

Translated from Finnish  
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You have titled your texts as short stories. Why not, the terms are not important. A lot of short prose is written under the title of short stories and the focus may be on the plot, an anecdote, or a situation, or they may be classified as open. Your texts are broad tales, almost mini-novels rather than conventional short stories which often end in a surprising culmination.

Having read your texts, I started wondering whether there might be a manuscript for a novel behind these short stories that seem to have been broken up, into separate texts. Perhaps the concentration of the themes, the similar, recurring settings and characters led to that idea. In any case it might be worth trying to work this material into a novel. You would not necessarily need a classical, solid plot; the structure could be based on episodes. Of course there would have to be some kind of a thread, an idea; perhaps a conflict that needs to be resolved. This is naturally true for short stories, too.

If you were to publish the texts as they are, I would leave out the story titled "B 67 puolenvaihto" (B 67 switchover). It does not fit the collection, it is too long and rambling, and I do not find the characters believable. In my opinion, the most memorable stories are "Pyörremyrsky" (Whirlwind) (although it still needs an added edge and clarification) and "Vedenjakajalla" (At the watershed). The latter has some obvious qualities of a mini-novel. The description of its themes, outsidersness and resignation, is touching; in addition, your story has social depth. However, you still need to expand the storyline and develop your characterisation. As a single short story, it lacks focus – in my opinion it gets side-tracked from time to time. Even the author acknowledges this, as he ironises the main character's (perhaps his own) penmanship!

You are an accomplished writer. Your texts are written in flawless Finnish. It is obvious that you have done plenty of reading and thinking, you are an experienced writer (are you perhaps a language professional; a journalist or a teacher?). Maybe you find writing a bit too easy. Your writing seems effortless. The danger is that your texts become too comprehensive and wordy, the rhythm seems to slow down. You need more edge and roughness! I admit that the eventlessness and unhurriedness may match the content of your short stories (the sense of being outside, the "life is elsewhere" attitude): form and content certainly support each other. I would also cut some of the English quotes, they add a foppish quality to your texts.

I wish you luck in your endeavours. I certainly found your texts entertaining. They did not make dry reading, but could still be made juicier.

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