read his novels, I'd pick this up for a try. If you've never read Stringberg, this is easy access to his laid-back style.

Henning says

Positiv överraskning; nog min bästa läsupplevelse med Strindberg. Handlingen är tätare och stilens hårdare driven än i Röda rummet, satiren mindre raljerande och kverulant. Alla karaktärer känns helgjutna. Berättelsen kan läsas som tidlös fabel.

Ines says

Wenn man den Namen "August Strindberg" hört, denkt man nicht direkt an Komödien - aber dieses kleine Buch ist unglaublich komisch. Es wird gesoffen, gearbeitet, gefeiert, geliebt und gestorben, und das alles auf den Schären in Schweden im 19. Jahrhundert. Der Protagonist Carlsson ist einer "oben vom Binnenland", der versucht, sich durch Heirat einen gutgehenden Hof auf Hemsö unter den Nagel zu reißen; was ihm auch gelingt, jedenfalls was die Heirat anbelangt... wenn ich jetzt an die Leute auf Hemsö denke, möchte ich gleich einen Kaffee mit einem ordentlichen Schuss und Pellkartoffeln und Salzheringe zum Frühstück essen. Literatur ist abgefahren!

Ich habe übrigens die Ausgabe vom Verlag Neues Leben Berlin, 1981 - Übersetzung: Hans Jürgen-Hube, Illustrationen: Hans-Joachim Behrendt; Reihe: Kompaß-Bücherei, Band 273

Adrian Colesberry says

I went on a tear on 2007 and read all of Henrik Ibsen and all of August Strindberg. Before I could get to all of Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, I had to turn back to writing, and I can't read while I write. Strindberg is wonderful. A bit more sarcastic than Ibsen and less tragic. But both are great.

Though I'm not a big fan of *Peer Gynt*. Strindberg's parody of *Peer Gynt*, *Lucky Per's Journey* is a hoot. If you ever have a chance to see it performed, definitely go.

I haven't reviewed individual plays. Read them all, they're like popcorn.

This is my review for all of Strindberg.

Thomas Strömquist says

The most accessible(?) of the better known novels by the artist, playwrite and novelist August Strindberg. This dramatic story of a man who travels to an Island in Stockholm's archipelago to marry a wealthy widow was based on ill-concealed true-life people on the real-life island where the author spent a few summers. The book disgraced a lot of people upon it's late 1800's publication and Strindberg was not welcome back to the island.

A recommended starting point or, if you are to read just one book, this is the one!
