

Heritage

By Jenica Jessen

My body is the work of a thousand Danish Vikings
whose blood throbs in my veins,
whose sunlight shines through my hair.
My grandfather gave me stature,
and my aunt (on the other side),
eyes
like hers,
blue until adolescence and
then slowly turning emerald.
I speak with my mother's
mother's mouth.
And though one bloodline blurred my sight,
and the other gave me weight,
I have the heart

of my brothers
and the brain
of my sisters
I proudly possess a set of good bones.
There's power in my arms,
my legs,
my back, from
the farmers and fighters who walk in my past,
who built me from pieces,
whose hair and height and
heart I will pass on.