**“Novellas”** (*„Novelas”*) by Rainis (1925)

Rainis had written multiple short stories, and named them novellas. They were created in different times and published in periodicals. In 1925, while working on the composition of the Collected Works “Life and Works” (*„Dzīve un darbi”*) he decided to publish four of them in a separate book “Novellas”. Rainis was doubting their connectivity: “They were all written in their respective times and circumstances. The first and last are separated by almost twenty five years. Will it be possible to find something in common there? I don’t know, maybe the development from one source? Maybe the forming of a single style? Maybe nothing? Maybe a lot?”.

In the story titled “Stubborn Fellow” (*„Spītnieks”*) (1900) Rainis depicted the events of his childhood — the conflict with his sister Līze that left permanent marks in his memory. In later biographic notes he called it a “Crisis of Stubbornness” (*„Spītnieka krīze”*). The original title of the story “Susutis” (1907) was “The Lifetime of a Dog” (*„Suņa mūžs”*). Rainis explained that it was written “in a daring style of its big, restless time, half symbol, half real life, but both sides are sorrow and longing for the third, real life”. “Ideal Discipline and What Came Out Of It” (*„Ideāla disciplīna, un kas no tās iznāca”*) is similar to the style of “Susutis” and was published in 1908, in the “Whirlwind Calendar” (*„Virpuļa kalendārs”*). Rainis admitted that these works are a peculiar kind of a novella, that doesn’t match neither the satire of “Whirlwind”, nor a regular novella. The last work “Heart Promise” (*„Sirds solījums”*) was started in Switzerland, but finished in Latvia. The southern atmosphere of ease, the history, the tales and the enthusiastic character of the people left an impact on Rainis. “The theme for this novella — the only in which I managed to keep at least some of the classic novella style — the theme was borrowed from some legend told by famers in Castagnola about some quite possibly true event; I don’t doubt it, that a Ticinese person is capable to feel and act like that,” remembered Rainis.

“Novellas” were published by the publishing house “Anša Gulbja apgāds” in 1925.