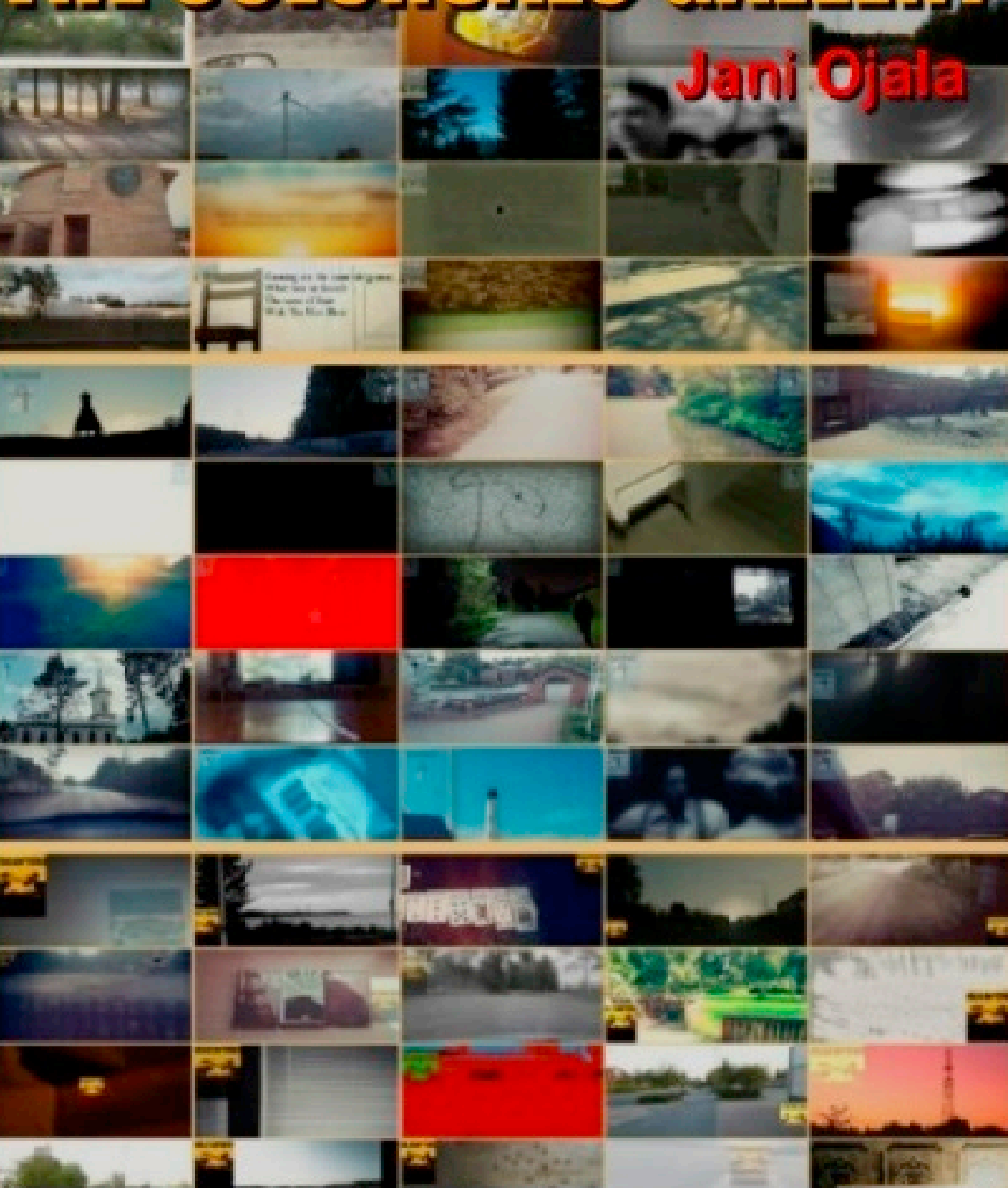


THE OULUNSALO GALLERY

Jani Ojala



The story behind every titlecard, overview and recap of every chapter of the Oulunsalo Fiction-trilogy

The Oulunsalo Gallery

The story behind every titlecard, overview and recap of every chapter of the *Oulunsalo Fiction*-trilogy.

This book is an accompaniment to **Ice Road** (2016), **Talisman** (2017), and **Helicopters** (2019)

Jani Ojala

”If you understood everything I said,
you’d be me.”

—Miles Davis

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Alright, first of all:

I still don't think of myself as much of a photographer, or an artist. Just wanted to repeat myself a little bit before going over to this book.

The idea to take titlecard-photos for each chapter of all three *Oulunsalo Fiction*-books, came to me in 2018, when I started preparing for the process of releasing all the stories in the coming year on my *wordpress*-site. There needed to be a thumbnail, and I thought, *why not?* These stories – about every character, about every conflict, and just the larger story altogether – provoke mental images in my mind all day long. Would be nice to express that, along with reaching a wider audience for my writings, with the idea of releasing every chapter for free. Also, to return to that point about *mental images*, this story takes place in – and is largely inspired *by* – my hometown, Oulunsalo, where I spent the first 22 years of my life.

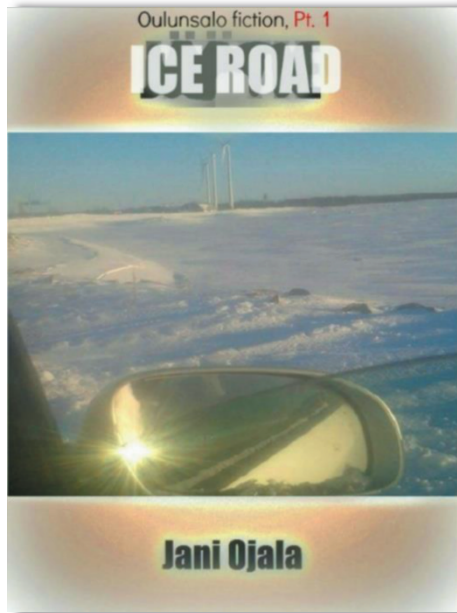
In 2019, after *Helicopters* was released and as I made the executive decision to release the entire trilogy within one set of covers... I decided it'd be a good idea to utilize all these pictures – manifestations of mental images I have from the goings-on of every part of the big story. It did make it a little more expensive to get the book printed, but it had page count up the wazoo as it was – thickest book I've ever had printed, by the way, *fun fact*. So I

figured, what the hell? May as well make it a more visual experience. Now that I could. Already had all the photos up there.

And now the photos are here.

Ice Road starts on page **9**,
Talisman on page **89**,
and Helicopters on page **173**.

Ice Road starts here.



Chapter 1
The Cabinet Door, Pt. 1



Alright, fun fact to start. I wrote this chapter in the summer of 2014, which was half a year before I actually started to come up with the main story, and writing down all the major plot-points that it would take. I still remember the day I wrote down all these things that would happen to Tapani, Miska and Samuli. It was a particularly white December's morning, and these three were the only characters in this *story-to-be* that I knew would play a part in it, back when writing this chapter. The story didn't have a name back when *The Cabinet Door, Pt. 1* was being written (neither did the chapter, actually). I just knew that this Miska guy was going to be trouble, these two middle-aged men would end up as corpse-disposers, and a protégé of Tapani's, by the name of Samuli, would enter the fold very soon after the first chapter.

Also a noteworthy fact is that in the newspaper Tapani reads, there's a headline about a Soisalo-family. This is the first of *two* callbacks in the trilogy to **Ylipurema (Overbite)**, the book I wrote and released before *Ice Road*. The second one is in the last chapter of **Helicopters**, where Samuli goes back to his cell and exchanges a couple words with his cellmate, Sami, who is his brother and *also* a main character from **Overbite**.

But, to the picture! (Don't worry, the rest of the preambles aren't gonna be *this long* [for the most part]). This one's just about... *the name*. The title of the chapter. It's a cabinet door, it's the closest cabinet door to me at the moment of taking Ice Road's pictures. I was living at my parents' house, and this picture is taken from that very house.

All kinds of ideas I come up with~.

Thought-bubble: "Business as us" (a line from the Blu & Exile song Maybe One Day; comes after Tapani advises Miska, in a subtle way, to commit murder if the unknown problem-causer he talks about, gets to be too much to handle; reflects the characters' everyday-like attitude about crime)

Chapter 2

The Head



The second chapter, *The Head*, quite simply revolves around Tapani coming over to Miska's place on his demand. The image, I wanted to be of the first thing he sees. But I was short on severed human heads at the moment, so instead went for something a little more... symbolic.

I was really into *The Doors of Perception* at the time, and figured this could be a *doors of perception*-type of thing. An image of a door being opened, and Tapani being *illuminated* on the seriousness of this matter. The outside is dim – not quite pitch-black, as our protagonist has been around the block and has a conception of what he's about to face. But it is contrasted, by the indoors of the carage looking so bright that you can barely see the details of it.

This chapter introduces **Samuli Leinonen**, main character to all three books.

Thought-bubble: "There's a feeling I get / When I look to the west" (a line from the Led Zeppelin song Stairway to Heaven; comes when Miska's experiencing minor anxiety whilst (off-narration) cutting the corpse in his house, in the moments leading to his argument with Tapani; expresses that unknown feeling people call panic, and also the one people try to regain when in-panic – the more mysterious one, peace.)

Chapter 3

The Island of Hailuoto





The idea to take titlecard-photos for each chapter of all Oulunsalo Fiction-books occurred to me in 2018, as I prepped for the process of releasing the trilogy on wordpress.com. There needed to be a thumbnail when you share it on social media, and I thought: why not? These stories, these characters, conflicts and settings provoke mental images in my mind all day long anyways. Be nice to express that. Little things from my hometown, Oulunsalo, inspire me more than I'll probably remember ten years from now. I'll have this trilogy to look back on, in case I ever forget. / So this book is different from anything I've released before. It's a book about my books - the absolute power move for a young writer in fiction.

The trilogy was a 5-year project, and here I'll go in-depth about what inspired everything in the magnum opus of my writing career... so far. / I'll be a lot less formal here than I've been on anything else, going over memories and images. To keep up with that spirit, I didn't edit the book at all either. All written in one take. Probably gonna run into some typos, but that doesn't matter. The testimony was complete.

