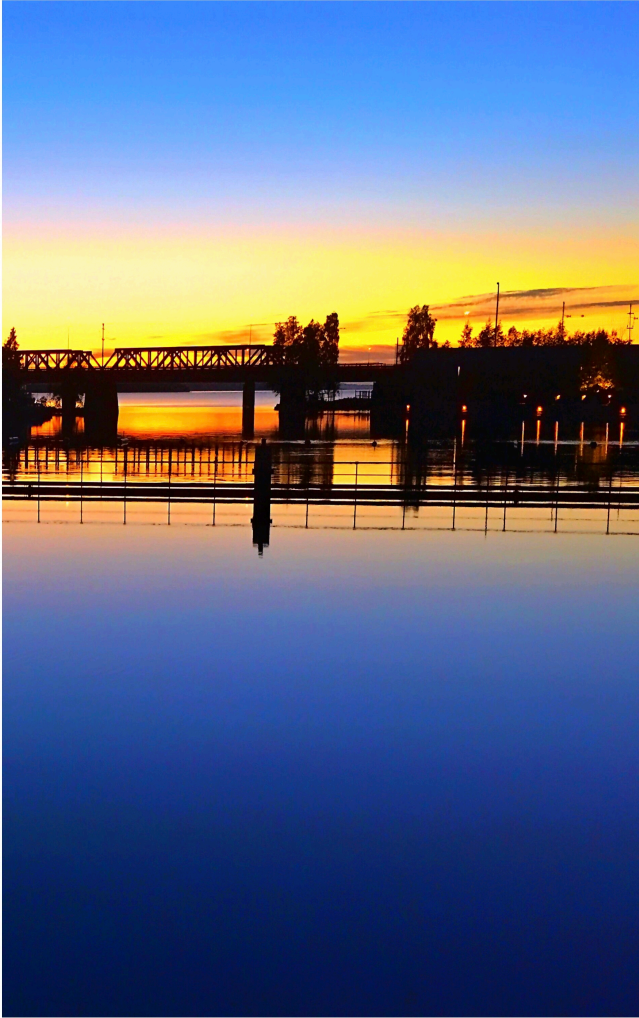


LAND OF YOUTH & BEAUTY: EARLY POEMS



by Simo Sakari Aaltonen

LAND OF YOUTH & BEAUTY: EARLY POEMS



by Simo Sakari Aaltonen

This is an extended sample of the book published in June 2022.

Land of Youth & Beauty: Early Poems by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. The moral right of the author has been asserted.

Copyright © 2022 by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. All rights reserved.

*Dedicated to my dear mother,
now in eternity,
and all who one way or another
create beauty and lyricism
in this world*

Contents

<i>Prologue</i>	9
<i>“On an Evening Stroll”</i>	14
<i>“Am I Happy?”</i>	16
<i>“Give Me a Motorcycle”</i>	17
<i>“A Clown Walked In”</i>	18
<i>“A Child’s Chant”</i>	19
<i>“Aldebaran”</i>	20
<i>“City of Angels”</i>	21
<i>“A Day and a Night Ago”</i>	22
<i>“I May Be a Stranger”</i>	24
<i>“Not Compassion Alone”</i>	25
<i>Sonnet: “I Wade Through”</i>	26
<i>Sonnet: “We Never Knew”</i>	27
<i>“The Golden Key”</i>	28
<i>“Face Tangled in Hair”</i>	29
<i>“Do It, My Love”</i>	30
<i>“The Days of Seal Pup Bay”</i>	31
<i>“Night Drive”</i>	32
<i>“I Dreamed of a Train”</i>	33
<i>“Three Seasons”</i>	34
<i>“Go Ahead”</i>	36
<i>“The Park Bench”</i>	37
<i>“Already Gone”</i>	38

<i>“Alone, Unrepentant”</i>	39
<i>“I Wish I Had Known You”</i>	40
<i>“Autumn”</i>	41
<i>“Feeling Enfolded”</i>	42
<i>“In Dreams”</i>	43
<i>“A Marionette’s Dream”</i>	44
<i>“Oisín and Niamh”</i>	46
<i>“Out in the Bayou”</i>	48
<i>“Melancholia Is the First”</i>	49
<i>“And Here All the Birds”</i>	50
<i>“The Covenant of Magna Carta”</i>	52
<i>“Cooling Heels”</i>	60
<i>“Strange Friend of the Past”</i>	62
<i>“I Light Candles”</i>	64
<i>“The Kiss on the L-Shaped Couch”</i>	65
<i>“The Night Is Long”</i>	66
<i>“Morpheus, Trickster”</i>	69
<i>“This Stream Is Exhausted”</i>	70
<i>“Twelve Donuts Have I”</i>	71
<i>“We Have Been Here Before”</i>	72
<i>“That Crystal Blue Feeling”</i>	73
<i>“Sometimes You Roll the Dice”</i>	74
<i>“Brush the Fingers”</i>	75
<i>“To Go Where the Wind Blows”</i>	76
<i>“We Go”</i>	78
<i>“To Walk the Streets”</i>	79

<i>“A Time of Going Away”</i>	80
<i>“First They Came for Dracula”</i>	81
<i>“Eternal Youth”</i>	82
<i>“Loneliness Has a Hollow Heart”</i>	83
<i>“Only Sleep”</i>	84
<i>“Bubbles on the Surface of Time”</i>	86
<i>“The Expression of the Dog”</i>	87
<i>“Could Language Itself”</i>	88
<i>“And They Thought”</i>	89
<i>“Hell Is a World Where”</i>	90
<i>“I Looked More Stylish”</i>	91
<i>“One Day”</i>	92
<i>“Poe Try and Try”</i>	93
<i>“The House on the Hill”</i>	94
<i>“I’ll Go To Sleep Now”</i>	96
<i>“This Dream Oppresses”</i>	97
<i>“It Was Always the Last One”</i>	98
<i>“There May Be No Kind of Way”</i>	102
<i>“Sandwiches”</i>	103
<i>“There Are Many of You”</i>	104
<i>“To the Child That Never Got Born”</i>	105
<i>“Old News”</i>	106
<i>“And There Were Days”</i>	108
<i>“Volcano”</i>	109
<i>“Acts of Kindness”</i>	110
<i>“Dream of a Tiger”</i>	111

<i>"Things Co-Exist"</i>	112
<i>"I Came Home"</i>	114
<i>"Somewhere"</i>	115
<i>"Happenings"</i>	116
<i>"What Happened to You?"</i>	118
<i>"I've Heard"</i>	119
<i>"This World"</i>	120
<i>"I Hear You Calling"</i>	121
<i>"I Garden"</i>	122
<i>"Crystal Wind"</i>	123
<i>"The Sun Returned"</i>	124
<i>"The Sun Drum"</i>	125
<i>"Rumours Vary"</i>	126
<i>"She Said, I Said"</i>	127
<i>"Plans, Dreams, Hesitations"</i>	128
<i>"Secret Joys and Cunning Ploys"</i>	129
<i>"What Was That?"</i>	130
<i>Epilogue</i>	131
<i>About the Author</i>	134

Prologue

How does one contemplate a final certainty?

With a heaviness of heart. Of course.

How can you live with a heavy heart?

We dream. The mind forgets.

What can we do?

Let go. Share the fire. Even embers lend light and warmth.

How much longer?

Long enough. This night has already gone on forever, my friend. You dream within a dream.

See the blue flame in the endless dark? Once we lived life among the unwounded ones.

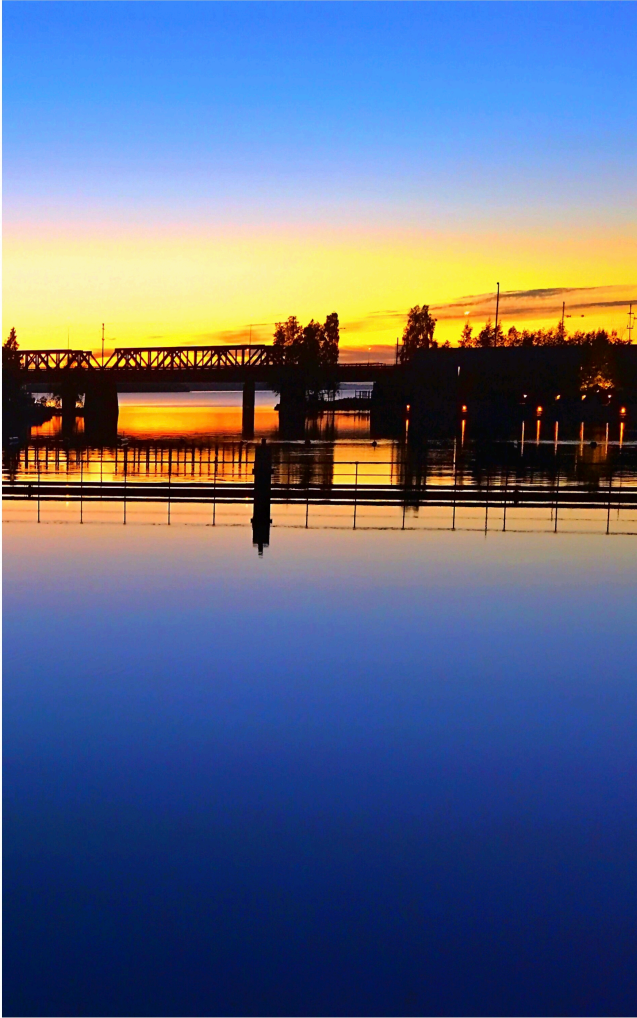
In the world of the quick. I remember. Of love and laughter.

So fragile. Over so quickly.

One more story.

Very well. This happened when the world was young and love could never die, when the skies flamed every morning and it rained every night...

LAND OF YOUTH & BEAUTY: EARLY POEMS



by Simo Sakari Aaltonen

“On an Evening Stroll”

On an evening stroll hoping to catch a glimpse
of a Bradbury summer night and asking myself in dismay,
where can you go in the city to feel the Earth turn
and the sun ray its rays,

all the backlit clouds pointed to a red sun
behind the steel framework of a rusted bridge
rumbling under the weight of a train
running unknown errands
for unknowable taskmasters,

and the tableau was arranged just for me,
and anyone else who cared to see,
so I tried to imagine the flannel-shirted
and T-shirted strangers turning their faces
to the horizon in the vast green domain
of the Finnish forest nymphs,
all scattered in the woods
and on the lake shores that are this country,

though the thought occurred
there was no guarantee I wasn't the only one,
all bets being off as we occupy a perilous time and place
we have never passed through before and never will again,
except did and will in our endless dreamscapes —

passing down the redbricked downtown alley of the city
that is my domain (and also yours and hers and his and its,

though less hers and its, crime of crimes),
a white-bearded old man hunched over a book,
perhaps the erstwhile local Lovecraftian,

but it was not my place, so I let him read and read,
and hoped his journey was as deep
as my walk was proving a puzzlement —

emerging into the soothing breeze
and dodging fellow upright people,
I conjured the image of a friend pulling over
and asking me to hop aboard her Cadillac,

and I would have, not only for the adventure and company,
but to feel the cool leather and reckless wind,
and taste the wine of youth.

“Am I Happy?”

Am I happy?

Not yet.

All my allies and
secret conspirators
are far away,
beyond the forests,
beyond the lakes,
beyond the starlit oceans.

Will I be happy?

Of course.

I have allies and
secret conspirators,
and one day I'll live far away,
beyond the forests,
beyond the lakes,
beyond the starlit oceans.

“Give Me a Motorcycle”

Give me a motorcycle to ride down baking roads,
give me a theatre in whose wings to crash at night
and a troupe of my sisters and brothers to watch over me
when the weariness of the journey gets too much.

Give me a streetlight to see her by,
give me always music to feel our feelings by,
give me a broken-down piano to play for my friends,
give me an evening of oblivion to make the world go away
while my people dance and sing and recite and play.

“A Clown Walked In”

A clown walked in the 5th floor French balcony,
made sounds to the effect of:

“Why champion something already popular?”
or it may have been:

“Why champignons on thin, all red bebop, you liar?”
With that nose, I couldn’t tell.

Well, he looked kind of peeved
to be pushed back out.

Too bad he had those helium balloons
and floated away, to pest another day.

“A Child’s Chant”

A girl lopes along the street
chanting in rhythm with her steps:

“Djöfull, andskotinn,¹
djöfull, andskotinn...”

“Djö”-step, “full”-step,
“and”-step, “skotinn”-step.

“Djöfull, andskotinn,
djöfull, andskotinn...”

And I think,
“She will become
a great musician.”

¹ Icelandic curse words.

“Aldebaran”

It is better to have dark than day
when Aldebaran calls from far away.

Better to breathe the wind of night
than wander blind in the sunlit bright,
looking for the farthest star in vain
(far, far beyond reach of mortal might)
— the celestial orb that can sustain,
but only, only if not forgotten
to us misbegotten
of the race most lonely,
which lives to mete out casual pain.

“We eat little, we drink less,
this Earth breeds not our happiness”:
perhaps it shone too on vision-weary Blake,
did Aldebaran, with its orange-shimmered wake,
and called to all who ever had breath
and loss of sleep with dreams of death.

The things that are done, the battles lost and won,
by ones unworthy of the glory of Aldebaran.

“City of Angels”

It is the land where the sun shines
as in childhood first seen,
there is the desert, there the sea,
the mountain, and the tree-lined street,
from memory’s oldest folding,
golden beyond dream’s reach,
the city spreads out eternal
from western shore to velvet skies,
the lighthouse found by the angel
casts its light even to the north,
to that child in twilit gardens
still wandering in days of old
those secret parks and fairground lawns
lost in time and youthful puzzles,
whose solution brooding waited,
as in sunlight first seen
in the flicker of TV rays,
glow of our radiant campfire.²

² My late, dear friend Robin Bradley commented on this poem back then:

“Wow. Heavy. Ray Bradbury run-on sentence style. Reminds me of my first flight into L.A. at night way back in ’71 where the lights of the city below stretched from horizon to horizon. I had no idea my city was so large. I remember the old days when the skyline was a forest of TV antennas. Now, if we could only get rid of the ugly utility poles and the black licorice tentacles that blot the auburn smog skies of Our Lady of the Angels. Hep, hep!”

“A Day and a Night Ago”

A day and a night ago I found a dove
seeking warmth, confused, in the rafters above.
We looked eye to eye, the bird and I,
had some bread crumbs and water, toasted high.

“Dear bird,” said I, “once I was like you:
winged my way trusting to the wind.
I was right to do so, you know —
yet I discovered that in certain places it thinned,
would carry neither voice nor wing, and its name was sorrow.
Bird, it came in many colours, all of them blue.”

The feathers before me in the sunlight glowed
with a whiteness like from the snows of north borrowed,
and so spoke in my fancy the dove:

“That is the message I was sent to convey.
Hell’s bells! Ages since I was sent on my way
and now see I came too late.
I was you and you’ll be me, and around we go —
assign little weight,
man, to identity, time,
reason, and rhyme,
save that taught us by messengers of love.”

There was no dove, nor rafters, no.
But there could’ve been.

It was a night sort of a day
when She went away,
and all that remained was ashes.

“I May Be a Stranger”

I may be a stranger,
born of a wild summer dream,
but suddenly nothing seems as sweet
as a thoroughly average life
in an American suburb
circa 70s, 80s —
front yard and back yard,
appliances and laundry,
day job and shopping,
a wife and children and a car,
and a hot dashboard in the sun.

“Not Compassion Alone”

Not compassion alone, nor ruthlessness,
in pursuit of life’s warm golden part

— this side of there, the other side of here —
guarantees that rare thing, a noble heart.

We are so broken, time scarce, effort hard,
we lose what we came for — that love — I fear.

Sonnet: “I Wade Through”

I wade through autumn leaves from place to place
on errands hollow, a chill on my heart.

I recall in the market your kind grace,
your warm smile, uncertainty on my part.

Foolishness has many names, we all know,
and the sands run no slower for the fool,
save in the magic circle where can grow
what all the world wants, what does all souls rule.

Desolation the root, ache the flower,
anguish grown viridescent, transmuted
by fresh-blossomed love’s forgotten power:
in the nexus of times these stand rooted.

To reach for the hand of new love once more —
I know not how, nor can the signs ignore.

**ABOUT
THE AUTHOR
(2026)**

**SIMO SAKARI
AALTONEN**
—WRITER & COMPOSER—



simosakariaaltonen.com

Finnish writer, composer, filmmaker, visual artist, podcaster. Has lived in Finland, Iceland, Paris, and the UK.

BOOKS

Art & Love (*series, 2020–*)

At Dawn: Early Short Stories (*2022, Large Print Edition 2024*)

The Better Patreon (*series, 2026–*)

An Iceland Symphony, Op. 1: A Theatrical Symphony for All Ages (*sheet music, 2021, 2nd Edition 2024*)

Land of Youth & Beauty: Early Poems (*2022, Large Print Edition 2024*)

Tales from the North, Book I (*sheet music, 2024*)

What Now with Simo (*series, 2020–*)

You Never Know What You'll See in the Haunted Garden (*limited series, 2019–*)

MUSIC

Early Music Archive (*2023 album*)

“In the Fog, Deep” (*2024 single*)

“Land of Youth & Beauty” (*2023 single*)

Passages Dark and Light (*2022 album*)

Passages Dark and Light II (*2024 album*)

Tales from the North, Book I (*2023 album*)

“That Dark, Dark Night” (*2024 single*)

The 13th Tale (*2024 album*)

Official site: simosakariaaltonen.com

Patreon: patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon

Bandcamp: simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com

Podcast hosting site: rss.com/podcasts/simo

YouTube: www.youtube.com/@SimoSakariAaltonen



The Better Patreon is my private Patreon and creative online home launched on 3 April 2025.

It provides to all members a regular stream of features on a weekly 3-day cycle (Monday to Wednesday):

A weekly, fully laid out and illustrated PDF newsletter, a Creative Journal, a David Lynch Series (a book in the making), short stories, poetry, diverse short writings, full Northern Exposure rewatch posts, Monday Midnight Movies, special features about all aspects of creativity, glimpses behind the scenes, early access to all my future works before they're published or released elsewhere, and a lot more to come.

patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon





The Better Patreon is both a website and a book series, with the former launched in April 2025 and the latter in March 2026. These books will collect between two covers all the written and visual content month by month, making this a true and unique

THE BETTER PATREON VOL. 1: APRIL 2025

- ✓ 4 INTRODUCTORY POSTS
- ✓ 4 NEWSLETTER ISSUES
- ✓ 5 SHORT STORIES
- ✓ 12 POEMS
- ✓ 12 ART & LOVE CHAPTERS
- ✓ MONDAY MIDNIGHT MOVIE #1
- ✓ 4 NORTHERN EXPOSURE ENTRIES
- ✓ HEALTH & CREATIVITY: "LET'S GET BETTER"
- ✓ AN ICELAND SYMPHONY: I. "THE MUSIC BOX"
- ✓ GRANT APPLICATION FILE #1
- ✓ WORK-IN-PROGRESS CHAPTER
- ✓ CHIEF SEATTLE 1854 SPEECH VERSIONS

The Better Patreon is both a site and a book series.
Every member at the time of publication gets each
new volume for free.

*alternative way of experiencing this Patreon. Note:
by purchasing any volume directly from The Better
Patreon Shop you also receive the File Vault of all the
multimedia items not possible to include in a book.*

AT DAWN: EARLY SHORT STORIES



This book collects my short stories so far. Written over a period of many years, they explore many fields:

Prose poetry, youthful night adventure, introspective science fiction, philosophical horror, chaptered dream exploration, humorous biographical detective fiction, seafaring sequel to one of a very young H. P. Lovecraft's stories, fragments...

This is the earliest harvest of my short fiction writing, from the dawn of my life. The stories were written when I was still looking for my most special things and the truest desires of my secret heart.

Having since found them, my future writings will mostly be very different. So while some of the stories in this collection feature strands I may develop further in those future stories, others will be the only ones of their kind I'll ever write.

But now, my fellow dreamer, it's dawn. The world is young again...

— Also available in a *Large Print Edition* —



**LAND OF YOUTH & BEAUTY:
EARLY POEMS**

by Simo Sakari Aaltonen

This book collects my poems so far. Written over more than two decades, they explore life in all its hues, dark and light and the rainbow in between:

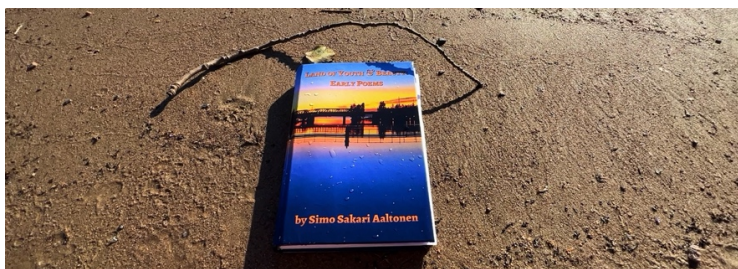
A marionette's dream, a pair of sonnets, a bayou tragedy, whirling donuts, nocturnes and nightmares, encounters in the dark and in sunlit moments...

Above and through all of it shimmers the greatest thing of all: the Land of Youth & Beauty — the magic theatre we enter when we love and feel truly loved.

“This happened when the world was young and love could never die, when the skies flamed every morning and it rained every night...”

— Also available in a *Large Print Edition* —

Land of Youth & Beauty: Early Poems — Lake Presentation



A short film (12:36) viewable on my official YouTube artist channel and my official site. The soundtrack was later released as my first single, “Land of Youth & Beauty”.

FILM



My early filmed works (2015–) are featured on my YouTube channel, presented on my Patreon, and embedded on my official site.

With few exceptions, these short works were conceived and executed entirely by me: writing, directing, cinematography, lighting, music, sound recording and engineering, featured art, editing, occasional acting, and everything else needed.

I look forward to working with actors in the future with my coming works in this field. You can find my full credits and these works listed on IMDb. I also actively continue with my screenwriting.

simosakariaaltonen.com
patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon
youtube.com/@SimoSakariAaltonen

MUSIC



From the bleakest dark to the brightest light, my music explores the full range of human experience. Behind it strives a soul hoping to reach likeminded others out there.

You can buy all my released music from my Patreon Shop or Bandcamp — where you can also read the detailed sleeve notes — and you can find it on numerous download and streaming platforms.

patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon
simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com

AN ICELAND SYMPHONY, Op. 1

— A Theatrical Symphony for All Ages —

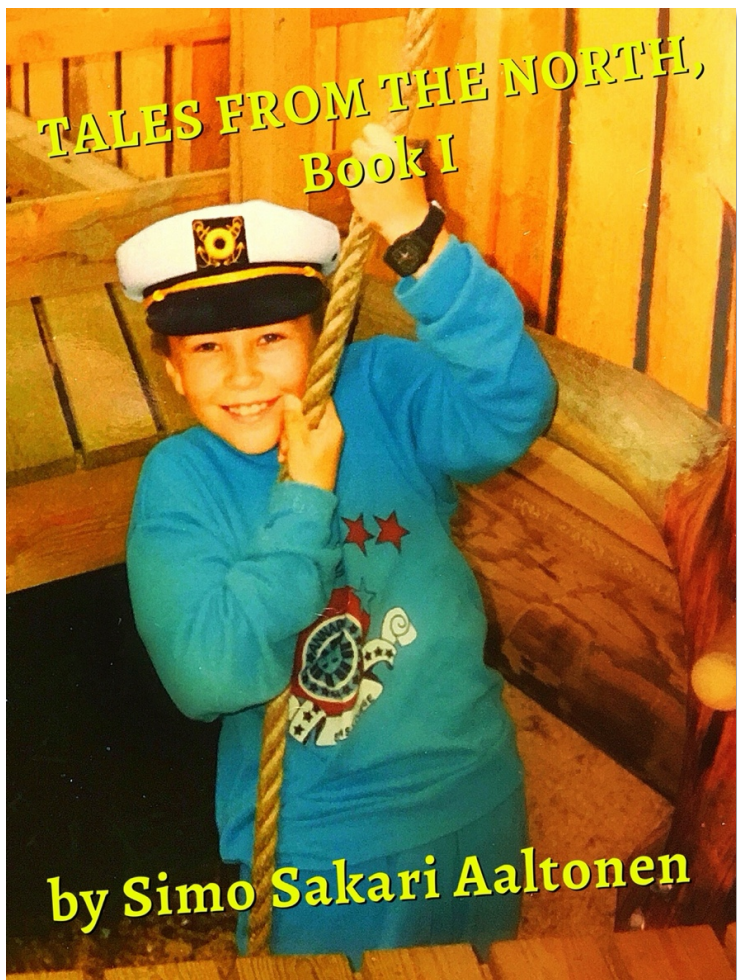
2nd EDITION

XX. Love (An Iceland Symphony)

♩ = 48
rit.
con sord.
p
a tempo ♩ = 48
con sord.
p

by **Simo Sakari Aaltonen**

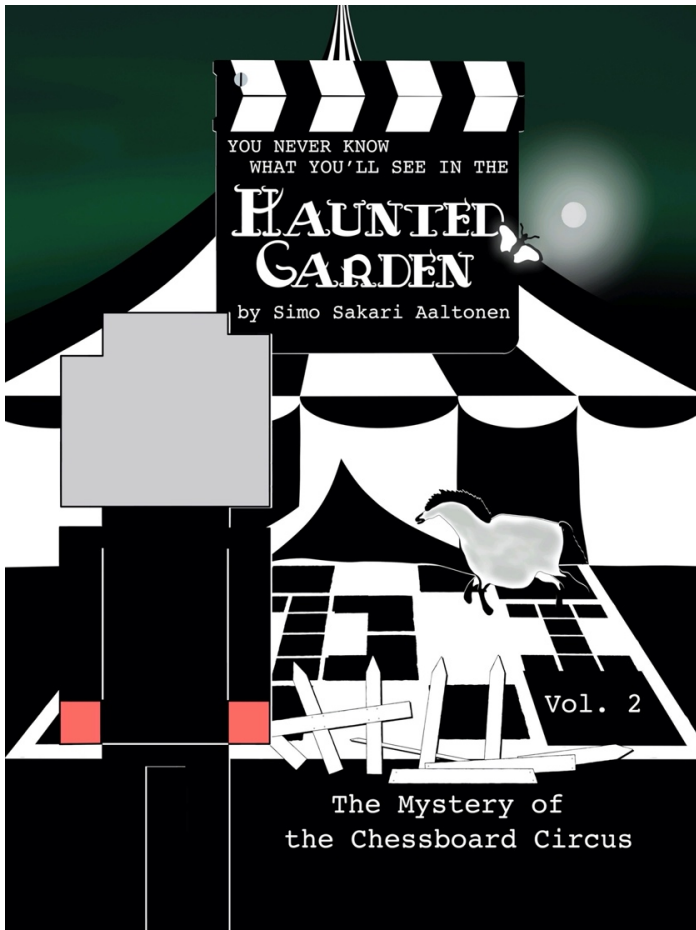
An Iceland Symphony is a musical composition of 21 sections involving theatrical elements. Its performance calls for musicians of all ages from the youngest to the oldest. This book includes the full sheet music complete with performance instructions.



Tales from the North, Book I is a set of 12 piano duets for two pianists and pianos. The pieces cover a wide range of moods, styles, and approaches using the composer's timeless musical language. 130 pages with a 10-page introduction.



You Never Know What You'll See in the Haunted Garden is a 3-part graphic novel featuring Rex the former game actor, Pregnant Horse of the Lascaux caves, and Alannah the butterfly. Vol. 1 introduces us to the mysterious Haunted Garden in Iceland with a series of visions.



Vol. 2: The Mystery of the Chessboard Circus *involves our heroes in an adventure where the visions find form in a series of events. And as with the first volume, clues to the future already await discovery in this, our second journey into the dream world known as the Haunted Garden. Vol. 3...?*



This 2020–2025 podcast used to be my central outlet for thoughts, feelings, passing fancies, memories, dreams, appreciations, and more.

Maybe a better metaphor would be a flickering campfire after a long day out in the wild — or in the inner wild. Or perhaps a random book with a flashlight under the blanket in a beautiful summer cottage, somewhere in eternity.

I recorded every episode extemporaneously, transcribed them afterwards, and eventually collected each season into these printed volumes. Part journal, part memoir, part musings on art and life, part strange humour, and part me reaching out to other souls out there.

Every edition brings every word of each season onto the printed page, for reading or leafing through at your own pace. This also makes the podcast available in its entirety to everyone with any hearing loss.

Unedited, unexpurgated, and with an introduction, a table-of-contents summary in the style of old books, and a varying number of footnotes in every volume.

—Simo



Diverse short writings about art, life, love, creativity, dreams, and more. Each volume features 124 concise chapters, perfect either for leafing through or taking in many at a time.

As a further embodiment of the things discussed on these pages, Vol. 2 evolves the series in an even freer direction. It also includes a number of extra chapters at the back, unseen since the author removed them from a website called Medium.

