



Seuraleikki

Tove Jansson , Eila Pennanen (Translator)

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13 novellia ihmisten suhteista, tekemisistä ja erikoisuuksista.

Vastahakoista luokkakokoukseen kokoontumista, lomailua Rivieralla kadonneen englantilaisen talossa kiukkuisen koiran seurana, nainen joka ottaa kaikesta pahasta syyt itselleen.

Seuraleikki Details

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From Reader Review Seuraleikki for online ebook

notgettingenough says

This book needs more dle.

Admittedly I have given up early.

postscript: apparently this review needs to be explained. Too much twee. Not enough dle.

I was about to donate this to the bookshop at the end of my street when I noticed that actually, these aren't all letters from Klara. It may be this is a good book with a bad start. It will be taken up again at the end of the year....

Bart Van Overmeire says

Enkele goede verhalen ('The train trip', 'The pictures' en 'Emmelina') maar het geheel toch net iets te licht en vluchtig.

Paul says

While not as strong as 'Sculptor's Daughter' or 'Art in Nature', say, there was still an appeal to aspects of this uneven collection. It is Tove Jansson, after all... From my perspective, Jansson's last two volumes of short stories were her weakest, understandably, perhaps, as by the time 'Letters from Klara' was published she was 77 years old. And when you're the author of 'The Summer Book', you're entitled to have your off days. The best of the stories possessed an unsettling, Mittel-European atmosphere, 'The Pictures', for instance, and 'Emmelina' that elevated them above the other vignettes here. It got me thinking how strong a selection from her last three collections could be, truly reflecting her genius as an observer of charged moments and odd characters.

Hugh says

Another fine collection of stories - not easy to review as a whole because some of them are rather elliptical, some are very short and I can't see any clear thematic unity. Jansson's characters are often unworldly and a little unsettling. Definitely worth reading but not her most essential work.

The longer stories, including the final three, run to around 15 pages each, and of these my favourite was Emmelina, which is almost a ghost story without ghosts.

Anna Baillie-Karas says

A wonderful collection of stories by one of my favourite authors, Tove Jansson.

Mainly set in Finland, they show her love of landscape and strong sense of her characters - older women, artists, children. She is unpatronising and unsentimental, imbuing her characters with dignity. There is such charm to her writing - often drily funny, but poignant and touching as the stories tackle loneliness, ageing and the pretences we maintain. Recommended.

Kirsty says

I could not resist ordering a newly translated collection of short stories by one of my absolute favourite authors when I first heard about it, and I dove in almost immediately. Tove Jansson's *Letters from Klara* is such a treat. Each tale was written whilst Jansson was in her seventies; one can see a marked shift between these contemplative pieces, and those of her younger years, which share an extremely perceptive vivacity. The stories within the collection are largely quiet and slowly paced, but they are all the lovelier for it. The blurb of *Letters from Klara*, in fact, describes them as 'subtle' and 'light-footed' stories, descriptions which I wholeheartedly agree with.

Letters from Klara provides a wonderful breather from the hectic modern world. Its stories are varied and quite diverse, but humanity is at the core of each. A lot of the stories are about ageing and death, clearly subjects which become more pressing and important during Jansson's literary career. *Letters from Klara* is neither her best, nor her most memorable, collection, but it is absolutely filled to the brim with tiny gems, and gorgeously evoked slices of life which appeal to all of the senses.

Martha says

This collection of short stories was a total impulse buy - I liked the cover, the title had a kind of romance to it and I've heard good things about Tove Jansson. My trouble came when the title story was the one I liked the most, so we peaked at the start, and then it was just a bit...meh.

It might be the sort of collection that requires a slower, more attentive read; whereas I whizzed through it in a day. All of the stories are very subtle, there's no drama, and the "transformations" described in the blurb aren't always obvious unless you really think about it. The ones I did "get" were quite sweet.

This is a 2.5 stars, but rounded up to 3 because I feel like 2 would be unreasonably mean - I didn't dislike this, but I think I may forget I've read it...

Michael says

There's often no point to Jansson's stories, at least, no explicit point. Her characters appear on the page, we follow them for a while, then they fade out. You make of them and their situations what you will, and I'm not always sure what I *have* made of them.

If there's generally no plot, what Jansson always provides is humanity, personness, relation. Even when I don't always 'get' Jansson's characters, I know that I've 'met them' in some way - she provides a connection between the reader and her characters and, ultimately, herself as the writer.

In this collection, there's a few of Jansson's cantankerous, willfull, wonderful old ladies; a woman who is death (she reminded me a little of Mary Wilkins Freeman's Luella Miller, though without the malevolence); strange, solitary children, and; tortured artists. A couple of stories, also, that feature living in exile, whether self-imposed or otherwise.

Jansson's understated, quirky tales quietly teach us what it is to be human.

Nat says

How is it possible that I was not interested in any of the short stories? Bit of a strange collection of stories which weren't engaging or interesting. Although I did enjoy this quote:

He's so enamoured of the so-called Nordic design, and there's nothing cosy about that. And it's not exactly hard to accomplish either. All you have to do is paint everything white, bring in a few of those disgusting IKEA pieces of furniture made out of birch and voila - you've created a Swedish home.

Jola says

It's not Tove at her striking best but I indulged in this collection of short stories with glee anyway. It's the twelfth book by Jansson I've read which just goes to show how much I love her.
Review to come.

Paul H says

Apparently simple stories about rather dysfunctional people. Hard to know what makes them so powerful yet some of the stories they unsettled me for days.
She seems to inhabit her characters without judgement and with full acceptance.

Nick says

I really enjoyed most of this collection of translated short stories. As a introduction to Jansson's work, I'm smitten!

Ruth Brumby says

Very skilled writing - apparently simple, but with a range of different voices and perspectives. One strength of the book is to celebrate differences between people and communication across the gaps with respect for

difference and individuality, to show an ability to recognise characteristics without trying to change them. There is a slightly surreal feeling to some of the stories, which jars a little with me, but nevertheless they are great examples of the short story form, able to evoke something powerful in a small space, to show small everyday details in a new light and to provoke thought, while remaining opaque and puzzling, without an easy answer.

Le Regent College Library says

Everything she wrote is amazing. Read it all!

Mikael Kuoppala says

Jansson offers a delightfully poignant collection of sharp and witty stories about people and the masks they wear in social interaction. This book views humanity as a clear continuation of the animal kingdom, with dominance, selfishness and naivety as its ruling attributes.

This book is one of the finest examples of well executed short form I have read as all of the stories stand on their own, have fascinating themes to explore and characters that are sculpted in a truly real and deep way.

Many of the themes the stories analyze have clear elements from Jansson's own life. Creativity, a person's relationship with her art, nature, homosexuality and the human need for solitude as well as companionship are strongly present.

This collection is also a good reminder of the fact that Jansson was not only an ingenious creator of the Moominworld but a clever observer of the human condition in more direct and realistic settings as well.
