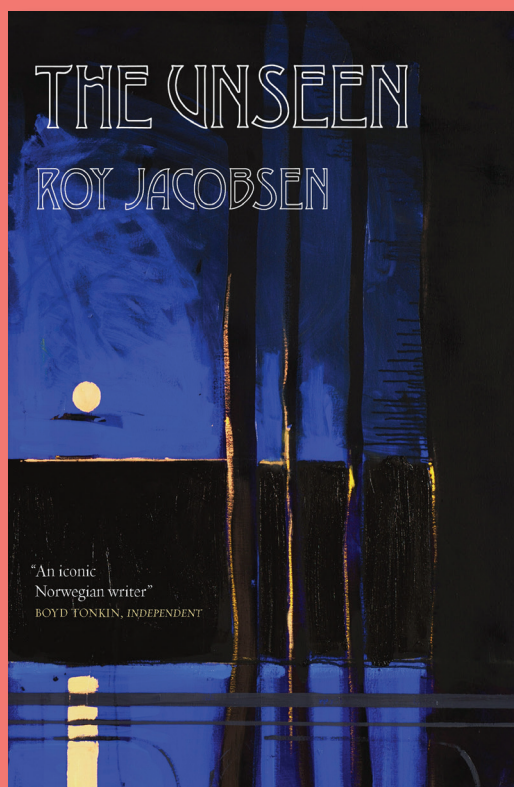


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# Reader's Guide



Other novels by Roy Jacobsen  
*The Burnt-Out Town of Miracles* (2007)  
*Child Wonder* (2011)  
*Borders* (2015)

## The Unseen Roy Jacobsen

Translated by Don Bartlett and Don Shaw

MacLehose Press

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### About the author

Roy Jacobsen has twice been nominated for the Nordic Council's Literary Award: for *Seierherrene* in 1991 and *Frost* in 2003. In 2009 he was shortlisted for the Dublin Impac Award for his novel *The Burnt-Out Town of Miracles*. He was born in Oslo in 1961, where he currently resides.

### About the translators

Don Bartlett lives in Norfolk, UK and works as a freelance translator of Scandinavian literature. He has translated, or co-translated, Norwegian novels by Karl Ove Knausgård, Lars Saabye Christensen, Roy Jacobsen, Ingvar Ambjornsen, Kjell Ola Dahl, Gunnar Staalesen, Pernille Rygg, and Jo Nesbo. He was born in Norfolk in 1948.

Don Shaw is a teacher of Danish and author of the standard Danish–Thai/Thai–Danish dictionaries. He has worked with Don Bartlett on translating Erland Loe.

### About the book

Ingrid Barrøy is born on an island that bears her name – a holdfast for a single family, their livestock, their crops, their hopes and dreams.

Her father dreams of building a jetty that will connect them to the mainland, but closer ties to the wider world come at a price. Her mother has her own dreams – more children, a smaller island, a different life – and there is one question Ingrid must never ask her.

Island life is hard, a living scratched from the dirt or trawled from the sea, so when Ingrid comes of age, she is sent to the mainland to work for one of the wealthy families on the coast. But Norway too is waking up to a wider world, a modern world that is capricious and can be cruel. Tragedy strikes, and Ingrid must fight to protect the home she thought she had left behind.

### Discussion points

How did you respond to the use of dialect in the novel, which is preserved in the translation? Did it make you feel closer to the world that was depicted or did you struggle with it?

Does anything about the isolated lives that the Barrøys lead appeal to you as an alternative to modern living?

Would you agree with the notion that the weather is as crucial to the story as any of the characters?

Which of the characters did you identify most strongly with and why?

What is your favourite anecdote from the novel about island life and what comes from the sea?

### Themed reading

Per Petterson *Out Stealing Horses*  
Lars Mytting *Norwegian Wood*