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Selected Poems by Emil Aarestrup

Translated by Jack Brondum and Peer L. Aarestrup

Carl Ludvig Emil Aarestrup (1800-56) wrote most of his poems between 1820 and 1840. Born in Copenhagen, he was orphaned at the age of seven and raised by family friends. He studied medicine at the University of Copenhagen, where he met his future wife, his cousin Caroline Aagard, when she was just sixteen. After they were married, Aarestrup worked as a doctor on Lolland and Fyn for twenty years. His oldest son, Carl Aarestrup, immigrated to Brazil for a time before returning to Denmark and marrying the daughter of his father's friend, the spice merchant Christian Petersen. Carl's son Louis is the maternal great-grandfather of Peer L. Aarestrup.

*These translations are the product of a twenty-year collaboration between the Copenhagen-based writer Peer L. Aarestrup and his close friend, Jack Brondum of Minneapolis, who paired his professional work in public health with his love of the Danish language and culture. Over the years, Peer and Jack would meet in Minneapolis or Copenhagen, translating, negotiating, and looking for new perspectives, always with pleasure and enthusiasm, determined to create the sublime text. They wanted to honor the old giant with the erotic quill by doing their best facing the difficulties. This process took long time, needed many breaks, discussions, adjustments, reconsiderations – over and over again, until a few days before Jack's death from prostate cancer in July 2016. Peer's novel, *Vejen til Emil Aarestrup* (The Road to Emil Aarestrup) and a bilingual edition of their translations of Emil Aarestrup's poems were published in Denmark in 2016, but the translators gave *The Bridge* special permission to reprint selected poems from the collection for our readers.*

Preface: Love's Long Arc

The name of the Danish physician and poet Emil Aarestrup is associated with sensual, erotic poetry in which a sharp, anatomical eye for the beauty of the human body is joined with a profound narrative about love in a single embrace. In Aarestrup's works the body comes alive. His erotic gaze is ever-present as a layer of desire in his work, just as his sense of the all-inclusive joy of the embrace conceptualizes pleasure of an explosive and outrageous kind. This was incompatible with the puritanical petit-bourgeois self-restraint and

human isolation of the period in which he wrote. This celebration of the erotic permeates his poetry with a modern consciousness of man's sensual nature, independent of time and space. In Aarestrup's work, we encounter a poet of Denmark's Golden Age breaking through the social mores of his time and writing himself onto the European poetic stage.

As the father of thirteen children, Aarestrup didn't have a great deal of free time, but he carved out time to write poetry. Aarestrup published two volumes of poetry—the first, *Digte* (Poems) appeared in 1838, while the second *Efterladte Digte* (Posthumous Poems) were published in 1863, seven years after his death. Denmark's literary elites didn't appreciate Aarestrup's innovative works during his life, but he was an important forerunner to the Danish symbolist poet Sophus Claussen. He wrote a few political poems, but most of them were amorous poems. As a doctor he often designed his poems as a unity of body and soul where "her elbow" goes hand in hand with "her soul," as in the poem "Der er en sjæl i denne Albu" (There is a Soul in this Elbow). Several women functioned as his poetic muse throughout his life: not only his wife, Caroline, but also Sophie Hansen, the poet Christian Winther's betrothed, who inspired the poem "Til en veninde" (To a Friend).

This collection includes selected poems for English speakers, taken from both volumes of Aarestrup's poetry and his unpublished works. The translators have not attempted to make representative choices, nor have they striven for absolute fidelity to the original rhyme and verse form (e.g., the ritornella, the sonnet), although fidelity to rhythm was maintained in most cases. Rather, we have focused on the sensual in Aarestrup's writing and the rich metaphorical language that "shakes one's limbs" and "makes one absolutely giddy" (Aarestrup). The reader will judge whether we have succeeded. The translations may be of interest for students of language and literature at educational institutions, e.g., high schools, higher education preparatory academies, and institutions of higher education interested in working simultaneously in more than one language.

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1. As in sacred mortal combat

*As in sacred mortal combat
My young heart pounds -
And you've at last let fall
Your dying sense of decorum.*

*From the dark lightning-laden skies
That are your lovely eyes
One sees 'mid the tears only
A yearning ether-ribbon.*

*My voice smothered, my gasps
As deep as a chasm, hoarse -
And you - even your lips'
Silvery chime near breaking.*

*Oh entwined lives, Gulhyndy,
Now approaching extinction -
Amor itself terrified
At sight of your eyes closing.*

*He rushes with his torch -
Well aware of the danger -
With heavenly haste, gently
A third life he ignites.*

2. Forestlonely

*Through the birch wood
I led you by the hand -
It was so green, so cool there,
We heard the nightingale's song.*

*It was as if the whole world
Its flowers and its branches,
Its clouds and its stars,
Were ours and ours alone.*

*We didn't speak at all;
We couldn't say a word,
Like tangled, silent vines,
Solitary, contented.*

*So free, it was secluded
So unguarded, so still -
It was as though we needed
And wanted nothing more.*

3. Children's Psalm

*Praise God! – Into childhood's quiet
Herb garden he took us and has
Led us to his source of knowledge,
Where it flows pure and clear.*

*Praise God! Wherever we walk,
Every flower, every birdsong,
He brought into being for our pleasure,
So we would never want for joy.*

*Praise God! He has given us
Contentment's noble treasure;
He who can hold this through life,
Joy will never abandon.*

*Praise God! When the field pales,
When nature's harvest comes,
When, exhausted, all the leaves have left their trees,
Spring dwells in our breast.*

*Praise God! We wander calmly
About the world by his hand;
Familiar with all around us,
All is beauty – we walk with God!*

4. The Bride

*At the brookside the young girls
Walk with their fish and fruits,
With silver-white salmon in their nets,
In their baskets small trout.*

*Lovely girls, let's sing
Let's weave a laurel wreath!*

*But one stands lost upon the bridge,
All day, morning to evening,
Dumb, the lissome maid stood,
As though carved from marble.*

*Lovely girls, let's sing
Let's weave a laurel wreath!*

*She stares at the brook –
The wind, with all its might,
Forces the wet summer dress
Against her limbs.*

*Lovely girls, let's sing
Let's weave a laurel wreath!*

*And if one asks: Who are you?
She extends her hand
Casting her eyes toward the sky,
And answers: I am a bride.*

*Lovely girls, let's sing
Let's weave a laurel wreath!*

*And once again in the green,
Slowly moving stream
She stares down, as though
Dreaming the deepest dream.*

*Lovely girls, let's sing
Let's weave a laurel wreath!*

*At the brookside the young girls
Walk with their fish and fruits,
With silver-white salmon in their nets,
In their baskets small trout.*

*Lovely girls, let's sing
Let's weave a laurel wreath!*

*A body is pulled from the green,
Slowly moving stream –
Oh, it's she, who dreamed
The very deepest dream.*

*Lovely girls, let's sing
Let's weave a laurel wreath!*

5. Father Hugo, I am scared!

*Father Hugo, I am scared!
From the cloister's darkened hallways
Let us bend our step;
If a ghost in its lair
Met us at this place? –
"It changes nothing,
Donna Rosa, just follow me!"*

*How the dark hallway looms!
Not the slightest light – I shiver!
Now the blackness doubles –
Oh, it took me by the chin,
I'll stay close to you –
"Exactly, that's it,
Donna Rosa, just trust me."*

Father Hugo! I can feel –
Oh, let's not dawdle!
Lord, how horrid!
Ho, now it's kissing my mouth! –
"Cross yourself, that's all that matters,
Donna Rosa, just cross yourself."
have I ever seen the like -

Father Hugo, I'm being squeezed,
I'm being crushed – I can feel –
Oh, again a kiss – another –
Oh, it's clear as day,
That this place will soon redden!
"Child, what does a kiss matter,
So long as it's lingering and sweet?"

"Along this path you have learned,
What joyous change
The ghostly beings rendered;
That, where in the past the dragon
Hurled his poison from his throat,
It's now clear as day,
The wicked one took but a single kiss."

"You will never again fear
To bend your step
Along the cloister's halls;
You will never complain,
That this is a horrid place –
When – this is my counsel –
Father Hugo accompanies you."

6. Amalie Raben

*The clouds hang heavily above the water,
And the forest shrouds itself in fog;
The old lighthouse, staring from the shore,
Sees only white gulls upon the lake,
But no sail, bringing home once more
Our tender sister, pious daughter.*

*Pointless, the orchard's scent, the path's turns;
She plucks petals no more.
Pointless, the birds' songs await her;
She hears birds no more.
Echo! Forest and castle will never more
Tempt the sound of her voice.*

*Where beck flows beneath the mountain's bows
With summer castles and with grapes,
There she rests, where tall poplars rear,
In peace, wearied by the long journey;
There she slumbers, there she lay down her stave,
There she sleeps beneath the flowers in her grave.*

*But her spirit, loving, bountiful,
Is among us, divine,
Is where in death she yearned to be,
It's in her home, in each faithful friend,
Among those whom she loved like her soul,
Whom her last breath bid farewell.*

*And tears lingering in our eyes,
The silent speech taught by sorrow,
The sad still looks of those you held dear,
Your spirit knows, Amalie! It hastens
To our memories' sorrowful celebration,
With hope, with assurance, with luck – a heavenly guest!*

7. The Earth

*Why do you always search the heavens,
Ungrateful dolt?
I am still beautiful,
Passionate as you,
See how spring teems in my hair,
The hot tears in my glance!*

*Do I deserve to be forgotten?
I, who like any good mother gave
You your first powers,
Your blood its vigor?
I, who with my birdsongs,
Welcomed you to life?*

*I, who painted roses in your cheeks
And a lily on your brow?
I, who day and night,
Tender, with a mother's weakness,
Never considered your wildness, your caprices,
And always gave in to you?*

*I, who shielded you when the sun burned
Too strongly against your face;
I, who loyal and true,
In the still of the night lulled you
To sleep, and like a loving
Wet nurse spread my cloak over you.*

*I, who when you close your weary eyes
And lie down for your final rest –
Old, cold and dead –
Open my womb to you,
Gather your dust in my urn,
And cover it with flowers?*

*Can you forget me, your first love?
Would you exchange me for another?
Come! Take heart once more!
Be my child, my friend!
Know that my heart is your home,
I will always guard over you.*

8. What Cracks And Furrows

*What cracks and furrows;
What sinuous lines end
These stretches and highpoints,
This elbow, these hands!*

*What tints to paint!
What curves and cupolas,
What peaks, what valleys,
Just made for the lonely dreamer*

9. Solitude

*Child, you dream of
Solitude's shadows,
Solitude's joy,
A sacred contentment,
An eternal solace –
How well do you know me?*

*Do you know what it is,
To be alone?
To feel as one
Apart and alone?
Tell me, do you know
What that is?*

*The angel approaches,
He whom you have sought,
Solitude by name;
Invisibly spreads
His dark embrace
Monstrously toward you.*

*See the deep river
Behind the green branches –
So, now you're alone,
Eternally, if you wish –
Do you dare? Have courage enough?
Want to?*

10. Are You a Christian?

*Are you a Christian? - you asked me recently –
What else? A despairing heathen?
Ready to believe one thing, then another,
Did my words affect you, Glut?*

*I admit that it's long ago
That I considered so important a cause,
And it's difficult just now
To grasp the distinction*

*But one thing: I believe in my sins,
And in Heaven – unconditionally!
But I'm passionate, and cannot find
My bliss in Protestantism.*

*My hands must touch the Sacred,
Must mix with the earthly,
Must shape, by my prayers,
The body of the divinity, the truth.*

*Then I can fervently worship One,
Whom I have within me, close to me,
Whose heart beats like my own,
Free of heavenly eccentricity.*

Yes, of course, I have the true, proper
Complete Faith, which brings Grace,
And the twain are salvation – which in this world
Can be called catholicism, of a sort.

This is my belief; it has sustained me
Through many nocturnal hours' doubt,
When I wandered your grounds, Glut,
And didn't dare ring your bell.

11. To a Child

Come out, my little tot!
Put on your yellow boots!
Come out, where the spring's plops
Maunder through the grass.
A woman old and gray
Gives you a drink from her bowl,
And her daughter bears
Her knitting and her pail.

On crooked legs you stomp
Through lock, stock and barrel,
And the cockchafer drops,
From its branch to your hat.
Where the stork wades the bog,
Where the lily blooms gold,
Where the rose welcomes the bee,
We'll play hide-and-seek.

At home your mother
Does a thousand things,
Must pick up and put away,
The things we've tossed about;
Now she sweeps your room,
And gives her flowers water,
Now she irons your cap,
And makes your bed for you.

Now I'll carve her name
In the bark – Hey!
I'll plant a great mullein
From the field as a sentry.
But what do I see? She's coming;
Here she comes, yonder,
Bearing her black plums
As the tree reaches for her.

Who is she holding in her arms
Pressing to her breast?
For whom does she willingly bear
Her bosom, nectar sweet?
It's your little brother;
He's always thirsty -
Now, race to your mother!
Can you get her kiss first?

12. Embryo

We often sat that way together
- hand in hand – eye to eye –
An unusually fine light –

But that's long - long ago
Long before time,
And where it was, we don't know.

13. Fear

Hold me tighter, tighter still
With your round and shapely arms;
Tighter, as long as your heart
Beats with passion's love and heat.

Soon we'll be separated,
Like berries leaving the vine;
Soon we'll have disappeared,
Like the bubbles in the brook.

14. To a Friend

*There is magic on your lips,
There is an abyss in your glance,
And in your voice I hear
A dream's ethereal music.*

*There is a clarity on your brow,
There is a darkness in your hair,
There is a current of flower's breath
About you, where you stand or walk.*

*There is a wealth of eternal wisdom
In the dimple of your cheek,
There is a fount a spring of wellness
For all hearts within your soul.*

*There is a world within you,
A passionate, chaotic springtime -
That I could never forget,
That I worship and know well.*

15. The Brooder

*Let me
Tell you
The Secret
Of my heart.*

*What pleases me,
What most often
Fills this breast
With joy.*

*No tumult,
No shining brilliance;
No dead garland
of honor.*

No friendship's
Gentle virtue;
No immersion
In love's joy.

What pleases me,
What most often
Fills this breast
With joy:

Is silence,
Is true
Reflection's
Profound peace.

16. When I Wander by Myself

When I wander by myself
yearning, silent, as I stroll,
that's when my soul awakens,
that's when my thoughts start to flow.

Redoubled, my awareness
takes the measure of this
luminous chaos shimmering
unendingly about my head.

Intimate with beauty
and its wondrous mysteries,
I hold your essence in me,
liberated, but unchanging.

Delicately, Psyche's wings
beat about your shoulder blades,
your lovely tresses tossing,
immortally, joyously.

*You take me by the hand
like Dante's Beatrice,
wishing to show me angels
of heaven and salvation.*

*Only when a friend hails me
to brighten my day, so he thinks,
and when I, as has been said,
delight at dinner banquets -*

*That's when life seems suddenly
to rush from its hiding place -
from so-called reality,
that I feel that I'm dreaming.*

*Waxing and waning,
veiling itself in the mists -
that is when my soul slumbers,
my body merely watches.*

17. I Was Undone

*I was undone by you at the children's ball
All the more by your myrtled locks
Worshippers grew and grew in number
Like butterflies about the lily's bells*

*Become a poet's wife and mistress
Curiously shy, like a muse,
I lift my eyes - and behold your force
Refreshed, carried away, as by a verse*

*Yet that which undid me remains unchanged: woman
The blond, chaste, enchanting beauty,
With cleft chin, dimples in her cheeks
Who, as before, made Adam sin.*

And one who prizes his good fortune
To have known your force, your bloom,
Has written these lines to show
How you can confound and bewitch

18. Take This Kiss And A Thousand More

Take this kiss and a thousand more, my sweet
Let the eye speak, Amor only confines
The silly language of the voice; and in his chains
Kisses and embraces are no crime.

The more our lips touch
The more my thoughts turn to nothing
I hand my prose to chancery
So that rhyme and verse may warmly glow

I know that the perfect fire of love
Is the pure and plastic form
That can only exist in your fair and open arms

For my thoughts I weave a net
For my signs of wisdom, an elastic one
But beautiful and close-fitting, in sonnet.

19. A Polish Mother

“Where to, my young lady?
Dense morning fog lies
Upon all the promenades
And glistening boutiques.

And beneath your silken hat
So somber a mien,
That a smile upon my lips
Would make you flush?

*What does the maid at your side
Press tightly to her bosom?
What precious burden is wrapped
In the shawl about her arms?"*

*"Here you see Sabinski's son,
His firstborn, tiny infant,
Who I conceived, I rejoiced,
within the arms of peace;*

*Who lay beneath my heart on
That morning I gave the pistol
To his father, and asked him
To give his life for Poland.*

*Sabinski's son, my good Sir!
Is wrapped in this shawl,
And it's with Sabinski's wife
You're talking in the street.*

*I bore this sweet burden,
While his brave father
Defended the streets of Warsaw
With lethal kartetscher.*

*He was born in the same hour,
That I learned the dreadful news,
His father was taken to prison,
wounded and in chains.*

*See the walls of the citadel?
The green bastions?
And between the piles of shot
The silent, resting cannon?*

*Tomorrow, at day break,
We'll hear in these empty streets
The beat of the mourning drums -
Then his father will be shot.*

*Tomorrow, at day break,
The Russian drums will roll,
Their guns will roar,
His time has come.*

*But before his death
I steal to his cell,
And he sees his heir
For the first time and the last.*

*They said no, Sabinski!
Would not let you see
Your little boy, your Anton,
Or your tearful wife.
But their evil threats
Won't defeat my courage.
At this point of the rise
The prisoner can see us both.*

*He sees us! Yes, he sees us!
Through the bar he waves
The white cloth as a sign -
Oh, if only we had wings!*

*And don't I have a dagger,
And don't I have a pistol?
No! - we two will once again
Fight for Poland.*

*Come, give me the boy, maid!
Take his cap off, hurry.
See how beautifully his
Little head shines in the sun.*

*Look at your son, Sabinski!
Whom I have born with such pain,
An heir to your courage,
Your nobility, your heart.*

Though an outlaw on this earth,
He will lift the old banner
Of freedom towards the sun,
The sabre and the pistol.

Listen to a mother's prayer,
Whose heart is ready to burst,
Cast your eyes upon him
For the first time and the last.

Cast your eyes upon him,
The power and the skill
Which only death can bring,
And wed him to revenge!"

So with these words the lady
Gave her baby to the maid -
The sentry's scornful laughter
was the only sound heard after.

20. Across the Snow

Across the square and street
Where the snow lay, white,
In the light of the moon
You passed so quickly by.

Crystal clear the city lies,
A beautiful creation,
Like a vision in the air,
I saw the gleaming castle there.

I watched that lucky muff
Swathe your hands.
I heard the smooth silk
Scream at your knees.

*Your breath, invisible
As the breath of a rose,
Streamed through your veil
Silver on the air.*

*The force of your feet
Gave song to the snow.
Your shadow wavering
On the soft carpet below.*

*I saw it rushing
The gleaming white,
Ethereally bare plain -
Another shadow at its side.*

*This was mine!
And it rushed,
Stretching, restless.
I had never seen it so.*

*Closer it came, this I swear -
So confused,
This night black creature
Catching, caressing yours.*

*They swelled -
Canova never grouped beings better -
Now I saw them, now I didn't
As the moon cast it's light below.*

*And came to light again
Together, oh, joy!
My flesh and blood can never know,
What my shadow knows.*

21. Early Parting

*It was that early morning,
The dragoon stood in the tent
Winding the purple sash
Around the baron's waist*

*And handed him his whip,
His helmet with the plume,
Brightly shining, as though just
Taken from the armory,*

*And brought his mount forward,
Chestnut brown and tall,
Turning a melancholy eye
Toward his lord and master.*

*And in the open holsters,
Embroidered with their gold,
His black-gloved rider's hands
placed his newly-loaded pistols.*

*And slowly mounting his saddle
The noble master spoke
Very softly: "Hendrik!*

*If I don't return again -
which may well be -
See to these letters and say:
'A matter of honour for me.'"*

*He gave his horse the spur,
Sparks flew from its hooves;
The black crows flew aloft
Their screams high above the trees.*

*A shot fell far away -
And one more - no more;
But in the vault of heaven
The sun rose ever higher.*

Dark evening came on,
From the castle in the valley
Tall windows shone brightly,
Casting their light from the hall.

The orchestra played. The cupbearer
Moved through the gleaming hall
Pouring purple wine
In the glittering crystal.

The lovely dancing miss,
Beautiful as a Bajadere,
Suddenly let go
Her dark cavalier.

She listened, she heard -
And only **she** heard -
The faintest sound from far away
Beating on the bridge's stones.

And how her round, lily white
Shoulders rose and fell!
She never heard the trumpet,
Never the tympani's swell.

She looked through the pane
Through the dark and gloomy night -
And saw in the light of the castle
A helmet, a breastplate bright.

As she flew down the stairs
a gold comb fell from her hair,
from that flowered braiding
she had so recently worn.

It wasn't he she waited for;
With sorrow's tidings written
In his dark visage the
Dragoon brought her the letter.

*She tore the letter open -
She fainted - fell as though crushed -
No finer marble ever
lay upon the ground.*

*It is that early morning,
The red light cast by the sun
coloring the old maiden,
While she slumbers in her chair.*

*The peach trees are blooming,
The almonds in the garden;
But her skin has faded,
Like alabaster on the grave.*

*An epitaph is written
In the furrows of her brow,
Her pale fingers seek each
Other quietly in her lap.*

*The cockatoo bows its
Golden head with compassion,
Watching his old friend
Forgetting its sweet ration.*

*A large portrait stretches across
The red damask of the wall,
The flower urn gracefully
offering its contents, its all.*

*There he stands, as though alive,
With the blue enamel of
His eyes, with the purple sash
Wound round his marvelous waist;*

22. I Saw You Blush

*I saw you blush and I shuddered
Our dissembling only half hid
A desire in our breast
Never prized by virtue
Never given life in words
Desires without end.*

23. There is a Soul in this Elbow

*There is a soul in this elbow
The strength of a goddess in this knee,
The mere touch of your little finger
Can turn nonsense to poetry*

*In short, in your limbs
There is a moving poetry
In every motion a world
Of art and harmony*

*But just as in sculpture
Or in a beautiful painting
Their lips remain forever sealed
Oh, make them just a bit more free!*

*But maybe just a word from your lips
Might come, Yes - just a chord,
Enveloping all worldly things
The poets call accord.*

23. Was It A Sin?

*Oh, was it a sin that we were alone?
That so few heard our wedding vows?
That between the tall and silent boughs
We saw only a single stork upon her nest?*

*A stork with red stockings
And with its long, gabbling beak
And no gardener's boy with roses,
And only a single snail leaving its silken trail?*

25. You! You! You Sweet!

*You! You! You sweet!
You gorgeous! White!
Yearning heat!
By my side
Often in my arms
Endearing eyelids,
With glance
Dimmed by a blessed mist,
Mute with joy,
Poisoned by kisses, nearly dead -
Oh, I am denied!
I cannot touch your full throat
I thirst for
The liquid flowering of your breath
The power of your arm to embrace
Your serpentine back
Your tongue's gentle kiss, Your mouth's - -
Ha, what fate has denied me! - -
Oh, if only I could feel
Your hand, the press of your little fingers!*

26. To Love

*First love! Young souls together
In that ecstatic glance!
Do you never rest? Do you always rush?
Can a heart live only once?*

Is your force never to return?
Once the pain of first love is gone?
Can you no longer dwell within this breast
Where once before you made your home?

Is the fresh, new blooming heart
The only precious flower with whom you play?
Then fly! Leave me, faithless one,
Whose brief pleasures bring eternal pain!

But you couldn't be so cruel;
You see, this is my hope, a blessed flame,
Fuller and stronger, but more restrained,
Which I carry once more to your altar.

The soul of the child may return again
Pure innocence in the wisdom of age
And where so rare a spring gives flower,
Then warm, bright days must come.

And no priest with ruffled collar,
And no smart chambermaid,
And no other wedding gift
But the silver foam of the little lake?

And the gentle "Yes" of the bride,
And my solemn oath to be true
Awaited only by that young god of love,
Binding me to you?

But deep in the woods, do you recall?
Like the grotto of a fairy;
Glowworms hung from all the bushes,
Bringing us the only light.

Oh, if ever I forget
That sweet hour - then strike me, God!
Grasshoppers sang with a thousand voices,
And each second a star fell from the sky.

Ritornelles

(Note: The first line of each poem is the same as the title)

Nr. 23 Blomst af Jasminen!

Bloom of Jasmine!

Your long locks I have sealed in silk,

Laid upon my heart they will ease my pain.

Nr. 53 En Femtenaars! En lang og smidig Unge

Fifteen! How tall and supple.

How light her gait! How daring her glance!

Sweetly defiant, she sticks out her tongue.

Nr. 99 Ved Kysset hæftet i din Nakkegrube

As my kiss touched your nape

You shivered, stiffened – I rushed

To plant the rose of my lips on your throat.

Nr. 100 Jeg kunne have gjort det mere broget

I might have done it more colorfully,

Freed your hair's thousand luscious cataracts –

But I'm miserly – I want to save a bit.

Nr. 101 Til Kys indbyder Armen, hvid og kjælen!

Your arm, white and wanting, invites a kiss!

Your round shoulder, a lovely playground!

Yet a kiss to your bosom goes right to the soul.

Nr. 111 Blomst af Salvien!

Bloom of sage!

Even though many call you a prude,

The bee knows where you keep your honey.

Nr. 122 Cactus, som med Purpurbægret blusser!

*Cactus, with your glowing purple vessel!
Ten years I watched you thorny, resistant,
Now, as you bloom, I have every reason to start.*

Nr. 136 Er det ej skrækkelig kjedsommelig

*Isn't it dreadfully tiresome,
That Bertha, who last year was so lissome,
This year is married and big-bosomed?*

Nr. 139 Ni børn fik Rosa, høist uliig hinanden

*Rosa had nine children, each unlike the last.
And each was the image of his father,
But not a single one looked like her man.*

Nr. 149 Lad ikke Sommershawlet glide,...

*"Don't let your summer shawl drop, friend,
From the shoulder down, I'd gladly take a bite!"
Why, don't you like it?*

Nr. 166 Jeg kan ei lide ham; han har en Vorte

*I don't like him; he has a wart,
His nose is a mile from his mouth,
And, besides, he was engaged to Dorte.*

Nr. 167 Han gjorde stor opsigt i Byerne

*He caused quite a stir in the cities,
Because wherever he went, he went on tiptoe,
His collar reached the sky,
And wherever he fell, he fell on his knees.*

No. 182 Hver Skjønhedsglimt, hver Yndighed, jeg mægted

*That glimpse of loveliness, all the beauty
I took from you, is laced to these leaves
As dust to butterflies' wings.*

No. 183 Men ak, hvor ofte hang sig, hvad jeg røved

*Oh, how often withered the beauty
My plump fingers stole, dull and dead,
Like the dust of butterflies.*

Nr. 185 Som Leda læner du dig til Platanen

*Like Leda you lean against the plane tree,
The pond's lukewarm waters at your feet
The Swan comes tempted by your beauty –*

**No. 194 Jeg rev mig ud med Magt af hendes ømme
Omfavnelse**

*I forced myself from her tender embrace –
Good night! I'll see you in the morning! –
No, sooner! – Where? – Don't you know? In our dreams!*