



Finn Family Moomintroll

Tove Jansson , Elizabeth Portch (Translator)

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Poor little chap! He had been turned into a very strange animal indeed...

Although they're small, fat and shy creatures, Moomins have the most amazing adventures. It all begins when Moominpappa tries on a magic hat that makes exciting and funny things happen . . .

Finn Family Moomintroll Details

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From Reader Review Finn Family Moomintroll for online ebook

Emily says

Sometimes things do work out as they ought to: my son is well on the road to loving the Moomintroll books just as much as I do. We breezed through this second book in the series really fast -- T was able, without much effort, to persuade Mama to read a chapter aloud pretty much any time of day, as long as he wasn't supposed to be in school.

This charming tale of one Spring and Summer in the lives of the Moomin family picks up where its predecessor left off. Every member of the Moomin household from the previous book is still there in this one, a circumstance that never repeats itself. It opens with Moomintroll and his friends Snufkin and Sniff waking up from their long Winter sleep on the first day of Spring, a day when everything is fresh and anything seems possible. Atop a local mountain which they impulsively climb, they discover a hat which they soon learn has some surprising magical properties.

The different transformations wrought by the hat over the next few months give the book an episodic feel, and to an extent, I missed the sense of urgency and narrative momentum which the impending arrival of the comet provides in the first book. However, a more meandering storyline suits Jansson's whimsical style just fine, and ironically, considering that in the first book Moomintroll and his friends went off alone into the wilds and encountered many great dangers, this one speaks more, in its quiet way, of growing up and making one's own choices. After Moomintroll's parents decide that the hat is dangerous, they try to get rid of it by throwing it into the river. Snufkin and Moomintroll sneak out late at night to retrieve it. *"You know", said Moomintroll seriously, "it's the first time we have done anything that we can't tell mother and father about."* And indeed, even though their motivation for wanting the hat back is the fun that the hat has given them, they have done the right thing and discovered that parents, as much as one loves them, are not infallible. Throwing the hat in the river where it was wreaking havoc on the ecosystem, turning water into raspberry juice and fish into canaries was a pretty terrible idea! But the greater lesson for Moomintroll is that the joys of being out at night, of being Snufkin's most trusted friend, and eventually, after they have hidden the hat, of seeing a lovely sunrise on the beach -- these are a far greater magic than anything produced by the hat.

There is a sadder lesson at the end of the book, when as Autumn begins to arrive, Snufkin decides to leave his friends and wander South: sometimes we have to say goodbye to the people we love the most. I had been surprised at the beginning of the book that Snufkin had spent the previous Winter hibernating with the Moomins. That seemed out of character for him, and I suppose it was the last time he did it. Ultimately though, the book is joyful, and the hobgoblin's magic turns Moomintroll's sense of loss into one of expectancy. And everyone has a lot of fun in the meantime.

Chris says

I guess I am fiscally conservative but liberal in most other things. You want to marry the same gender; you should. It's none of my damn business as you are both consenting adults. Your womb is none of my damn business. You want to change gender, go right ahead -- none of my damn business.

And incidentally, you can reverse that.

I blame Moomins for this. I just realized this.

When my family went to Sweden when I was in third or fourth grade, I was given copies of Jansson's children books and really, really read them.

Seriously, I know this because I just re-read the first one, and you can tell it was well loved.

I re-read Finn Family Moomintroll after reading a collection of Jansson's short stories. I realized I totally forgot about the Hemulen. He wears a dress that his aunt left him, and no one cares.

In fact, it is the strangest family, you will ever meet and is so about interspecies dating.

But that's the Moomins for you – love, togetherness, and adventure!

Jansson plays with ideas of self, of words, of autobiography, with hats.

Harry Potter's Sorting Hat has nothing I tell you on the Hobgoblin's hat. Plus the Hobgoblin rides a panther.

Mark says

Perfection. The characters, the scenes, the language. Everything.

Manybooks says

I absolutely adore Tove Jansson's Moomintrolls and their exploits, and the 1970s German language translations by Vivica and Kurt Bandler were favourites of my childhood (and are still considered sweet and nostalgic gems to be reread over and over again, although my copies are falling apart and I now need to find replacements). And with this fact in mind, when the Children's Literature Group decided to read Elizabeth Portch's English language translation of the third Moomintroll book, of Trollkarlens Hatt a couple of years ago (in 2010 to be exact), I joined with eager and yes glad anticipation, although I did wonder why Ms. Portch had chosen the title of Finn Family Moomintroll, as it kind of harkens back to Johann D. Wyss' classic Swiss Family Robinson (and I definitely failed to see and still have trouble understanding how and why a group of Scandinavian troll like creatures should somehow be related in any manner to a tale of a Swiss family marooned on a deserted island). But that all being said, and my happy reading anticipation notwithstanding, Finn Family Moomintroll was in many if not most ways a major and sad disappointment, both in 2010 and still remaining thus for my recent reread (which I engaged in both to finally post a real review and also because I did want to give Elizabeth Portch's translation a second chance, but my disappointment with Finn Family Moomintroll persists and rather massively so).

I do still enjoy and appreciate the characters, the plot, the events, the ideas presented, but have massive amounts of trouble getting even remotely into the flow of the presented narrative. And considering how much I personally have always and repeatedly enjoyed the 1970s German language translations of precisely this same book (and others of the Moomintroll series), I absolutely believe that it is mostly Elizabeth Portch's rather mediocre translation that has caused this rather annoying sense of disconnection and being on the outside looking in (and yes, at times even tedious boredom, something that I NEVER once experienced with Vivica and Kurt Bandler's always engaging and adventuresome renditions of Jansson's original Swedish). And thus, while I still do more than love and adore the 1970s German translations of the Moomintroll series that graced and sweetened my childhood, I can only and will only consider but two stars for Finn Family Moomintroll, as the flow and rhythm of the Elizabeth Portch's translated text (or rather the lack of the former, the lack of adequate narrative flow and rhythm) is and continues to be both annoying and disappointing enough to in no way be able to consider a higher ranking (and also making me ever more eager to reread the Bandler's 1970s German language translations).

Nino Chachava says

???????>?????>?????

Greg says

I liked, but didn't love *Comet in Moominland*. *Finn Family Moomintroll* though really captures the same wonderfulness that the Moomin comic strips do. This book is a bit more episodic than *Comet*, but it feels more cohesive. Maybe the Moomintroll is best when he isn't on long adventures with his friends, short adventures serve them nicely when they can return home to rest and enjoy the simple pleasures of Moominvalley. If I had kids I would read this to them, if they didn't like it, I'd drive them to the mall and leave them there and realize I'm better off without such shitty kids.

Kim says

As part of a "read a new book, reread an old book challenge" and because it's the 65th anniversary of the Moomin series (there's even a Moominweek at tor.com!), I decided to reread as much as I could of the Moomin series. Which ended up being only one book, unfortunately: *Finn Family Moomintroll*. I read this series when I was perhaps 8 or 9 years old, and loved it; I think it would also be a great choice to read aloud to younger children. The illustrations are adorable, and the names of the characters fun to say---the Snork, Hattifatteners, Thingummy and Bob--and in *Finn Family Moomintroll*, each of the chapters tells of a self-standing episode, although they are linked by the device of the Hobgoblin's hat.

If you've never read the Moomin books before, you may be wondering exactly what a Moomin is. They are round fuzzy creatures who look like white hippopotamuses and who live in Moominvalley, in a house that resembles a Finnish fireplace. Akin to the Moomins are the Snorks, who look just the same in the black and white illustrations, but who change color according to their moods. In fact, the little girl Snork, the Snork Maiden, has a crush on Moomintroll, the little boy Moomin. Moomins hibernate through the winter, and awaken in the spring.

On the first spring day the Moomins awaken from their hibernation, and Moomintroll decides to go on an expedition to the mountains with his friends, Sniff and Snufkin. In their explorations, the three children stumble upon a fine top hat, which they bring home, though it ends up being too big for everyone to wear. Instead, the hat is put to use as a wastebasket, and Moomintroll throws away his eggshells in it. Shortly thereafter, five small clouds appear, and the children amuse themselves by floating around upon them. From this point, the story primarily involves transformations brought about by putting things into the hat, some of them fun and positive, like the clouds, some of them not.

As you can probably tell, the Moomin books are very silly and imaginative, and it's really refreshing to read a book in which you never have to worry that things will work out in the end. There's not really a villain in *Finn Family Moomintroll*, though there are some characters who aren't pleasant: the eerie Hattifatteners, for instance, and the Groke, who freezes the ground wherever she walks. Yet even in the cheery and fanciful world of Moominvalley, there are hints of melancholy, which will become more pronounced in the later books of the series. The Groke, for instance, is very lonely and isolated by her condition; Moomintroll, while normally a cheerful child, doesn't understand Snufkin's need to wander off by himself. Though I never found him as cute as the Moomins---he always looked to me like a scarecrow, only wearing a smock---Snufkin was probably the character I identified with the most as a child, specifically because he was balanced the joy of spending time with friends and the peace of being alone. But I really loved most of the characters, even the grumpy Muskrat and the fussbudget Hemulen. If you love absurdist fantasy and have a sense of whimsy, I'm

willing to bet you will, too!

Xfi says

"El Snusmumrik asintió con la cabeza. Se entretenía construyendo barquitas de caña que luego botaba en el río. ¿Adónde van?, preguntó el Muminroll. A lugares donde yo no estoy, contestó el Snusmumrik."

Precioso libro infantil que nos lleva a otras épocas, donde la inocencia y los valores sencillos se valoraban más.

Un mundo imaginario de seres educados, encantadores, que disfrutaban de todas las pequeñas cosas de la vida, donde se valoran más los sentimientos que las pertenencias y la vida en comunidad y la autogestión es lo más importante. Donde todo el mundo es bienvenido a ese pequeño y precioso caos anárquico que es el valle de los Mumins.

Una auténtica joya para niños escrita en una época terrible, los años 40, y que apelaba a la solidaridad, la paz y la igualdad.

Jessica says

Our first experience with the Moomins, and we are utterly charmed!

Ivonne Rovira says

While I enjoyed *Finn Family Moomintroll*, it was not nearly as delightful as *Comet in Moominland*. When Moomintroll and the tramp Snufkin discover a stovepipe hat, they unwittingly bring home what turns out to be a Hobgoblin's Hat. The hat wreaks all sorts of havoc until Moominmamma wisely hits on a solution.

Neither as witty or as funny as *Comet in Moominland*, *Finn Family Moomintroll* does introduce the odd little Thingummy and Bob, who have some very unusual ideas about stealing.

Cleo says

Ten stars!

Rachel Hartman says

This book is the reason I learned to read.

My mother read it aloud to me once and then refused to read it again. In fact, she washed her hands of the whole series on the grounds that it was "creepy". I was forced - forced! - to teach myself to read, if I wanted any more Moomins, ever. I got my revenge, however: I read this book out loud to HER while she was working in the kitchen and couldn't get away.

imbirowa says

„Samotno?? jest czasem potrzebna.”

Moja opinia: Muminki to Muminki. Wiadomo, że zawsze będzie je kochała i nigdy nie będzie zbyt stara na zapoznanie się z ich historią. Uwielbiam Wóczykija. Uwielbiam Ma?? Mi. Uwielbiam uroczy domek i przygody, jakie przeżywają. Sama chętnie polatałabym na chmurce.

Moja ocena: ★★★★★★★★

Amina says

Made me travel back to my childhood, what a warm feeling, I used to watch it as a cartoon called ???? ???? and what a terrific world...

Lisa Vegan says

I feel sacrilegious in rating this book with just 2 stars. I almost “graded” it higher.

I apologize to everyone who loves this book. I’ve gotten over it now, but for years I was extremely perturbed when others I knew didn’t love *A Wrinkle in Time* and some of my other favorites.

I apologize to The Muskrat (who is a real hoot) and to Moominmamma (because she really is a great character) and some of the other characters too. I apologize to the author because there were glimmers and glimpses throughout the book of a book I’d have found great, including a few choice lines that I appreciated greatly.

Thanks to all the members of the Children's Books group who kept me motivated to continue reading by explaining why they loved this book/series in this thread: <http://www.goodreads.com/topic/show/3...>, and who also gave some specific information helpful to enjoying the story, including a link to a character list. And thanks to my old Goodreads friend Jenny (who unfortunately left Goodreads shortly after she’d joined – we used to incessantly discuss the book *Into the Forest* at a time when very, very few Goodreads members had shelved it and when only two of my real world friends had read it) who was (I think) from Finland and who raved about these books, which is why I read an owned copy.

I had an excruciatingly difficult time getting into this story. I felt irritable while reading it. If not for the help I received from the Children's Books group members in understanding the book and its background, I doubt I'd have enjoyed it at all. This might be due, in part, to my mood at the time of reading it and my stage of life.

It didn’t help that I needed a magnifying glass to read the letter to the reader and the map (yes, this book does have one of my beloved maps!) at the beginning of the book.

There are hints of psychological sophistication and wry humor, and it seems to be the kind of tale I “should”

enjoy.

I hated the positive depiction of tobacco.

I loved the mother sending the kids to the cave until they were in better moods and really enjoyed it when the house turned into/grew overgrown with foliage because of the magic hat.

I eventually warmed to the characters, though I do wish I had first read the book where they were first introduced: Comet in Moominland because I might have enjoyed them from the beginning rather than being confused by them; in this book there is a lack of introduction to the world/characters. I also ended up enjoying some of the events that take place. However, I didn't like the writing style, which I blame on the translation. (Never have I wished so fervently that I could read Swedish or Finnish.)

This book has the same feel to me as Winnie-the-Pooh, other books I never read as a child but read one of them only after I was a Goodreads member. I liked that one better than this, even though the sense of humor in this is much more sophisticated and probably better able to be appreciated by adults as well as by children.

The illustrations were very cute, but I think I'd have enjoyed them more if I'd known something, anything, about the characters before I'd started reading.

I will keep thinking and if I ever read the earlier book, I'll try to reread this book too and see if I like it any better the second time around.

And, pay no attention to me, but take a look at the ratings breakdown for this book. Obviously. I'm not a typical reader of this book.

Tweedledum says

The troll toy craze first arrived in the UK around 1962. I was 7 and I begged for one of these little dolls. I must have really wanted it as I never asked my parents for anything. Mum wasn't too impressed. Tried hard to dissuade me but perhaps the novelty of her daughter's passionate appeal won her over. How I treasured that toy.

I did not encounter Moomintroll and friends however until a year or two later and did not really associate the two in my mind. My toy was a troll... These were Moomins. Nevertheless it was again love at first sight. The cover of the puffin book was delightful and as for the stories.... So quirky and a celebration of free spirit. Everything was OK. Moominmamma did not, it seemed, bat an eyelid at anything... All visitors were welcome no matter how eccentric and Moomintroll could go off n adventures whenever he fancied. Ah that's the life....

Sadly troll has come to mean a very different kind of animal now. Something much closer to it's Nordic origins.. A person bent on destroying the pleasure of others.. Where's a big billy goat gruff when you need one?

Nikki says

I loved the Moomins so much as a kid. I don't remember reading them, actually -- surprisingly, no sense of

location or of my fingers on the pages comes back to me, though usually I'll remember where I read books and whether my edition was new or old, and the smell of the pages... In any case, I do remember that I loved the Moomins, and it was lovely to curl up and reread now I'm older, and wiser, and really not feeling well.

I do love the range of characters, all with different customs and such, that just happily get along. And I love everyone's consideration of everyone else's different needs. It's... accepting, and hopefully inspiring, without being the slightest bit preachy.

Cristin says

Read this one when I was seven...At the time, I didn't understand the concept of "Never judge a book by its cover" (and boy am I glad, as this book's just as good, if not better than it's awesome, mind-candy cover) and at first, I picked this one up solely based on the colorful illustrations on the jacket.

It's still a favorite of mine and reminds me of the absolute wonder of being a kid. This book rocks my world. What a little freakin' treasure chest of glory the Moomintrolls are!

Snufkin is a role model. I want to roam around with a harmonica...with no possessions...just a story and a song.

This one is unforgettable.

Hannah Greendale says

Click here to watch a video review of this book on my channel, *From Beginning to Bookend*.

A charming return to the land of Moomin Valley, in which Moomintroll and his friends discover a Hobgoblin's magical top hat. Delightful mayhem ensues.

Deborah O'Carroll says

ALKSDJFLSKJDFLJ I JUST LOVE THESE BOOKS SO MUCH. ^__^ *huggles book forever and a day* I think this one might actually be my favorite overall! (Though parts of Moominsummer Madness are still my favorites too.) So cute and fun and amusing and whimsical. UGH I LOVE SNUFKIN AND ALL OF THEM. <3 JUST. AWK. I CAN'T EVEN. I JUST LOVETH IT. ^_^ <3333
