

# THE TELEPORTER

Jari Enckell



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# CHAPTER 1

A regular summertime work day was underway again. I got up earlier than usual, as I had promised to bring in some bear claws for the office. There was cause for a bit of celebration, since our company had expanded to welcome its fourth ever employee. From now on, the Stat Aces firm would comprise owner-CEO Kalevi Pöntinen, along with three employed statisticians; namely myself, and Esko Huovinen, and our newest addition, Jorma Tiilikainen. It was Jorma's first day on the job, which called for a collective round of coffees first thing in the morning.

After I'd showered, I took a pot of yoghurt out of the refridgerator in my studio apartment and made myself a sandwich. As I munched my breakfast, I tapped open the Helsingin Sanomat digital newspaper on my smart phone and started scanning the day's news. Nothing new under the sun, as ever. The US president was spouting nonsense in his tweets and the UK had its hands full with the insanity of Brexit. I couldn't focus my attention on anything specific, so I turned off my phone. I got dressed, brushed my teeth, and went walking along Topeliuksenkatu toward Ruusulankatu, where the ace statisticians had their offices. On the way I picked up some pastries from Cafe Picnic.

The Stat Aces were a statistics service company in Helsinki's Töölö district, and we routinely took on commissions from all sorts of customers. I believe the biggest fish were TV channel MTV3, national broadcaster Yle, Bauermedia, and Statistics Finland, to name a few. Our company had often been in the running for various competitive European Union-backed statistics deals, with no luck so far. So we had had to make do with smaller domestic business, usually things like opinion

polls or traffic analyses. I was to spend the next two weeks staring at traffic figures. The forms were all prepared on my desk, as was the electronic vehicle counter. I had done similar measurements before, so it made sense I should be the one to take on the case.

It's probably worth mentioning at this point that I'm a fifty-something lifelong bachelor, and my name is Leevi Mielonen. My background is in installation and machining, with a professional title that probably doesn't even exist anymore. I haven't done a single day's work as a machinist. After the polytechnic I marched into the army through conscription, and I ended up spending a few years in the military. When I got out I did this and that, and finally statistics somehow just called to me. It sounds weird, but it's what happened. First with Statistics Finland for two decades, and then under Kalevi as his first hireling. Kalevi had worked at Statistics Finland as well, but founded a competing company of his own. I'd had this job for about five years, with no complaints to speak of. My rental studio is on Topeliuksenkatu, in central Helsinki. It's small and cramped, but dear to me regardless. I've been living here, mostly alone, for many years.

There have been two female companions in my life, of the long-term sort. Both stuck around for about two years each, before and after I turned 35. For some reason I always go into a panic when my significant other starts talking family and mortgages. I'm not built for that sort of thing. Why, I wonder? Apart from these two women there have been a few casual dalliances, nothing worth mentioning. At my age I'm not really looking for anything spectacular anyway. My own peace and quiet and the chance to do what I please, that's money in the bank, and something I'm not about to give up. Relationships bring responsibilities along with them, nevermind adding children to the mix.

I arrived at the office just after 8 am, tasty bear claws in hand.

I shook Jorma's hand and bade him welcome to the team. He seemed to be excited about his new place of employment, and was clearly brimming with energy. He scarfed down his pastry with relish, too. Jorma was a new recruit from a competing company, where he said the atmosphere was downright rotten. Here he would have a fresh start, and a chance to "express himself", as he put it. I thought to myself, exactly which official forms and paperwork did he think would allow him such self-expression, but I said nothing. I was glad he had such drive; he would need it for all the interviews and cut-and-dry stats work that he had in store.

Kalevi called me into his office after we'd finished our coffee and shot the breeze as per custom. He said he was going to China to learn about transparent fish, which would make me acting chief of the Stat Aces in the meanwhile. Japanese researchers had apparently created a species of see-through fishies by cross-breeding pale white goldfish, and these genetic creations were on display in a goldfish emporium in Hong Kong, where they had been shipped from Japan. Their life expectancy was a whopping 20 years, and they could grow to be 25 centimeters in length. Kalevi was an avid goldfish breeder, which also explained the massive aquarium in his corner office, complete with two very well-fed specimens swimming around. They were at least 20 centimeters long, at a glance. The boss was in a flutter about the transparent Japanese individuals, mainly because you could see their internal organs at work without having to cut them open first. This way biology classrooms the world over would no longer need to slaughter the poor creatures to study them, the apples of Kalevi's eye. While he was gone, my task was to feed his two special pets regularly and keep an eye on their wellbeing. I was given a very specific list of dos and don'ts for this highly trustworthy assignment; in



writing, thankfully, because I never would have remembered half of them.

After completing the morning's formalities I packed my gear and headed off to the intersection at Mannerheimintie 120, to calculate the traffic right around the Tullinpuomi Shell gas station. I attached the counter to the traffic light post and switched on the device. It would diligently count all the passing cars until it was turned off again. I set about my own task, which was to monitor all the drivers who ran red lights or accelerated at yellow ones, and register each one on my form. This was now to be my main purview, every day, between 7–9 am and again at 3–5 pm. The intervening hours would be spent punching in the data at my office computer, where a program would crunch the numbers and produce statistics on what percentage of motorists were a little gas-happy at the intersection in question. Of course, I'd also make sure to feed Kalevi's aquatic friends and double-check the temperature of their living conditions. Under no circumstances should the water temperature exceed 22°C.

## CHAPTER 2

The first day of my two-week counting labor was soon behind me, just like that, and I headed for home. On the way I stopped at the Mansku K-Market to fill my fridge. It turned out that this was the one bit of shopping that would change my life irreversibly, and I was to be drawn into events whose existence I had never even imagined.

I was in the fruit aisle bagging some oranges, when a clear voice rang out in my head, saying "Laugh". I turned around in a circle to see if the voice was coming from somewhere in the shop, but no, everyone was going about their business, oblivious. "Laugh, laugh" the voice said again, and I was now convinced it was only in my own head that this bizarre command was being issued. When the voice told me a third time, "Laugh, goddamn you, right now", I instinctively formed a counter-thought and snapped back "There's nothing to laugh about, shut the hell up". After this the voice left me alone, and there was nothing more to be heard inside my mind. I paid for my groceries and walked home, shaken.

The experience was something of a shock, and after I'd put away my shopping I had to have a lie down. Now then, was I going crazy, or was I crazy already? I googled auditory hallucinations and discovered I was not alone. A Dutch study had found that a whopping 40% of people hear voices in their head at some point in their life. Woah; maybe this isn't so serious after all, I thought. I ate my evening snack earlier than usual and went off to bed. No eerie voices disturbed my sleep, and I was out like a light until morning.

The next three days at the intersection were all identical. My new daily routines felt familiar and safe. Traffic counting and filing reports. Checking on the goldfish, who were doing

fine. These might well be my last counting shifts, I thought, since automated robotic counters were on the way; units were planned for at least Mannerheimintie, Kaisaniemenkatu, and Mäkeläinkatu in the near future. So I decided to enjoy the task at hand, and give it my full attention despite the sheer monotony.

The fourth day was no longer the same. During the afternoon rush I clearly felt that someone was staring at me. I couldn't find the person with my eyes, but someone was definitely looking right at me. The hairs on my right arm stood on end for the whole duration of this spooky feeling. It lasted about five minutes, and then stopped; but soon the same feeling came over me yet again, someone was staring. What the fuck was this?? Did this have something to do with those commands in my head from before? My own reply to this question was interrupted by none other than the voice again, which said: "We must meet". I spun around and yelled aloud: "Who the hell are you!?" and "Leave me alone!" Passers-by looked at me in shock. One mother drew her child close to her and shot me a fearful look. The voice continued: "Calm down, and answer me with your thoughts. Everyone'll think you've gone mad otherwise." Right then I sent out a thought: "Please get the fuck out of my head already. If you want to talk then do it to my face." The voice went on: "I will, but it will take a while. My meat suit isn't in Finland at the moment. You have an exceptional gift, and I'd like to tell you about it."

We exchanged thoughts right there at my traffic-counting spot for a few minutes more, and he agreed to meet me in just under a week at the nearby sports hall cafeteria, called KisaHalli. He would appear as a "regular person" and explain the basics of this "gift", he said. It would then be up to me whether I would want to develop this so-called talent, whatever it was, and whether I would join an ultra-secretive enterprise that this

Leevi Mielonen, a single middle-aged statistician from Finland, has a soft spot for caramel bear claws and lives a simple life. He is also in possession of an extraordinary ability that he knows nothing about, until he is contacted by the Astral Level Troops, the secret global organization in charge of keeping world peace behind the scenes.

Leevi is suddenly drawn into a world that is more vast, dazzling, and cosmically linked than he ever could have believed. The fate of civilization itself relies on teleporters, rare individuals with transcendent and telepathic gifts. Leevi soon realizes that he himself is not only one of them, but unusually gifted in the astral arts.

From murderous autocrats and psychic spies to wandering ghosts and Mayan rain-gods, this story is full of wild characters in even wilder situations. The stakes are as high as they can be in this speculative fiction novel.

***The Teleporter*** is the debut novel from Finnish plumbing entrepreneur **Jari Enckell**. It is a quick-paced farce with pressing themes, spectacular plot twists, and dry hilarity — all based on real events and places, and on the psychedelic mysteries of consciousness and the cosmos. The book is translated into English by bilingual author and poet **Kasper Salonen**.

**BoD**

