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I was Isak



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In 1931, Karen Blixen's African life was over. The farm, which for years had lost money for the private company back home in Denmark, was sold; and she had to return very much against her will to Rungsted, bankrupt in more than one sense. But, during her last years at the farm, she was able to complete a couple of her Gothic tales. Now she continued her work with all her self-discipline and zest for life in her childhood home, where her mother received the returning daughter with open arms.

1931年カーアン・ブリクセンはアフリカ生活を終えた。この間母国デンマークの株式会社にも多大の赤字をもたらした農場は売却され、彼女は自分の意志とは大いに反しながらもロングステズに帰らなければならなかったが、その地の荒れようは一通りのものではなかった。しかし彼女は、農場での晩年に空想的な物語を二三書き終えることにも成功したし、その後は故郷の家で自己陶冶と生への意志を結集して仕事を続けた。そこは、母親が両手を広げて帰って来た娘を受け入れてくれた場所だった。

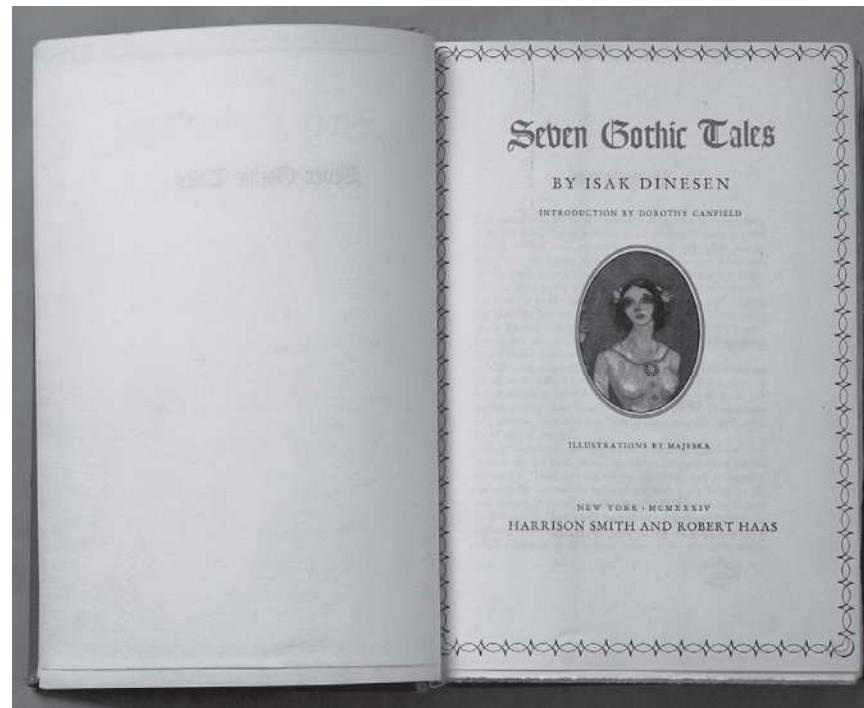
デンマークの肖像写真家キーレットによる1934年のイサク・ディーネセンの写真がアメリカでの本の紹介に使われた。



The Danish portrait photographer Kehlet's picture of "Isak Dinesen" from 1934 was used for the book launch in the US.

その2年後、『七つのゴシック物語』*Seven Gothic Tales*の原稿がようやく仕上げ、何度も断られた末にニューヨークにあるアメリカの出版社に引き取られた。名のあるブッククラブがこれを「今月の本」に選んだ。この短編集がブリクセンの新たな筆名であるイサク・ディーネセンの名で1934年4月9日にアメリカで出版されるや、たちまち文芸評論家やアメリカの出版界からは真に新しい幻想作品作家の登場だと目された。

この初版発行と同じ年にアメリカで、『七つのゴシック物語』の高価な豪華版が出版された。マダム・モジエスカによるイラスト付きで1010冊がナンバー入りで印刷されたものだった。これがタイトルページ。



Two years later, the manuscript of *Seven Gothic Tales* was at long last ready. After several rejections, the book was finally accepted by an American publisher in New York. An esteemed book club named it “Book of the Month”; and, when the collection was published in the US on 9 April 1934 under Karen Blixen’s new pseudonym Isak Dinesen, it was immediately clear to critics and the American book world that a completely original and imaginative author had made her debut. The same year as the original edition, an expensive limited edition of *Seven Gothic Tales* was published, illustrated by Madame Majeska and printed in 1010 numbered copies. Here is the title page.

The road was Pisa.

Herman von Spiegelhausen, a young boy of noble birth was travelling in Italy in the spring of 1822. He was in a way doing his thing from place to place in search of peace of mind and happiness, which he had not found.

One fine May eve he stopped at a little inn on the way to Pisa. - The air was clear as glass and filled with sweet odors and a golden, dappled light, a lot of swallows were seen about in it. While they were eating his supper was Herman. He walked down the way, all white, a lot of his people's feet,

This notebook is from her later years in Africa. It contains a draft of the tale "The Roads Round Pisa" from *Seven Gothic Tales*.

『七つのゴシック物語』のアメリカ初版本は、たちまち10万冊が発行されて、独り立ちを始めたデビュー作家に経済的基盤を約束した。
この本の穏やかなカラーカバーはF・J・ブッテラによるもの。



The original American edition of *Seven Gothic Tales* quickly sold 100,000 copies and ensured its author the economic foundation for a new, independent existence.
The book's lightly coloured cover is by E.J. Buttera.



Two of Madam Majeska's illustrations for *Seven Gothic Tales* in the limited edition from 1934. To the left "The Old Chevalier" and to the right "The Monkey".

