



CORRELATIONS

KASPER SALONEN

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Lay out Annika Tenho

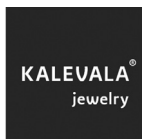
FOREWORD

The poems in this collection were written when I was 18—22 years old. It was understandably a formative time in my life, and the poetry that came out of it would never have existed without the help of some supremely excellent individuals. These include my immediate family: Ilpo, Maria and Joonas, all talented authors and creators in their own right; and my extended “poetic family”, whom I came to know online over the years and without whose influence I would probably never have written anything more than a handful of bad sonnets. There would be dozens of people to name, but those with whom I traveled the farthest and shared the most were Alex Fear, Kelson Foster, Caroline Michaud and Rob Nelson. Thanks also go to my very favourite uncle, poetaster extraordinaire Patrick McManus of Raynes Park, as well as the whole Poetry.etc mailing list crowd.

The surroundings that these poems were written in no longer look or even feel the same to me anymore; trees have fallen, pathways have vanished and new ones have sprung in their places. But it is to my home growing up — Rekola, Vantaa, Southern Finland — as it vividly exists in my memory and in these poems that I dedicate this book. That place taught me how to see the seasons as a phenomenon that repeats itself without ever staying the same.

I owe the opportunity to publish this collection to two fantastic organizations: the Kalevala Koru Cultural Foundation for believing in me and giving me the break of a lifetime; and the Helsinki Poetry Connection, for igniting in me the ability to put my money where my mouth is.

I can be reached at ksalonen@gmail.com. Thank you, all.



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REKOLA / ROOTS

*I make this in a warring absence when
Each ancient, stone-necked minute of love's season
Harbours my anchored tongue ...*

Dylan Thomas

ROCK - TALE

lying where they were left:
two rocks in a cave,
swathed in their dark defense.

in the days before podiums and speakers
and the distant thunder of funds,
the raw world was a podium.

and Time without his temples rocked and spoke,
slowly taught rituals of goals in smoke.

the one rock chipped like a trap-tooth
from the anatomy of mountain into the all-new
hand of man— a boulder in space flinched
at the technology.

the one stone washed in like a jewel
from the smithies of seas and Time
who had painted space on it in black-pattern
minerals made it special—

unable to crack houses out
or crack any will for blood—

the hand of man tapped it, and did not know it.
the mind of man strove to reach it, and missed.
the eye of man found it, tore out from its cave-skull
and pocketed it— conscience went comatose.

Time tended his error, covered it in matter.
the spine of man was happy— his patron saint.
conscience would pray in his sleep and wait.

NINE HEARTBEATS

nine heartbeats, and a heavy feathered
apple too attacked to be called
a sparrow whacks through branches
and falls upwards—

a rat with his stretched hammock-gut
tears at wet weeds stiff with the shock scurry
of new rot and fur, bolts too fast
with his teeth as compass—

a honey-fed sack of black string
locking and unlocking her lean gears
purrs and tightens her eyes—

a spider climbs forward and tests the air,
fending off phantoms with its thin scimitars,
tickling the dead awake—

nearby I observe to myself that the ground
is a blanket for the clay,

and that half a hundred summers have thinned
our huge house yellow-grey.

I see a cuckoo, a bluejay, a postman's bike

pick themselves up for a final shiver.

YARD BALLAD

bring a dobro
out here among
this avenue's long wreck

among all this wood &
leaves strewn wantonly
the scent of wick needling memory

among a family driving boughs
into rickety piles
an apple tree a bit hacked hanging on

among the few angles of this hill
where last summer a sea
of lupines grew nodding

MAALISKUU

a bitchy hooliganess Spring wants it bad: to lactate and ache—
she hammers at her eggshell-door, hammers
with undeveloped tendrils until she seeps,
until a secret somersaults in, smuggling sex and seeds.

the moon's rebel disciples, with their crystals
and crimes and paralyses and knifecuts
assert their dominance— conversion of cell by cell
to a griphold, drawing eyes from splinters in their thatched bone;
they have their cold manifesto to terrorize by,
they are clawing the metal for an extension.

the sun is selling her body somewhere else.
here at the last platform
people cling to their scarves and coats and the thermometer's
degree-high rise— the air's numb acoustics stiffen less...
and birds pick cold concertos from this mess...

STATUS QUO

the sparrow is lean
and teeters
lanky like a kid:
he has not eaten.

his fears
have failed his throat
and set his eyes all
 amok,
twin spiders spinning in gusts—
he is deathly careful of us,

the loud kings, vengeful and proud,
gracious like a hard horrid wind
around high houses stale and scraping,

strolling
as though the sun's own crown
were weighing our sorry skulls,
or the seeds and stems of rain
 were in our silly fists jingling,
 smug and poised without
 hurry to be strewn
 however we look up smirking
 and decide—

the shade's eye winks, twitches

and the patterns flail stable
in their weightless shelter,
the fake maze mending—

the sparrow goes hungry for a heat-rise blur,
a shadow—

and we continue.

admire.



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