



**THE BETTER  
PATREON**

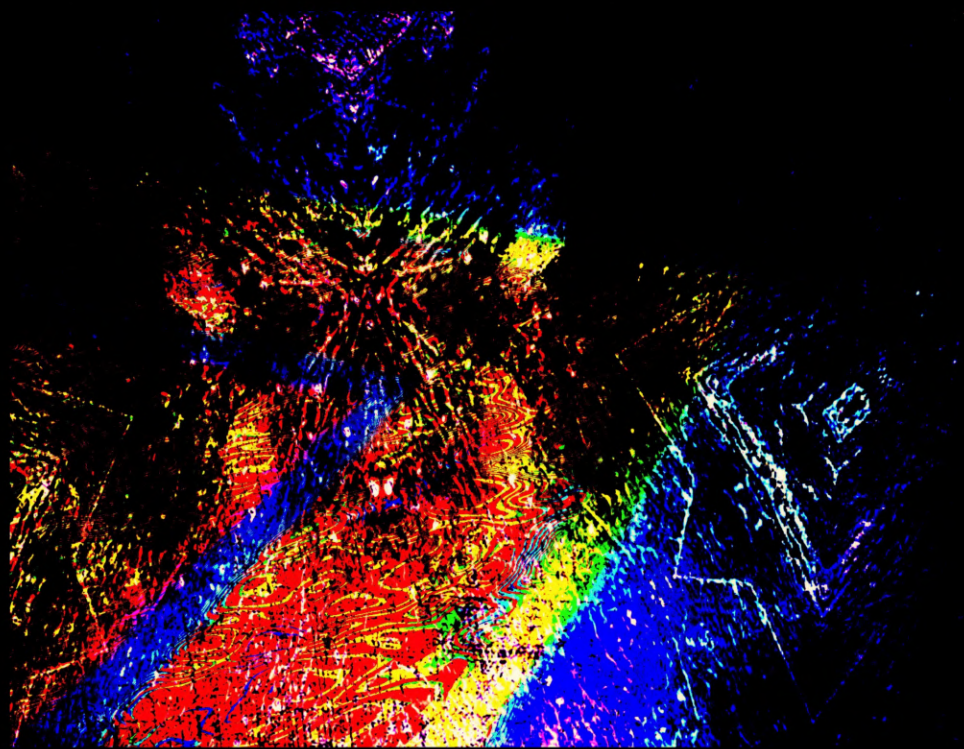
**VOL. 1: APRIL 2025**

**BY SIMO SAKARI  
AALTONEN**



# THE BETTER PATREON

VOL. 1: APRIL 2025



BY SIMO SAKARI  
AALTONEN

*This is an extended sample of the book published in March 2026.*

*The Better Patreon, Vol. 1: April 2025* by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. The moral right of the author has been asserted.

Written, illustrated, and designed by Simo Sakari Aaltonen.

Copyright © 2026 by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. All rights reserved.

*Dedicated to*  
*Stephen Abbott,*  
*Luke Jensen,*  
*Josh Mandel,*  
*Maren Elina Nötzelmann,*  
*Michael Shaw,*  
*and Bartosz Skobiej*



“Creating is the coolest thing that we can do.”

—David Lynch, The Guardian Lectures interview (1985)



# Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	13
<i>3 April 2025 — Thursday</i>	
<i>Welcome to The Better Patreon</i>	17
<i>4 April 2025 — Friday</i>	
<i>Introductory, Part 2: Regular Features</i>	19
<i>5 April 2025 — Saturday</i>	
<i>Introductory, Part 3: Perks and Quirks</i>	23
<i>6 April 2025 — Sunday</i>	
<i>Introductory, Part 4: Conclusion and Beginning</i>	28
<i>7 April 2025 — Monday</i>	
<i>The Better Patreon Newsletter #1 (7 April 2025)</i>	33
<i>Short Story: “At Dawn”</i>	36
<i>Poem: Prologue</i>	46
<i>Art &amp; Love: Caring</i>	52
<i>8 April 2025 — Tuesday</i>	
<i>Poem: “On an Evening Stroll”</i>	59
<i>Art &amp; Love: Philip Glass</i>	61

*9 April 2025 – Wednesday*

<i>Poem: “Am I Happy?”</i>	63
<i>Art &amp; Love: Play</i>	65
<i>Northern Exposure 1.01 “Pilot” – Part 1</i>	67

*14 April 2025 – Monday*

<i>The Better Patreon Newsletter #2 (14 April 2025)</i>	81
<i>Short Story: I. “When Evening Descends”...</i>	85
<i>Poem: “Give Me a Motorcycle”</i>	89
<i>Art &amp; Love: Art</i>	91

*15 April 2025 – Tuesday*

<i>Health &amp; Creativity: Let’s Get Better</i>	93
<i>Poem: “A Clown Walked In”</i>	99
<i>Art &amp; Love: The Bluebird of Happiness</i>	101

*16 April 2025 – Wednesday*

<i>Poem: “A Child’s Chant”</i>	103
<i>Art &amp; Love: Music</i>	105
<i>Northern Exposure 1.01 “Pilot” – Part 2</i>	107

*21 April 2025 – Monday*

<i>The Better Patreon Newsletter #3 (21 April 2025)</i>	209
<i>Short Story: “Ice Cream for All”</i>	213
<i>Poem: “Aldebaran”</i>	233
<i>Art &amp; Love: Season 3</i>	235

*22 April 2025 – Tuesday*

<i>Grant Application File #1: Taike 31 January 2023</i>	<i>237</i>
<i>Poem: “City of Angels”</i>	<i>241</i>
<i>Art &amp; Love: True Character</i>	<i>245</i>

*23 April 2025 – Wednesday*

<i>Poem: “A Day and a Night Ago”</i>	<i>247</i>
<i>Art &amp; Love: Healing</i>	<i>249</i>
<i>Northern Exposure 1.02 “Brains, Know-How, and Native Intelligence”</i>	<i>251</i>

*28 April 2025 – Monday*

<i>The Better Patreon Newsletter #4 (28 April 2025)</i>	<i>275</i>
<i>Short Story: “True Detective Story”</i>	<i>279</i>
<i>Bonus Short Story: “Moonstruck”</i>	<i>285</i>
<i>Poem: “I May Be a Stranger”</i>	<i>289</i>
<i>Art &amp; Love: Plain Bread</i>	<i>291</i>
<i>Work in Progress: What Now 1960–1964 Playlist Chapter</i>	<i>293</i>
<i>Movie #1: Land of Youth &amp; Beauty: Early Poems – Lake Presentation</i>	<i>309</i>

*29 April 2025 – Tuesday*

<i>An Iceland Symphony: I. The Music Box</i>	<i>313</i>
<i>Poem: “Not Compassion Alone”</i>	<i>333</i>
<i>Art &amp; Love: Dreams &amp; Sanity</i>	<i>335</i>

*30 April 2025 – Wednesday*

<i>Poem: Sonnet: “I Wade Through”</i>	<i>337</i>
<i>Art &amp; Love: Unspoken</i>	<i>339</i>
<i>Northern Exposure 1.03 “Soapy Sanderson”</i>	<i>341</i>
<i>Chief Seattle 1854 Speech Versions</i>	<i>365</i>
<i>About the Author</i>	<i>385</i>

April 2025

# *Introduction*

Dear reader,

With this book, my creative Patreon takes on a whole new dimension and way of enjoying it by becoming a book series as well.

These volumes will each cover one full month and include everything shared at The Better Patreon during that month.

I originally thought it might be possible to fit several months in each volume, but I quickly saw that's impossible, since as you can see, the page count for this volume covering the month of April came to about 400 pages.

At least for now, these volumes will come out only in ebook form, but with the possibility in mind of one day publishing them as physical copies, it's necessary to remain below 550 pages per volume and below 650 megabytes in terms of file size. Those are the current upper limits allowed on Amazon.

Several good things follow from this fact of each volume covering a single month, including these:

- Once I've caught up to the present with these books, every month will culminate with a new volume coming out immediately.

This is possible because I've started laying out every entry right after sharing on the site. So the books will now take shape in real time, day by day, alongside the weekly cycles.

- One of my main motivations for doing these books is that they'll now offer an alternative way to follow everything — for anyone who may simply prefer this format, have less time to keep up with individual posts, or may even have missed some posts in their continuing stream.

In the catching-up period, future volumes will come out more frequently than once per month, since all the main design choices have now been made, meaning the further volumes will be faster to compile. In fact, the May 2025 one is already almost finished as well.

(Before that, I'll publish *Art & Love, Vol. 2* — see the catalogue section at the back.)

Important note:

In the days following the Early Access publication of this volume with members, I'll create the File Vault. This will feature all the things A) not possible to include in the book itself (such as audio files and large still frame collections in PDF form) or B) presented for other reasons as their own independent files.

Some of these are listed explicitly at the end of the entry under the heading “Attachment” or “Attachments”, while with others, the existence of an attachment can be taken as a matter of course, having usually been mentioned and established at some point in those entries.

For example, with all the short stories and poems, the posts have come with attached PDFs showing those works as directly extracted from the books in which they originally appeared.

Due to the fact that this File Vault exists on the site itself, it's available only to members on either of the two tiers. Speaking of which:

In the future, all current members on either tier get each new volume in this series for free, but becoming a new member on Tier 1 (\$3) won't give access to the earlier volumes. Joining on Tier 2 (\$9) does, since that includes all my published and released works as digital downloads.

My warmest thanks to all the supporters of this Patreon so far! You've given me inspiration and concrete resources to go on. This book series is part of my aim to make this indeed a better kind of Patreon.

I'd love to hear what you think of it, and I wish you good reading!

—Simo Sakari Aaltonen, Tampere, 15 January 2026

P.S. To keep these books self-contained experiences, I chose not to include any live, active Internet links. For clarity, links in the posts are still indicated by underlining. In all cases, it should be clear where they link to.

***APRIL***



***2025***



3 April 2025 — Thursday



*Introductory Posts*

## ***Welcome to The Better Patreon***

Dear visitor or member,

This private Patreon is my new online creative home and private community. I'm a Finnish writer, composer, filmmaker, visual artist, and podcaster.

There's so much to share about the upcoming content that it's necessary to split this soft launch over a number of days, during which I'll describe everything in more detail over a number of posts.

This post from 3 April 2025 — the official launch date — is just the first step. Being a private Patreon, there will be no public posts after the introductory ones outlining the main features of The Better Patreon.

I underline the private nature of my Patreon because it's important to understand that I see this as an extension of my home. The Better Patreon is

not a public forum.

The two tiers are:

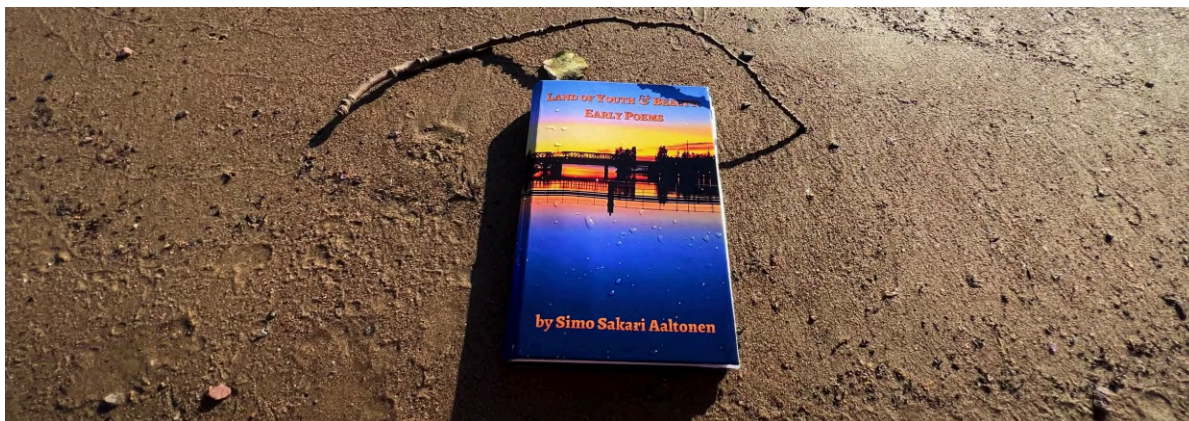
- **\$3 a month:** this gives access to all posts of every kind. My full back catalogue of creative works is also available here for prices lower than anywhere else.
- **\$9 a month:** access to all posts and my full back catalogue of creative works for no additional cost. This currently includes 10 books (two of them also as large print editions), five albums, and three singles.

The place to access all these works is [the Shop page](#).

I'll also soon package my short film works — currently 39 in number — as video sets that will then be available in the original, highest, non-compressed quality.

More in the days immediately following, and then regular posts of several different kinds commencing with the week starting 7 April 2025.

—Simo Sakari Aaltonen



*Introductory Posts*

## ***Introductory, Part 2: Regular Features***

As mentioned in the first introductory post, The Better Patreon will offer so much that it would have been impossibly unwieldy to outline everything in a single post.

In this one I explain in more detail how the tiers work and outline the regular features that will follow a weekly 3-day cycle.

### ***More on the Tiers***

The \$3 tier gives access to all posts of every kind — and please note that everyone, not only members, can buy all my works so far from the Shop for prices cheaper than anywhere else.

The \$9 tier also offers access to all posts but additionally includes all my creative works as downloads for no additional cost.

This is true even if you support me on the higher tier only for a single month: if you want, you can pay that once, download everything, and then either continue on the lower tier or split altogether. For the \$9, you'll have gotten

everything I've published and released so far. There will never be a better bargain for my works.

The Shop page is already active and running, and there you can download everything.

An important point about the ebooks is that when I first started publishing my own works, my first ebooks were in the reflowable Kindle format, but here on The Better Patreon, every single one of the ebooks is available for the first time as PDFs in the print replica format, which preserves all layout and presentational features of the print books.

For me, the way a book is presented is an important part of the work, so I'm very happy to now have all my books available in this form.

## ***The 3-Day Weekly Cycle***

The foundation around which all other content will be built over time is the 3-day weekly cycle at the start of each week.

I decided upon this arrangement because it embodies a principle I've come to strongly believe in after decades of considering these issues and based on my own experiences and health struggles: no human being should be required to work for a living more days than they have for rest, recovery, recreation, and enjoying life to full, healthy measure.

More specifically, the 3-day weekly cycle means I'll be sharing regular posts on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday each week. Some of these involve full serialisations of my existing works, others are new.

Each week starts with two things:

- A short story from my book *At Dawn: Early Short Stories*.

- A newsletter summarising my progress and activities and everything featured on The Better Patreon during the past week. This is a fully laid out newsletter in PDF format. I'll share the first one in a future public post, once I'm closer to the end of this introductory week.

As for daily posts, on each of those three weekdays every week, all members get:

- A poem from my first book of poetry, *Land of Youth & Beauty: Early Poems*.
- A chapter from my book of short writings, *Art & Love, Vol. 1* (and one day, from the later volumes).

And each 3-day cycle is crowned by a *Northern Exposure* rewatch post on Wednesday: I'll be doing a full rewatch of this wonderful TV series and sharing all the thoughts and reactions that have been forming in my mind and heart through the decades since I first saw some of it back in the early 1990s.

This is far, far from all the content and member perks to come, but let's continue in another post.

(I'll be sharing all my working methods and things that have worked best for me in all fields of creativity. Also final project files for various visual, video, and music projects. And members will have early access with all my future creative works. And...)

## ***Summary***

To sum up the features described in this second introductory post, by joining The Better Patreon on either tier, you'll be getting each and every week a newsletter, a short story, three poems, three concise non-fiction writings, and

a *Northern Exposure* rewatch post.

All these will be filed into their own collections, so you can easily find and access all previous posts in each category. Every member can also customise their notification settings, so you can either get every update in your email or, if you prefer, check into The Better Patreon at your own convenience and in your own time.

Indeed, another good reason for the 3-day weekly cycle is that it will let everyone follow at their own pace and catch up during the later days of the week.

I hope The Better Patreon can grow over time to become a great place for likeminded souls to share and converse. One of my aims with all this is to enter into a much more interactive and open life of creating. I deeply value all my friends around the world.

Please join in on everything that grabs your interest and share your reactions! The Better Patreon is also a private community, free of all the things that most of us have become tired of elsewhere online.

More in another introductory post. Thank you for reading.

THE BETTER PATREON NEWSLETTER      7 APRIL 2025      #1

---



## THE BETTER PATREON

with Simo Sakari Aaltonen

---

**3/4/2025**

The soft launch of my private creative Patreon, The Better Patreon, started on 3 April 2025 with the first of the several introductory posts necessary to share the main features and the nature of this, my new online creative home and private community.

These are the introductory posts, available in the collection of that title:

- Welcome to The Better Patreon.
- Introductory, Part 2: Regular Features.
- Introductory, Part 3: Perks and Quirks.
- Introductory, Part 4: Conclusion and Beginning.

-Simo



This photo is from 2024, so not a new one. My health has been rocky, to say the least, since the start of that year, and after this, I've not yet felt up to stepping in front of the camera for anything newer. As I hopefully keep making progress, healthwise as well as in other ways, eventually The Better Patreon will come to feature video content too.

The photo is from a beautiful lagoon in Tampere, Finland. It's a place I associate with great health and happy moments of, indeed, getting better. It's where I did all the lake episodes for my 2020–2025 podcast *What Now with Simo* – the finale of which I recorded on the exact 5-year anniversary, on 24 March 2025, and am currently in the process of editing. Books 4 and 5 of the transcript series will be published this year.

---

patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon© 2025 Simo Sakari Aaltonen

*Introductory Posts*

# ***Introductory, Part 3: Perks and Quirks***

This third introductory post is all about the perks of being a member of The Better Patreon and some quirks of being me, specifically as the host of The Better Patreon, and here you can also see the first issue of the newsletter, officially dated 7 April 2025.

## ***Perks***

**Early Access** — Every member on either tier will get, at no additional cost, early and full access to each of my future creative works at least one week before I publish or release elsewhere.

**Feedback** — The variety of content here will embrace all the different types of my creative works, and therefore The Better Patreon will also be the most central and all-encompassing place for sharing your thoughts and feelings on them.

The regular posts of stories, poetry, short writings, and more, plus special posts I'll make over time on specific works — all these offer a natural, ready context for comments and reactions, in direct connection with those works themselves, so everyone will also be seeing the exact work being commented on.

**Your Preferences Heard** — Once I have all the regular features going and at various future points as well, I'll ask members what kinds of additional content would be of most interest to them. I'm equally happy talking about and sharing any type of creative content, so it only makes sense to ask and listen to the preferences of my honoured guests.

**Ad-Free** — This Patreon will be entirely free of ads as well as any kind of pressure or hype. I prefer to only offer and share, not seek to compel anyone to buy or spend more. By becoming a member on either tier, everyone present will already have done a major and meaningful thing to support me, and their very presence helps and gladdens me.

For these reasons, I also chose not to highlight one of the tiers, as Patreon does make possible. I wanted to only share the options without emphasising either one over the other. Plus, one of my main ideas behind the two tiers has

been that they allow for different and equally valid ways of following my work, in smaller or bigger doses.

**My Work Is Your Work** — Maybe the most unusual perk — or does this qualify as a quirk? — is that for each month of supporting me here on the \$9 tier, any private individual will have my permission to publish or release any single one of my creative works anywhere they wish, in a single context. Even if it makes money for them.

This means any single short story, any poem, any essay, any piece of music, even any video, and so on. So for example, if you're publishing an anthology of short horror stories, you might want to include my story called "The Scarecrow" (one of my personal favourites).

All I ask of anyone wishing to take me up on this perk is 1) that the person contacts me and asks for my permission for the specific work privately so that we can have a written agreement and make it formal that way, and so that I can keep records of where my works have appeared, and 2) clear, explicit attribution to me and The Better Patreon.

More specific discussion of this perk will follow in one of the future, private posts.

## ***Quirks***

After these introductory posts, this will be an entirely private Patreon. This is the only way I can guarantee a pleasant environment for everyone.

I considered saying here that I'm not making this a public forum because I wasn't born yesterday and because I'm not totally insane. Many public forums become headaches to their maintainers sooner or later.

But rather than only making a half-joke about it, I do want to clearly explain one of the major reasons for the private nature of this Patreon.

I have a couple of lifelong health issues, ones that have needed daily consideration since my teens, but on top of these, in early 2024 I was diagnosed with multiple and more acute health problems.

Without going into these in any detail in these introductory posts, more than one of these problems is heart-related and means that, at least for the foreseeable future, I positively need to avoid situations that would raise my stress levels. I can only get better — that word from the title with many meanings — if I stay alive.

All the above is also a big part of why I emphasise the fact that I consider The Better Patreon an extension of my home and studio. When inviting others to our homes, we expect appropriate, considerate behaviour from everyone present. This is also true of The Better Patreon.

If I felt someone was going out of their way to create conflict or otherwise sour the mood, it would be equivalent to deliberately creating a disturbance at someone's home after having been invited there, maybe for a nice dinner party, as a trusted guest. If that trust were to be broken in such a way, the offending person would need to leave. Without a refund.

I say all this to make sure I can guarantee a truly healthy environment for everyone, myself included. The Better Patreon will be free of all the things most of us are tired of in many online places.

## ***Summary***

I hope this post has helped shed further light on my wish to make this Patreon not only feature getting better and doing better as a theme but also be a better

kind of Patreon, to the extent of my ability to provide that. I wish this experience to be enjoyable to everyone on many levels.

Thank you for reading! One more introductory post left, and then regular posts starting on Monday, 7 April 2025.

***Attachment***

The Better Patreon Newsletter 001 (7 Apr 2025).pdf



*Introductory Posts*

# ***Introductory, Part 4: Conclusion and Beginning***

The earlier public introductory posts focused especially on the tiers and the regular features that will be posted on The Better Patreon every week over the 3-day cycle from Monday to Wednesday.

This last post in the series, now gathered into the collection Introductory Posts, outlines more specialised content that needs to happen on a freer schedule, since creating these posts will require widely varying amounts of time.

Once I have all the regular features running steadily, I'll start creating these other types of shares, each to be posted when ready. These are some of them.

## ***Special Features***

**Progress Reports** — I'll share my progress on all my creative projects in a way I've never done before, documenting their creation and all the steps involved and advances made as I go along.

Right now I'm shifting heavily into screenwriting, and I'll also be publishing my own screenplays. This is my biggest focus for the future. Early Access, described in the previous post, means members will get to read these first, before anyone else.

**Creative Diet Diary** — I'll also keep track of and share everything I'm taking in: the creative and other types of nourishment that help energise my own work, day to day and night to night.

**Tools and Methods** — I'll be talking about all my creative tools and working methods — all the things that have worked best for me when creating and that I know can also work for at least some others regardless of what kind of art they seek to create (what kinds of stories, pictures, music, and so on).

I'll share and explain final project files, for example showing how I staged various pictures layer by layer, edited videos, composed pieces of music, and — of course — wrote things.

One of the first pieces like this will be about a simple method change that suddenly helped me stay focused and moving ahead with my short stories better than ever before.

These discussions will be in clear and specific terms, naming the pieces of software and equipment in my personal creative tool kit, and in such ways that what's shared can be applied to any type of creation you yourself may wish to make.

**Anecdotes and Stories** — From time to time, I'll tell about experiences never yet shared elsewhere but that I feel I have an obligation to tell, not only for myself but also for others. (We all own all our experiences. Everything that has happened to us, we are free to talk about, as long as truth and certain clear personal lines of privacy are respected.)

**Practical Considerations** — I'll be documenting my experiences with applying for arts grants and also other areas of managing life and finances as an independent artist with more than one lifelong disability as well as some more acute issues. Also as someone who has lived below the poverty line most of his life, including as we speak.

**Surprises** — One feature I look forward to as a special treat are small spontaneous shares of single points or elements related to something creative.

These will be quick for me to create on a moment's inspiration and will hopefully add random spice to everyone's experience.

## ***Concluding Words***

I feel sure I'll later think of something important I forgot to mention, so please don't hesitate in the slightest to ask about anything! One final point I want to state explicitly:

All supporters of The Better Patreon are very welcome to share on social media, blogs, or such any part of the posted content they see as members.

So if you wish to share, for example, any image or a quote or even a full poem, feel free to do so and also know you have my thanks. (Just remember to credit me and The Better Patreon.) Again, as an independent creator with limited practical and physical resources, all forms of support and spreading the word about my works and what I'm seeking to do here mean a lot to me.

Likewise, even if you, the person reading this, don't wish to become a member yourself, in case you know anyone else who might be interested in receiving short stories, poems, diverse short writings, and more on a regular basis, in digestible and nourishing bites, or alternatively in gaining access to my full back catalogue in one go (for \$9), any shares would help me and the life goals I seek to pursue here to my fullest ability.

(And of course there's the full *Northern Exposure* rewatch, starting with the [first post](#) on Wednesday 9 April 2025.)

Even if it is just one tiny corner of the Internet, I hope The Better Patreon will offer a place of refuge, sanity, and renewal to everyone who joins. I can only affect this small oasis in this world, but what I can do to make it a nice place to spend time at, I will.

That wraps up these introductory posts. Thank you again for reading. On Monday 7 April 2025, The Better Patreon gets underway.

7 April 2025 — Monday



*Newsletter*

## ***The Better Patreon Newsletter #1 (7 April 2025)***

Welcome to the official start of The Better Patreon! If you're seeing this, you're a member of this private Patreon, and I want to thank you again for your support.

This newsletter, summarising the previous week on The Better Patreon and all my creative activities since the last issue, will start every 3-day weekly cycle on Monday. This first issue was already shared as a preview in my public [Introductory Posts](#), but this is the official share filed into this collection called [Newsletter](#).

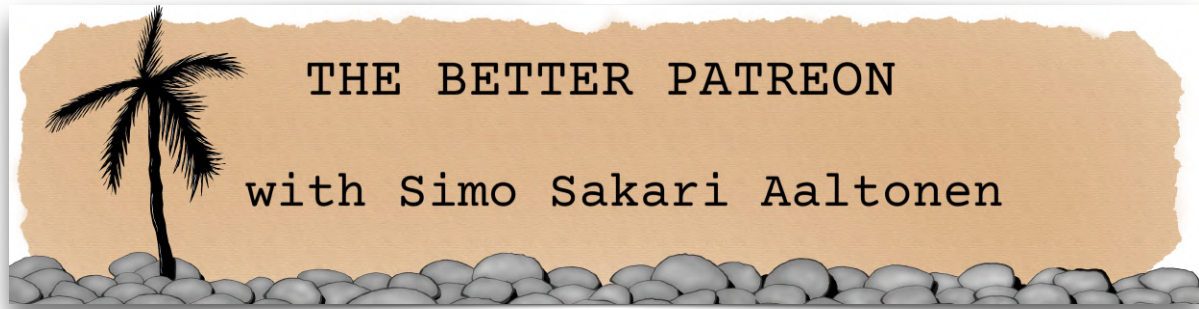
Since at least this first issue is a single sheet, I included it also as an image below, but as with all future instances, you can find the issue attached as a PDF.

P.S. Some of the images in posts are turning up blurrier than the originals, at least for me. I haven't yet figured out if this can be helped in some way, but in any case, the PDFs will always offer maximal sharpness, of course!

And the images at the tops of posts can be clicked for a sharper view, but the same doesn't seem to be true on all devices of inline images, like the one below.

***Attachment***

The Better Patreon Newsletter 001 (7 Apr 2025).pdf



**3/4/2025**

The soft launch of my private creative Patreon, The Better Patreon, started on 3 April 2025 with the first of the several introductory posts necessary to share the main features and the nature of this, my new online creative home and private community.

These are the introductory posts, available in the collection of that title:

- Welcome to The Better Patreon.
- Introductory, Part 2: Regular Features.
- Introductory, Part 3: Perks and Quirks.
- Introductory, Part 4: Conclusion and Beginning.

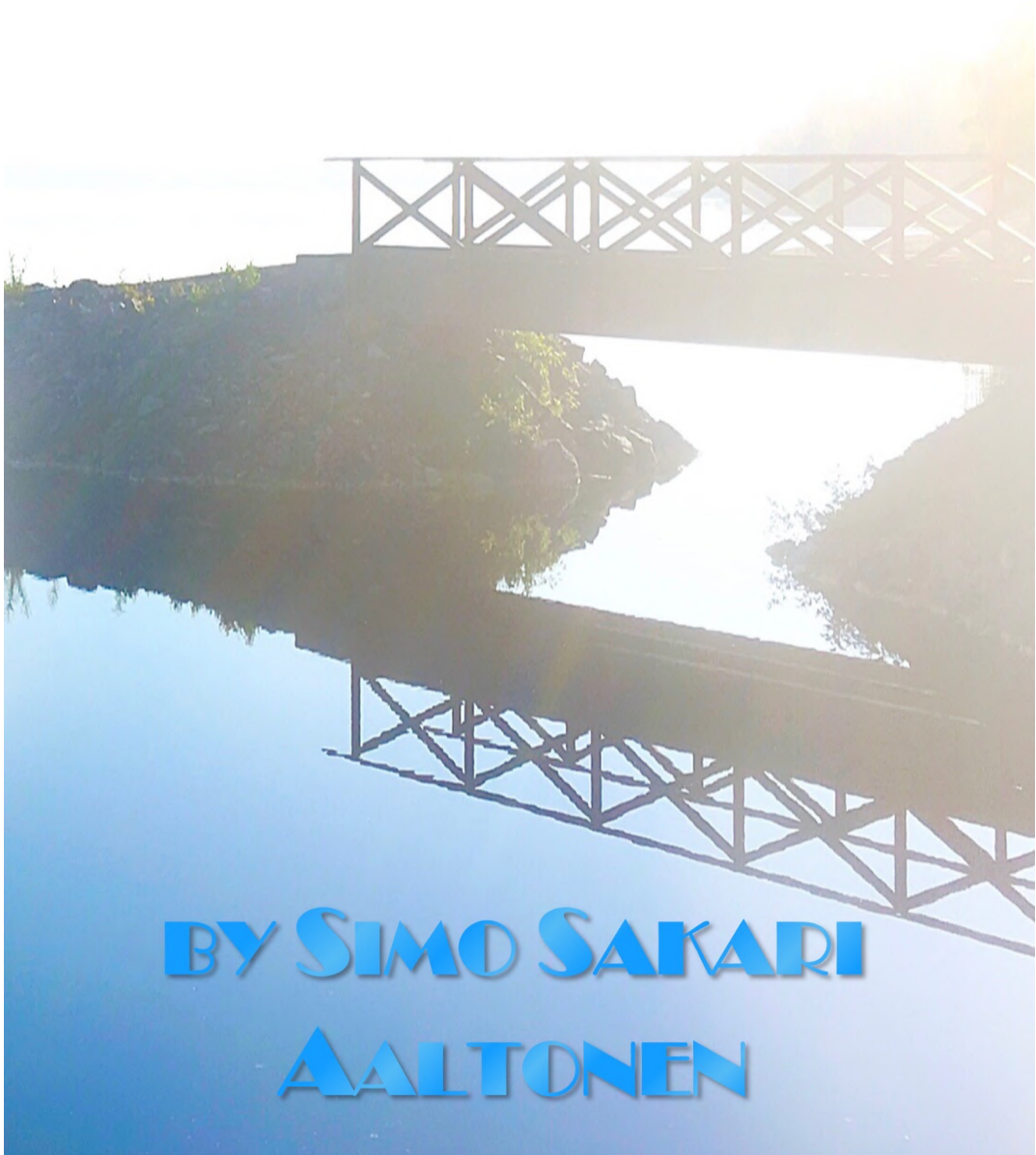
—Simo



This photo is from 2024, so not a new one. My health has been rocky, to say the least, since the start of that year, and after this, I've not yet felt up to stepping in front of the camera for anything newer. As I hopefully keep making progress, healthwise as well as in other ways, eventually The Better Patreon will come to feature video content too.

The photo is from a beautiful lagoon in Tampere, Finland. It's a place I associate with great health and happy moments of, indeed, getting better. It's where I did all the lake episodes for my 2020–2025 podcast *What Now with Simo* – the finale of which I recorded on the exact 5-year anniversary, on 24 March 2025, and am currently in the process of editing. Books 4 and 5 of the transcript series will be published this year.

# AT DAWN: EARLY SHORT STORIES



BY SIMO SAKARI  
AALTONEN

7 April 2025 – Monday

*Short Stories*

## **“At Dawn”**

Introducing the weekly series of short stories, serialising my book *At Dawn: Early Short Stories* in full. All these will be gathered into the collection Short Stories.

The book is available from the Shop as both the original and the large print edition, with both included in a single purchase, and physical copies of the hardcover and paperback are available from all Amazon stores around the world. (For example, here’s the hardcover in the US store and here in the German store.)

Here, with these posts, you have the option of reading either from the text post per se or from the attached, fully laid out PDF, taken directly from the ebook. But please note that the Patreon text editor doesn’t currently allow for some formatting, such as justifying text to centre or right.

After each story, in the text post only, you’ll find the relevant part from the “Reflections & Dates” appendix of the book. This part isn’t included in the attached PDF, since most of the pages of the appendix include multiple entries.

With this first entry, I’m also including the covers and the front matter apart from the table of contents, which can still be seen in the PDF.

Thank you for joining me on this journey.

## **Back Cover**

**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.**

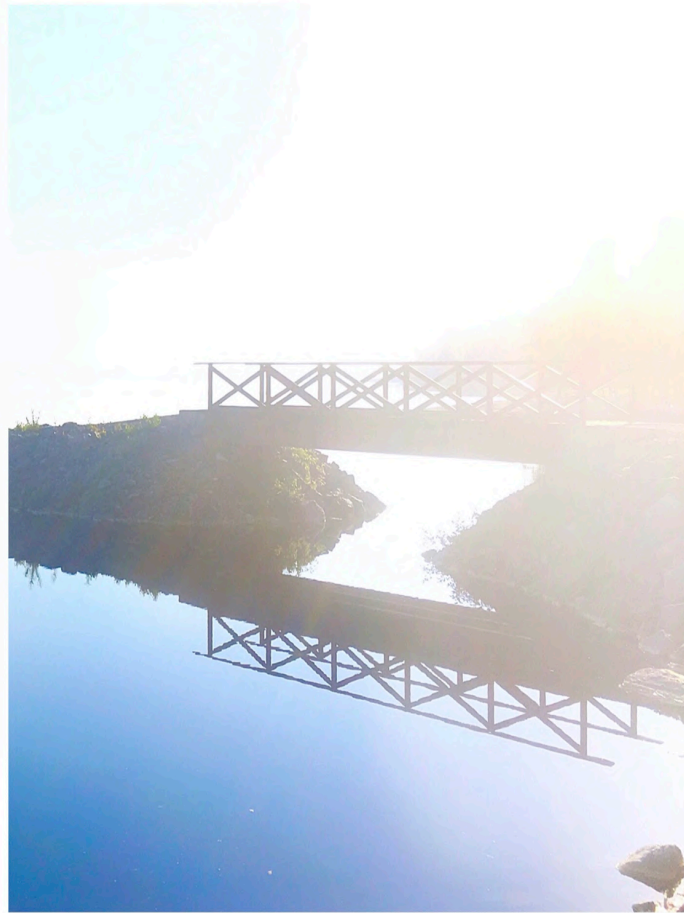
**Having since found them, my future writings will mostly be very different. So while some of the stories in this collection feature strands I may develop further in those future stories, others will be the only ones of their kind I’ll ever write.**

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

**—Simo**

***Title Page***

**AT DAWN: EARLY  
SHORT STORIES**



**BY SIMO SAKARI  
AALTONEN**

## **Copyright**

*At Dawn: Early Short Stories* by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. The moral right of the author has been asserted.

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

## **Dedication**

*Dedicated to everyone  
who still dreams  
and hasn't forgotten  
the magic of life and love*



## “At Dawn”

Come alive now.

Come down the wooden staircase as the house sleeps. Check you have the keys. Push the snug wooden door shut.

Drink the balm of the dawn air. Be young again.

Step barefoot across the cool packed sand and the waking lawn.

Thrill to the silence of a slumbering world. The blue purity that is always now, as yet unpolluted by human flight.

Stop to let the shiver of pleasure travel from between your toes up the length of your spine to fire your brain with new life.

The orange juice and coffee course through you.

Go to the wooden twin swing now.

Taste the wood with your hands and feet. Sit and swing. Bring life.

Have no thoughts for a while. Close your eyes and sit back. Make it a longer while. Just swing. Just breathe the magic air. Heal under the caress of the mild breeze of swinging.

Open your eyes. Look around. See the other houses, other yards, blessedly free of noise, free of smug sloth, free.

Stand up, touch the wood again, and continue on the grass. Step over the hedge where it’s closest to the ground.

Your neighbour with his shut floral back yard curtains will never know. Watch for slugs and bugs. Respect their right of life.

Pad down the wooden planks to the lake. Breathe the tree scent and be reminded of childhood. Push, with resolve, aside the adult thoughts that threaten the moment. They are a mistake in this clarity.

Go to the meeting of sand and rocks and water. Balance on the many and varied rocks under your heels. Squat to run your hand in the water. Perhaps you’ll swim tomorrow.

Go to the bench. Try and fail to mould your back to the inhuman shape of the peeling slats.

You were brought here for a reason.

Be not alarmed when the swan streams into the water and glides toward you.

Remember swans are not timid creatures. Their majesty hides fierce hearts ablaze with pride and protection.

Remember the foolishness of assuming hostility where no humans are concerned. Remember you are human and concerned. Be an animal again. Communicate calm and non-aggression with your body and natural movement and stillness in easy alternation.

Sit with the assurance of dawn and dream-fortified rest. Let the swan glide to the edge of water and slowly look at you from the corner of one eye. Be reminded swans mate for life. Wonder if there has been tragedy or if life still holds wonder for this one.

Feel the connection to thirteen years and more in the past, when Jules would lick his paws and wash his face at the window after his luxurious Sheba and water, watching the birds with one eye.

Feel the sting in your eyes. Let the thought tickle your mind that you would give much to see him weigh in his feline way the maddening combination of water and the biggest bird he ever saw.

He loved dogs, the bigger the better. It was the dogs who cowered from him, even when he purred.

The swan turns and glides past you again. Acknowledge the reality of the feeling of communion, of an ancient experience older than language and wiser by far. Let the swan bring to you that which you need and rarely allow.

The feelings and thoughts that now come are yours alone. They last for some time.

In the distance hums the mail lady’s truck. In the sky the sun has conquered the horizon and more. The air is shifting from dawn to morning. The water ripples and splashes as the swan takes off and flaps the warming air. A circle around and a last look at you. Wave to the swan and wipe your face.

You began this day with life and trust in life. Now go back up the stairs and make eggs and sandwiches and coffee for your slowly stirring family.

Pass on the gift.

### ***Reflection & Date***

30 May 2014. A morning walk when the rest of the world sleeps.

This second-person, present-tense story reflects my fondness for waking up extremely early in the summer and being out and about when most of the world still sleeps.

The summer morning air can smell so amazing.





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

**by Simo Sakari Aaltonen**

7 April 2025 – Monday

Poems

# ***Prologue***

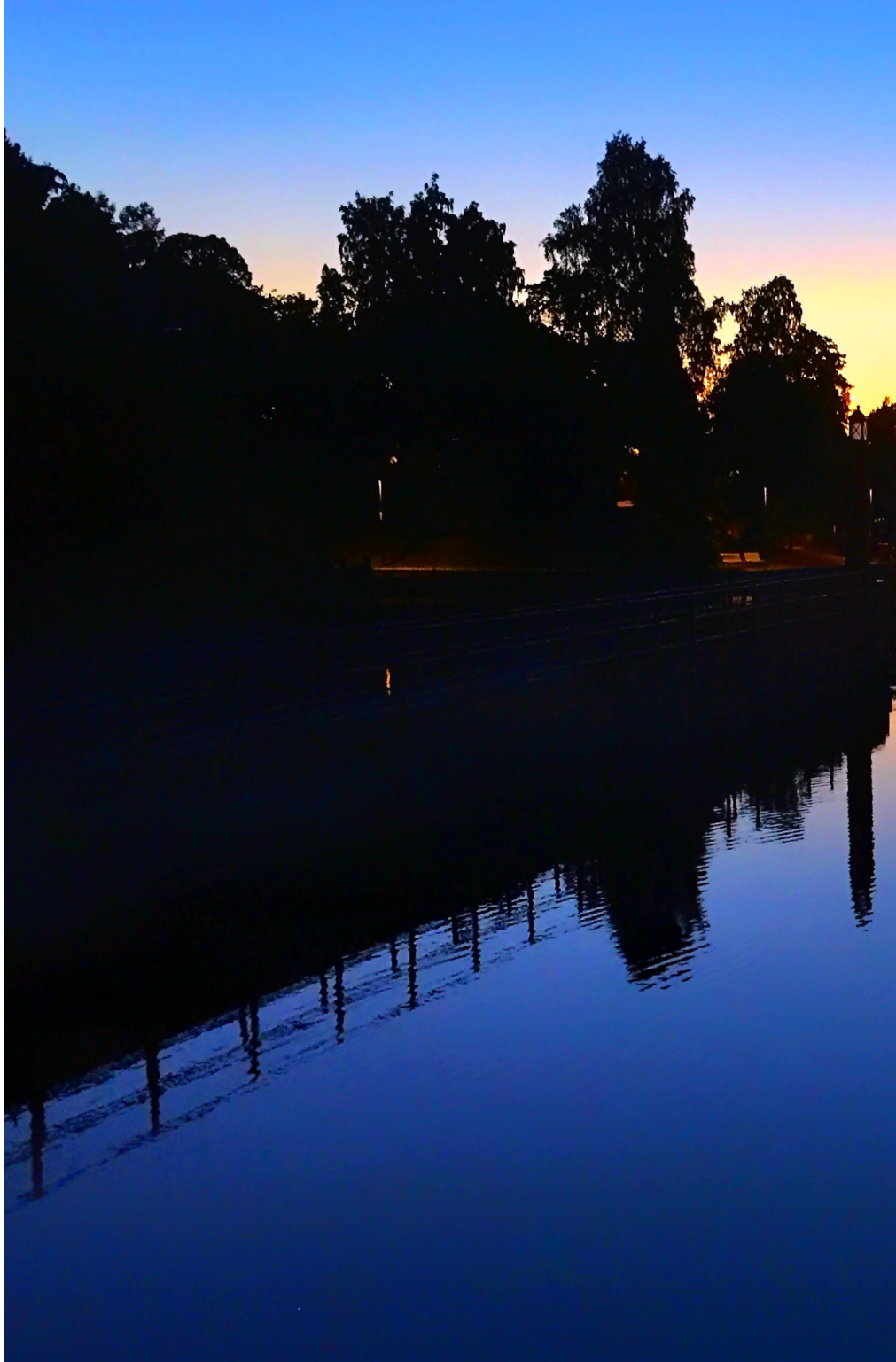
Inaugurating the series of poetry posts, which will take place on each of the three days of the weekly cycle from Monday to Wednesday and be gathered into the Poetry collection.

As with the Short Stories, I'll share each poem in both text form as part of the post and as an attached, fully laid out PDF, taken straight from the book *Land of Youth & Beauty: Early Poems*.

The book is available as an ebook from the Shop as both the original and the large print edition, with both included in a single purchase, and physical copies of the hardcover and paperback are available from all Amazon stores around the world. (For example, here's the hardcover in the US store and here in the German store.)

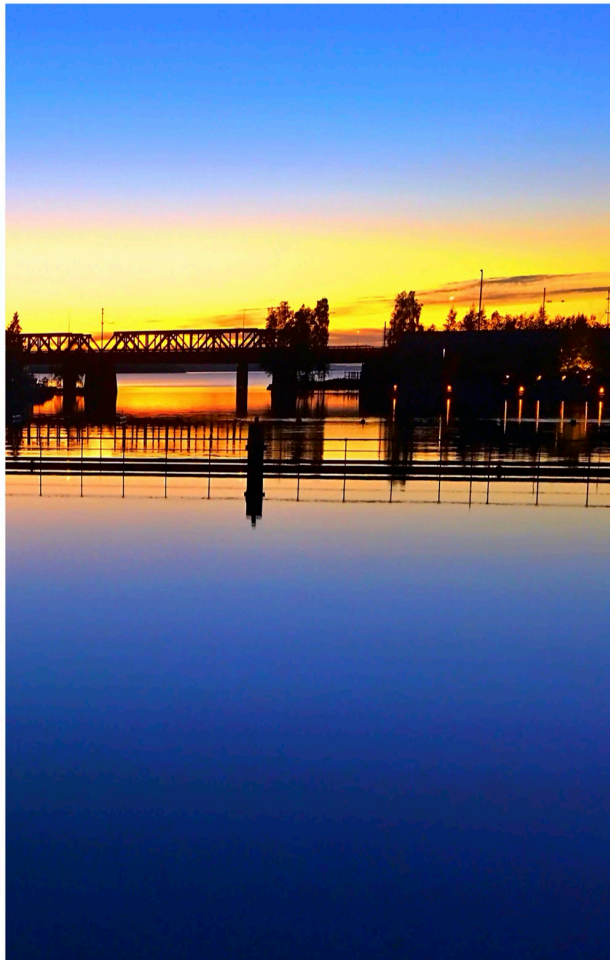
As an extra feature, in these posts I'll share for the first time also the date of composition for each poem. These dates have so far not been included anywhere else.

## ***Back Cover***



*Title Page*

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



**by Simo Sakari Aaltonen**

## **Copyright**

*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.

## **Dedication**

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



## *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...*

(2022)

**ART  
&  
LOVE**

**VOL. 1**

**by Simo Sakari  
Aaltonen**

7 April 2025 – Monday

*Art & Love*

## ***Caring***

Welcome to this full serialisation of the non-fiction book series *Art & Love*, with chapters to be posted on each of the three days of this Patreon's weekly cycle from Monday to Wednesday. The collection of these short writings is also called Art & Love.

My aim with *Art & Love* has been to write about the many and varied topics in the most concise way possible. Many chapters are only a paragraph or a few, some even just a single sentence. Some are serious, others light or humorous.

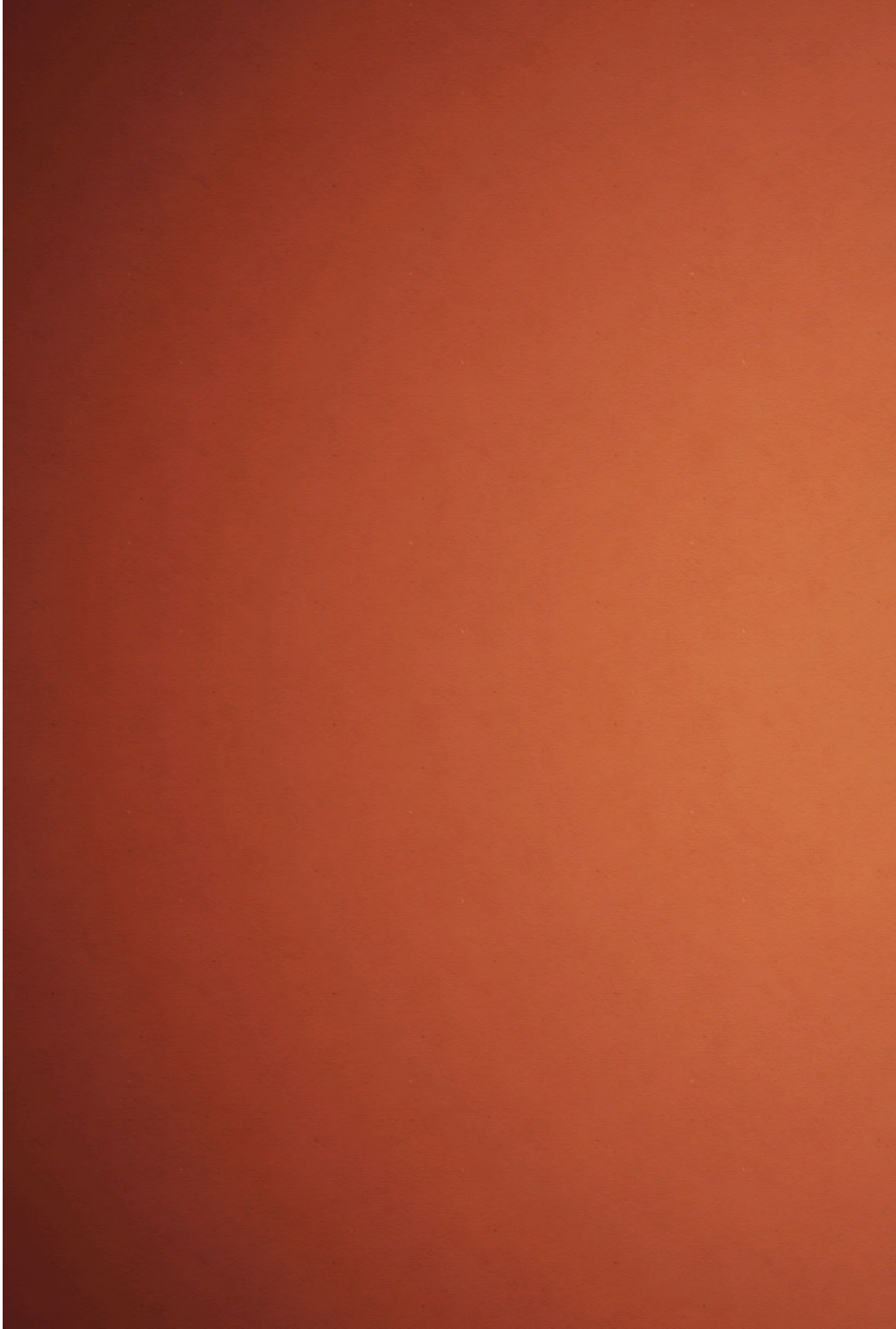
But with all of them I aimed to capture something important, something I might not get to express elsewhere.

*Vol. 1* of the series is available from the Shop, and the second volume is in the final editing stage. Early Access means all members will receive *Vol. 2* for no additional cost (for free) at least a week before I publish on Amazon. Physical copies of *Vol. 1* are available from all Amazon stores around the world. (For example, here's the hardcover in the US store and here in the German store.)

As with the Short Stories and Poems, I'll include each chapter as part of the text post and also attached as a fully laid out PDF, taken straight from the ebook.

And like with those, I'll start by sharing also the front matter. The table of contents is included only in the attached PDF.

## ***Back Cover***



*Title Page*

**ART  
&  
LOVE**

**VOL. 1**

**by Simo Sakari  
Aaltonen**

## **Copyright**

*Art & Love, Vol. 1* by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. The moral right of the author has been asserted.

Copyright © 2020 by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. All rights reserved.

## **Dedication**

*This book is dedicated  
to Hildur Kristín Thorstensen  
who reminded me how to live*

*John Cage's Silence (1961) showed me  
how refreshing a book can be*

*David Lynch's Catching the Big Fish (2006)  
gave me further heart and courage to be light*

## **Epigraph**

The play-concept as such is of a higher order than is seriousness. For seriousness seeks to exclude play, whereas play can very well include seriousness.

—Johan Huizinga: *Homo Ludens* (1938)



## ***Caring***

One life per customer.

How do we treat others, what feelings do we leave them to deal with, to get through their days and nights with?

It's one thing to laugh or make someone laugh, it's another to be able to smile or make someone smile.<sup>1</sup>

Do we care or don't we?

Do we care about the wounds we may know we've caused?

Do we think about what we leave someone to remember every time they look in the mirror?

Or for that matter, what we leave ourselves to remember when looking in the mirror, or when alone with our thoughts, maybe falling asleep, or trying to?

The memories are echoes of hurting or healing, of caring or not caring.

---

1. I learned this thought from Norm Macdonald in his *Norm Macdonald Live*.



8 April 2025 — Tuesday



*Poems*

## ***“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.

(17 May 2013)

8 April 2025 — Tuesday



*Art & Love*

## ***Philip Glass***

His composing is often like cutting cloth by the yard, but I don't mean that in a dismissive way.

Sometimes it results in just a piece of cloth, but other times, with other pieces — something like *Koyaanisqatsi* or the soundtrack to *The Hours* — the result is a beautiful and perfect garment.

The creation of all the different pieces is a necessary part of the process that results in those perfect garments.





*Poems*

**“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.

(4 April 2012)



9 April 2025 — Wednesday



*Art & Love*

## ***Play***

Elsewhere in the same work as from which this book's epigraph is from, Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (1938) — referring to all our playful activities in every field of life — he points out that in all mythology — I'd say all worthwhile mythology — there's always a playful dance on the borderline of humour and seriousness.

Without both, I'd say any person or work may be reason for concern. Healthy minds are playful.

By the way, I haven't read that book.





*Northern Exposure*

## ***Northern Exposure*** ***1.01 “Pilot” — Part 1***

Warmest welcome to this first post of my full *Northern Exposure* rewatch from a creative point of view!

Over the years, I’ve written hundreds of thousands of words about this wonderful, lively, fertile, inventive, inspiring series, and almost none of it has ever yet seen the light of day until now.

These writings have included story analyses, reverse engineerings of the plots, and wide-ranging discussions from a firmly non-academic point of view.

All the posts in this series will be free of the kinds of background details that belong more in the fields of academia and encyclopedias.

I engage directly with what is there in the series itself, and this will be all

about storytelling, creativity, and thoughts and reactions from a broad human perspective. And like the series itself, I’ll address the full range of human emotions and sensual experiences.

With episode 1.01 “Pilot”, I’ve written several different pieces, and because together they amount to so much text, I need to split this inaugural entry into more than one part. This Part 1 concludes the first weekly 3-day cycle of The Better Patreon, and Part 2 — a freeform, lovingly appreciative piece of more than 20,000 words — will follow on Wednesday the week after.

The amount of material for the opening episode is due to the fact that the first story provides the most natural point to discuss the foundations laid out in it for the whole series.

Rather than over-explaining what you’re about to read in this first post, I’ll just mention that these analyses are from sometime in the 2010s and represent a period in which I was consciously sharpening my ability to be concise and penetrating as a writer and future plotter of stories, screenplays in particular.

So for example, when I wrote the description of Maurice as “pompous” back then, an inner voice was insisting, “Is that a fair word?” I love Maurice, and this is in no way a critically damning description — only precise, breezy, and concise. He is pompous, and I love him dearly.

A quick note on the various versions of this series out there:

The best release of *Northern Exposure* available anywhere so far is the UK Blu-ray set of 2018, which includes all the original music.



Unfortunately, that’s not true of either the episodes currently streaming or of the earlier DVD sets. Both of those feature a lot of replacement music, which with a series so carefully crafted often significantly flattens scenes. The makers created scenes that work in tandem with the specific pieces of music.

However, the UK Blu-ray set has no subtitles and is missing some of the extras included on the DVD sets, which also feature fantastic subtitles. An ideal release for me would be the visual and aural content of the Blu-ray set together with those subtitles from the DVDs.

## ***Overall Series Description***

A tapestry of the lives of the diverse, often eccentric, mostly pretty wise and kind inhabitants of Cicely, a small Alaskan town with uncommonly much emotional intelligence to go around.

## ***Characters***

**Joel Fleischman:** Neurotic, intellectual control freak from New York. The health of Cicely. In John Truby’s terms, his high is being in control. His low is when he loses control in any way.

**Maurice Minnifield:** Pompous know-it-all selfmade man. The “big man” of Cicely. Deeper down, kind and sensitive.

**Chris Stevens:** The voice and mind of Cicely. Artist. Embraces many perspectives.

**Holling Vincoeur and Shelly Tambo:** The stomach of Cicely. Also its... well. The rest will become clear later. (Check out the shape of the sign above their bar’s front door.)

**Maggie O’Connell:** Transportation. The fact that she’s Joel’s landlord gives her the upper hand — places her in a position of power. This is important in terms of rendering Joel’s sometimes somewhat aggressive outbursts non-threatening.

**Ed Chigliak:** Eternal optimist, innocent, messenger, visionary, young man. Loves cinema and pop music.

**Ruth-Anne Miller:** Physical goods, age, contact with the outside world (the post office).

## ***Story Elements***

**Premises:** Joel Fleischman, a Jewish New Yorker fresh out of medical school, learns he’ll have to practice for four years in a small Alaskan town in the middle of nowhere. Holling considers talking to Maurice again, risking his life. Number Six’s life is in danger when his wife first shoots, then stabs him.

**Desires:** Joel wants away from Cicely. Holling wants to make up with Maurice. Number Six wants things to be better but doesn’t know how to achieve that; Joel wants Number Six and his wife to face their problems (they’ve reached a point of stagnation and helplessness).

All three plots hinge on communication and coming to terms with something or someone, and accepting change. Variations — Gilliam deliberately misinforms Joel; Holling and Maurice choose to stop talking to each other; Number Six and his wife forget how to talk to each other.

**Stakes:** The next four years of Joel’s life and, especially from Maurice’s point of view, the health and lives of the people of Cicely. Holling’s life. Number Six’s life and marriage.

**Basic actions:** Joel tries to get out of his contractual obligation. Holling considers things, then approaches Maurice at the festival. Number Six and his wife fight.

**Outcomes:** Joel is forced to accept there’s no way out of his contract. Holling and Maurice resume their friendship. Number Six and his wife start getting along, thanks to Joel’s mediation.

**Problems and challenges:** What is to keep Joel from leaving? (Contract, Maurice.) How to make the ending satisfying and even upbeat even though Joel fails to get what he wants? (An emotional meltdown followed by a communal event in a beautiful setting. Significantly, presided over by the main opponent, Maurice.)

**Opponents:** In this story, Maurice, the leader and embodiment, in many ways, of Cicely. Also in the storyline with Holling. Overall in the series, Maggie (the love interest). For Number Six, his wife.

**Fake-ally opponent:** Pete Gilliam.

## ***Act Endings***

**Act One:** Joel has met Maurice (the opponent).

**Act Two:** Joel has seen the town, settled in at his cabin, and heard about the feud between Maurice and Holling.

**Act Three:** Joel has done some doctoring and learned of the conflict between Number Six and his wife. Maurice has threatened Joel.

**Act Four:** Joel is in Cicely to stay. Holling and Maurice have resumed their friendship. Number Six and his wife have patched things up between them.

## ***Act Synopses***

### ***Teaser***

1. Joel, on a plane from New York City to Anchorage, Alaska, tries to convince a fellow passenger (and himself) that having to stay in Alaska for four years is not that bad. (plane from New York to Anchorage)

Symbol: lights out at the end.

### ***Act One***

2. The opening titles establish the setting (small Alaskan town, in the northwest; snowmobiles; rusting trucks in overgrown yards; the town is “An Oasis”, like it says on the sign reading “Roslyn’s Cafe”) and main character

(Joel — we see his name stenciled on his office window). (Cicely)

Symbols: moose, rusting trucks, small-town streets.

3. (deleted) Joel gets a cab at the airport. (airport)

4. Pete Gilliam meets Joel and shows him into his (Gilliam's) office. (hallway)

Symbols: Joel's luggage, his golf clubs.

5. Gilliam tells Joel they've decided to set him up in Cicely, not Anchorage.  
(Gilliam's office)

Symbols: brochures.

6. (deleted) Joel gets his bus ticket from Gilliam. (Gilliam's office)

Symbol: ticket.

7. Joel takes the bus to Cicely. (threadbare bus driving into wilderness)

Symbols: candy bars, map.

8. Joel gets off the bus seemingly in the middle of nowhere. (forest road)

Symbols: luggage, golf clubs.

9. Ed Chigliak arrives in a pick-up truck to pick up Joel. (forest road)

Symbols: luggage, golf clubs.

10. Ed leaves Joel to finish the drive to Maurice Minnifield's place on his own.  
(truck, forest road)

Symbols: music cassettes.

11. Joel finds Maurice's house and meets him. (forest road, dirt track to  
Maurice's place, Maurice's front yard)

Symbols: Alaskan flag, satellite dish.

12. Maurice introduces himself to Joel while freshening up. (Maurice’s living room)

Symbols: moose head, NASA helmet.

**End of Act One:** Joel has met Maurice (the opponent).

## ***Act Two***

13. (deleted) Maurice and Joel drive to town while Maurice expounds further upon his world view. (Maurice’s Cadillac, road)

Symbol: Cadillac.

14. Maurice introduces Joel to the town of Cicely and takes him to his (Joel’s) office. (Cicely, centre of town)

15. Maurice tells Joel this is his (Joel’s) office. Marilyn introduces herself to Joel. (Joel’s office: reception area)

16. Joel, panicking, runs through the streets and looks for a phone. (streets of Cicely) (a kind of modest labyrinth)

17. Joel calls Gilliam, demanding to leave, then his fiancée, asking her to check his contract. (Holling’s bar: pay phone) (communication)

18. Holling tells Ed he’s been considering calling Maurice. Ed thinks this is a bad idea. (Holling’s bar: the bar)

19. As Joel continues waiting for his fiancée’s call, he introduces himself to Holling and learns from him the history between Maurice, Holling, and Shelly.

(Holling’s bar: pay phone) (communication)

20. Joel’s new landlord, Maggie, introduces herself to him. (Holling’s bar: pay phone) (communication)

21. Maggie gets Joel settled in at his place. (Joel’s cabin: living room)

Symbol: lighting a fire (Maggie and Joel).

22. A petrified Joel stays wide awake until a scurrying rat springs a trap and dies. (Joel’s cabin: bedroom)

Symbol: rat trap. (Joel himself is caught in his situation like a rat in a trap.)  
(At this point I stopped listing these, but you can pay attention to and identify them yourself as a creative and storytelling exercise.)

**End of Act Two:** Joel has seen the town, settled in at his cabin, and heard about the feud between Maurice and Holling.

### ***Act Three***

23. Joel disposes of the dead rat. (Joel’s yard)

24. Joel runs into town. (outdoors, on the way to Cicely)

25. Joel gets a bus schedule. (general store)

26. Joel refuses to see the patients waiting at his office. (Joel’s office: reception)

27. Joel changes his mind, returns inside, and assigns numbers to the patients. (outside Joel’s office, Joel’s office: reception)

28. Joel sees two patients, shoos away Number Six, then notices a trail of

blood. (Joel’s office: office room)

29. Joel follows the trail of blood to Number Six. (Joel’s office: reception)

30. Joel treats Number Six. Ed tells Joel that Maurice wants to talk to Joel. (Joel’s office: examination room)

31. Maurice tells Joel he’s going to hold Joel to his commitment to Cicely. (Maurice’s boat on a lake)

(The action has narrowed down to this little boat, a vessel just big enough for the two men.) (Setting this scene on the boat, with Maurice out hunting, lets the writers eat their cake and have it too: Maurice shoots, just not Joel.)

**End of Act Three:** Joel has done some doctoring and learned of the conflict between Number Six and his wife. Maurice has threatened Joel.

#### ***Act Four***

32. (deleted) Chris tells Maggie and Ed that Holling said he’s going to talk to Maurice. (Holling’s bar: booth)

33. (deleted) Marilyn tells Holling the odds are against him. (Holling’s bar: another booth)

34. (deleted) Joel complains to Holling. (Holling’s bar: a third booth)

35. (deleted) A logger thanks Joel for treating Number Six. Joel promptly escapes to the booth with Chris, Maggie, and Ed. (Holling’s bar: the first booth)

36. Joel gets drunk as he and Maggie share some of their backgrounds with each other. (Holling’s bar: booth)

37. (deleted) Holling looks after Joel as Joel throws up in the men’s room (off-screen). Maggie waits for Joel to finish. (Holling’s bar: outside the men’s room)

38. Joel wakes up in Maggie’s bed thinking they had sex last night. (Maggie’s bedroom)

39. Joel learns from Rick what really happened last night. (Maggie’s porch)

40. (deleted) Joel arrives in town, now a bit more busy with visitors coming for the Festival. (main street of Cicely)

41. (deleted) Ed asks Joel a technical legal question regarding Maurice’s threat to Holling. Ruth-Anne hands Joel a flyer for the Festival. (main street of Cicely)

42. Joel notices that Number Six is back. (Joel’s office: office room)

43. Joel negotiates a truce between Number Six and his wife and gets them talking. He hears a phone. (Joel’s office: examination room)

44. Joel hears from Elaine what his contract says. The punishment for leaving is so severe he has no choice but to stay. (Joel’s office: office room)

45. Joel freaks out and throws an almighty physical tantrum in the truck. Marilyn offers to stitch the patient up, but Joel says he’ll do it. (street, truck)

46. People are having fun at the Summer Wonderland Festival, now in full swing. (lakeside)

47. Maurice gives his welcoming speech. Ed shares some food with Joel. (deleted) Number Six and his wife thank Joel. (Maurice: stage; Joel, Ed, Number Six and wife: a log off to one side)

48. Ed talks to Joel about New York. (a log off to one side)

49. Holling breaks the long silence between himself and Maurice. Maurice does not shoot him. (another log off to another side, nearer the lake)

50. Ed assures Joel he’ll get used to the taste of mooseburger. (a log off to one side)

51. Joel and Ed walk into the festival crowd. (lakeside)

**End of Act Four:** Joel is in Cicely to stay. Holling and Maurice have resumed their friendship. Number Six and his wife have patched things up between them.

## ***Reference Note***

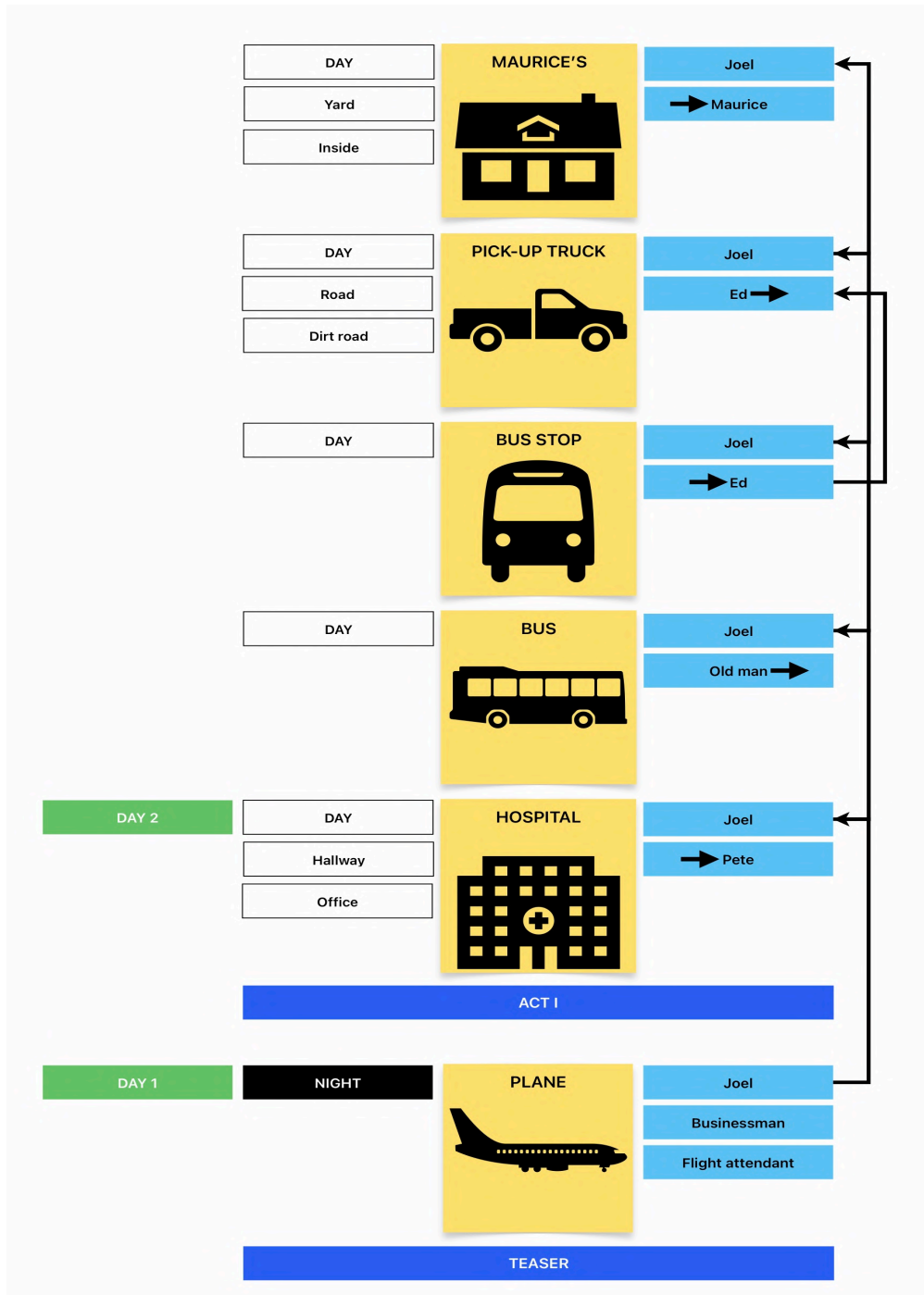
To explain the reference to screenwriting teacher John Truby: back when I wrote this, I read his book, *The Anatomy of Story*, along with just a few other screenwriting books.

I’ve never written any story using any formula like he presents (the “22 Steps”) — I write based on feeling and intuition and strongly believe all stories have their own forms, which may follow no previous pattern at all (like David Lynch often said, the idea tells you everything) — but I did find in his book many useful tools for analysing existing stories, to see their underlying structures more clearly.

That in turn helped me grow as a writer, since these are helpful in terms of seeing how rich or lacking any story or element may be.

But having read the book, I put it firmly aside and won’t return to it, because I want to avoid all kinds of formula thinking and creating.

Before concluding this first part, here’s something I once created just for fun in the iOS app Freeform: a visual diagram of Act 1. It moves from the bottom to the top. I may have been thinking in terms of a road stretching ahead that way.



*Coming up in Part 2: a plotting reconstruction, the free discussion of more than 20,000 words, and another kind of extra.*





**ABOUT  
THE AUTHOR  
(2026)**

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



**[simosakariaaltonen.com](http://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](https://simosakariaaltonen.com)

Patreon: [patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon](https://patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon)

Bandcamp: [simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com](https://simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com)

Podcast hosting site: [rss.com/podcasts/simo](https://rss.com/podcasts/simo)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/@SimoSakariAaltonen](https://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](https://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*

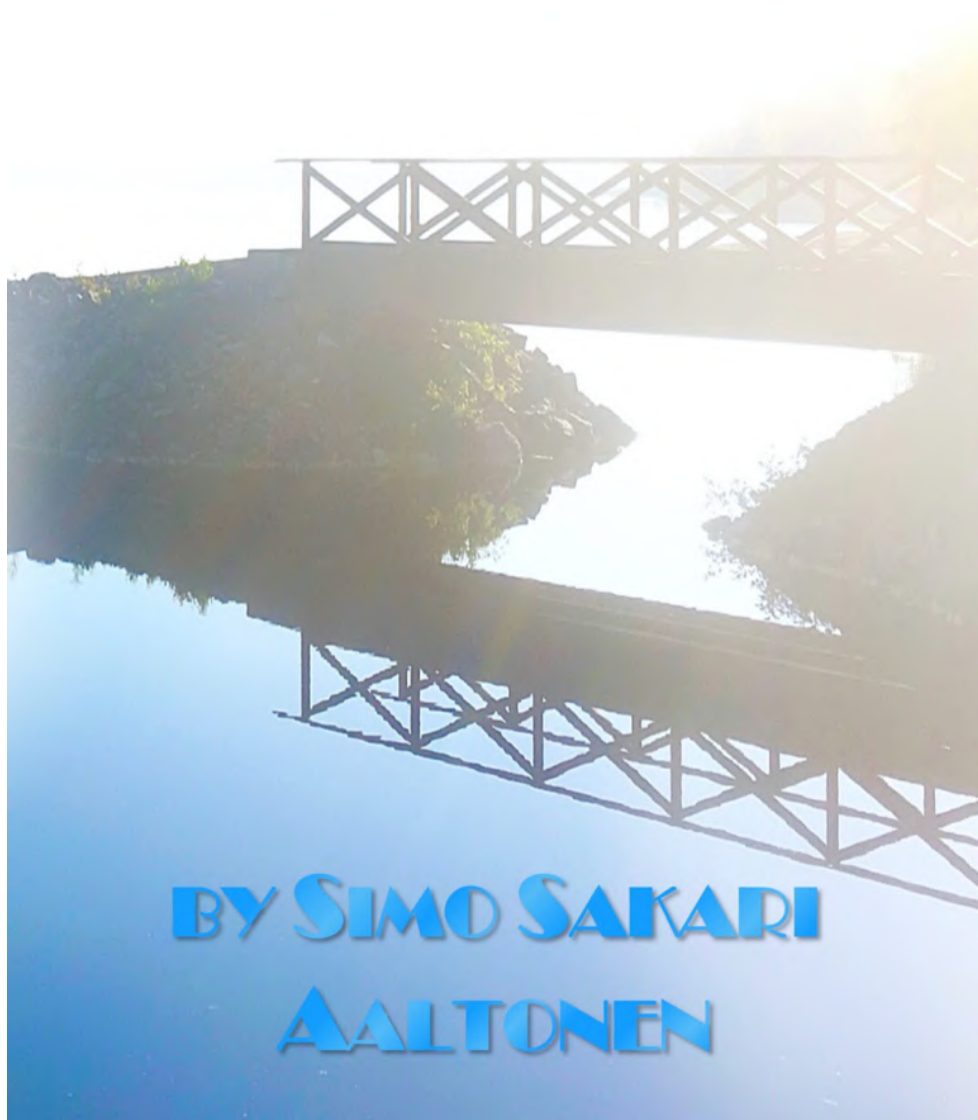
# THE BETTER PATREON, VOL. 1: APRIL 2025

- ✓ 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



BY SIMO SAKARI  
AALTONEN

*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:*

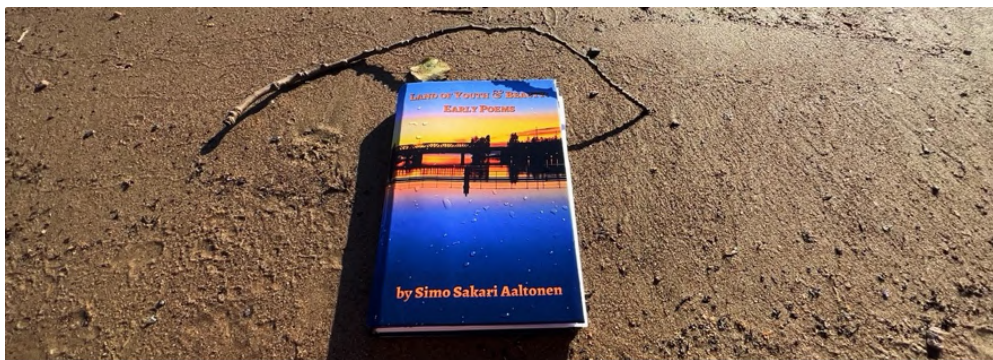
*A marionette's dream, a pair of sonnets, a bayou tragedy, whirling donuts, nocturnes and nightmares, encounters in the dark and in sunlit moments...*

*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](http://simosakariaaltonen.com)

[patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon](https://patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon)

[youtube.com/@SimoSakariAaltonen](https://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](https://patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon)

[simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com](https://simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com)

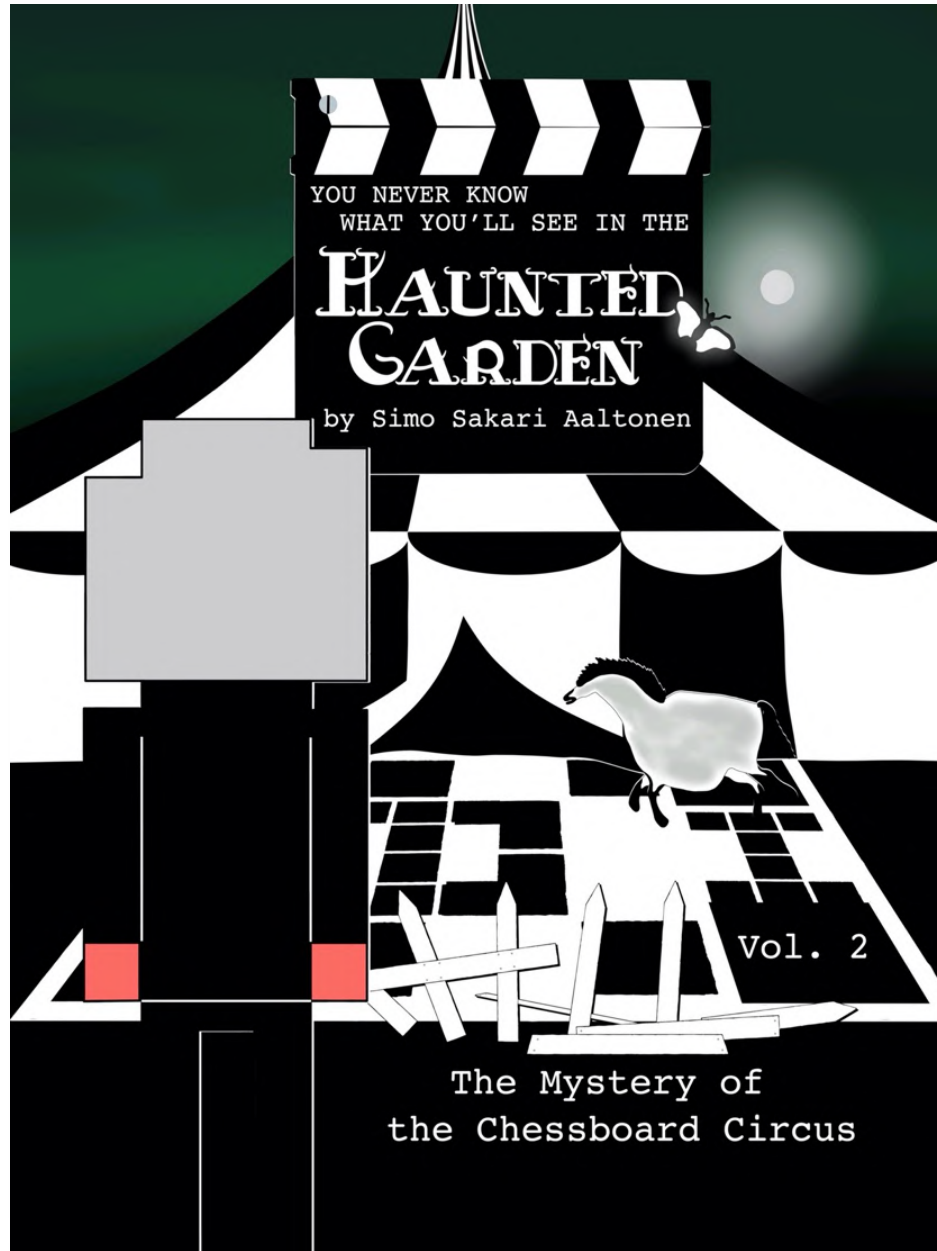




*Tales from the North, Book I is a set of 12 piano duets for two pianists and pianos. The pieces cover a wide range of moods, styles, and approaches using the composer's timeless musical language. 130 pages with a 10-page introduction.*



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.*



# 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.