



Leverage from
the EU
2014–2020



HÄMEENLINNA

Main story: Elli and the lost ring

Elli Otilia Palander was the oldest of six children and the only girl. When she was a child, she probably spent her time with her five brothers, but Elli also wanted to go to school. She was a well-off girl who was interested in helping others and doing charity work with those less fortunate. She was also interested in art in many forms. She was ahead of her time, open-minded and unprejudiced and – consequently – often seen as unruly. She did not enjoy parlours or embroidery.

Elli liked to go out to town and see the different sides of life, to get to know different types of places and lifestyles. She met interesting people on her trips and saw many things.

One day she noticed that she had lost a ring her mother had given her. Her mother will not be angry, she will just sigh and be upset. Elli has to find the ring. But where? She has been to so many places, even the castle, and listened to all the stories people have told her. Her head was swirling, and she wondered what is true and how can all this be possible?

How did she manage to travel forward and back in time? And where is her mother's ring?

Sibelius's birthplace: Son of a cold winter day

On a cold winter day, in the midst of the misery of the famine years, a boy was born of whom everyone would later hear about. The odds were against it: it was unthinkable that a doctor's son would become an artist. A good profession was what was needed, especially after the father of the family died just a few years later of typhus. The family had to move in with their grandmother, and all their possessions were auctioned.

The boy, called Janne, was talented. After a while, the family settled in a spacious house with the grandmother and aunts, and soon music filled the house. Janne's singing voice maybe made you cringe, but he played the piano and, later, the violin, beautifully.

Janne, his sister and brother made up a trio. Compositions also started to appear. His academic talents were not as obvious, and his homework was often decorated with notes, too.

To the grandmother's surprise, Janne managed to pass the matriculation exam. He moved to Helsinki and enrolled at the university to study law. He only made progress in his studies at the conservatory, though.

Soon, the whole nation was talking about him, known by his stage name, Jean Sibelius, that he had picked from his uncle's business card.

Palander House: Edvard's day

Ernesti Suolahti recalls how the Palanders used to celebrate the name day of his father, Edvard



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Palander, a teacher in the 1880s, with a big feast, so different from the modest and quiet life they usually led.

Preparations in the kitchen started well in advance. The kitchen was the domain of the cook, Mrs Heerman, who had learned the profession in the household of governor Ammond. Ernesti and his brother Hugo were frequently asked to run errands in town. Their favourite was going to the tobacco shop.

The lyceum's eight-player student ensemble performed. They had already paid a visit to their teacher in the morning and played in the imposing drawing room. The octet included Jean Sibelius, who later became a famous composer.

The guests arrived in the evening with their customary presents. The ingredients for hot toddy had been placed in the host's chambers for the gentlemen, and the ladies enjoyed wine and biscuits in the drawing room. There was punch served in the parlour for the young people.

When it was nearing ten o'clock, the doors to the dining hall swung open, and the festivities continued until the wee hours. As odd as it sounds, everyone woke up early, but no-one looked tired.

Willa Vaski: Bakehouse

In 1988, while having coffee in the garden of the house where she was born, Isa Kuparinen looked back on its history.

In her childhood, Isa had participated in the baking of the hefty cinnamon rolls in the Palander Bakehouse. After its bakehouse years, the long-time lady of the house, Aino Suolahti, had decided to call it Willa.

The turmoil surrounding the early years of Finnish independence did not interfere with the garden's idyll, but in 1918, there was a chaotic event outside. Isa still remembered the horrible blast when a railway carriage full of ammunition exploded in the railway yard.

When young Isa and her friend, Elli Palander, were caring for the injured brought into the garden, they got the idea that they would comfort the wounded by handing out warm, hand-knit socks. Their elaborate patterns were inspired by the wooden gates of the house.

After the house was sold, some 20 years earlier, to the headquarters of the Hämeenlinna Military District, Isa's childhood home was turned into an office.

On this day, Isa was delighted that Mrs Aro, whose family had just rented the house from the City of Hämeenlinna, invited her to the garden to rest her 100-year-old feet and tell stories of the old times.

Häme Castle: The mysterious death of the male witch



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A long time ago, it was laid down in the law that the most heinous criminals be sentenced to death. That was the case with Esko and Urbanus, sons of Niilo, who had been condemned at the court assembly for a horrible deed of witchcraft!

The brothers, who had made a pact with the Devil, were brought into the Häme Castle in 1665 to wait for their punishment. Their presence terrified everyone.

Finally, something happened that scared the people at the castle out of their minds: Esko was found dead in his cell. Did he die a natural death or did he kill himself? It was common knowledge that restless souls haunted the living, and suicide was the most mortal sin of all, and one that calls for the Devil to come among the people of the castle!

The body could not be buried in sacred soil nor outside the churchyard walls – it might have come back to haunt them. So, they placed the body in a locked box to wait for more instructions from the Court of Appeal.

Finally, the word came: Urbanus should be released and sent away, and he was to take the cursed body with him.

Everyone at the castle was overjoyed: they got rid of both the living and the dead male witches!

Prison: Antti Isotalo in Hämeenlinna

The most legendary robber chief and Puukojunkkari gang leader, Antti Isotalo from Southern Ostrobothnia, was one of the most famous prisoners held at the Häme Castle during its prison years.

The gangs were known for terrible knife-fights, but people also looked up to them. Isotalo is still famous for songs written about him, and at his own time, he was a prominent figure in his home region despite his criminal career. Assaults, thefts and moonshine distilling were listed on his criminal record. In the end, he was sentenced to death for committing manslaughter by stabbing someone.

Luckily for Antti, the Senate pardoned him in 1870. His sentence was mitigated to 12 years in the penitentiary, a whipping and a fine. He served his sentence in the facilities that now host the Prison Museum.

During his time in the prison, Antti was known as a fair man who took part in building the gazebo still standing in the Kaupunginpuisto Park in Hämeenlinna. He also used to pull the prison governor's children around in a sled in winter time.

Antti pleaded not guilty to murder but thought that his punishment was in other respects reasonable. He later returned to his home region and lived there as a distinguished man.



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Hämeenlinna Church: "The city is on fire"

Osmo, the sexton of the Church of Hämeenlinna, is in the sacristy when he hears someone crying. He finds a little boy in the church, sobbing,

"The city is on fire!" a clear voice echoes around the amphitheatre-style nave of the church.

"Who is it hiding here?" Osmo asks gently.

"It's just me, Johan Sibelius, or Janne as everyone knows me."

Osmo takes the boy to the window. The city outside is quiet and the Kirkkopuisto Park is blazing with autumn colours.

"Please calm down now and tell me why you are in such a panic!"

"I was fishing at the Vanajavesi lake and my fishing mate told me about the city fire that happened over thirty years ago. Almost the entire city burnt down, and only the church survived. I don't know if it was my imagination or if I fell asleep, it felt so real! I ran to the church to be safe."

Janne's eyes brighten up as he looks around.

"Here, in the Pantheon of the north, you can almost feel like you are in Rome!"

The organist has climbed on the organ loft and begins to play the clear tone of the oboe organ stop. Closing his eyes, Janne lies down on the church pew.

The dream of the future virtuoso composer is visible in his expression: "I want to be able to create such beauty too!"

Ahola-Valo Museum: Bless you!

"Congratulations, you have won a glass of the Ahola-Valo health drink!"

Aatos is perplexed: "But why?"

"You have been viewing this table for such a long time so attentively. It is my favourite, too.

Everyone who gets absorbed into the work is treated to a health drink," the gallerist explains with a smile.

"You must have a beautiful soul!"

Aatos is at the small framing gallery at Verkatehdas, in Hämeenlinna.

"Is this where I will find my soul?"

The painting is a work of illustration by Aleksanteri Ahola-Valo to a poem by Katri Vala: "*Convert me to be like you, earth, to be able to constantly revive, to create something anew.*" Both the poem and the painting praise creativity.

Aatos thinks about his life and Ahola-Valo. He remembers Ahola-Valo's motto: *We must generate health and, through health, beauty; and we must generate life, as it is a form of art in itself.*

Aatos is sunk in thought.

"Yes. Health, art and life are all one. Everything has a direction. The purpose of art is to lead the way."

Aatos raises the health drink to his lips.

"A toast to health! Oh, this is nice. I want more!"

Avux spruce resin: Wisdom from nature

A boy is walking in the forest with his dog. He is looking for a cure for the scurvy ravaging his village.

They see a vagabond who is making a mixture. The mixture makes it possible to travel in time – maybe they can find a solution in the past?



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The boy and the dog taste the drink. Suddenly they realise they have travelled to a new place where they can see houses and carriages. A man is scraping something off a tree trunk.

"What year is it now?" the boy asks the man.

"It is 1821 and we are in Hämeenlinna", the puzzled man responds.

He explains that he is collecting spruce resin and he is studying to become an apothecary at the Hämeenlinna pharmacy in the market square.

"Can you help us?" the boy asks. "There is scurvy in our village."

The man advises him to collect herbs and resin, to make an extract out of them and make everyone in the village drink it. The boy says his thanks to the man and drinks the potion given to him by the vagabond. He has instantly returned from the past and starts collecting the ingredients pointed out by the man.

The boy checks all the herbs he finds in the *Flora Fennica* textbook and realises that he had actually met Elias Lönnrot in the forest.

Militaria Museum: Life at the barracks

The barracks next to Häme Castle formed a small town where families lived ordinary lives.

When the evenings began to get dark in the autumn, the children would explore places off limits to them. One great place to explore was the loft of a building that was always locked.

A loose board was discovered, and one of the children climbed in. Something gleamed in the beam of the torch: tins. Underneath them was a paper with peculiar-looking writing. He grabbed some tins, put the piece of paper in his pocket and left quietly. The tins were a great find. The preserved fruit, from the war times, was delicious. The piece of paper he put between his diary.

Seventy years later, an old man returned to his childhood neighbourhood. There are no more soldiers there. The large brick building had been refurbished and was now a museum. There were cannons and pioneer equipment outside. As he was looking at the cryptographic devices in the museum, the man remembered the piece of paper from his childhood. Could he have decoded the encrypted message with these devices? Probably. The man smiled as he crossed the field in the barracks to get to his car.

Skogster Museum: The city's memory

People sometimes think that buildings or items have a memory.

The Skogster building located next to the church has witnessed all the important events in the city in the last hundred years or so. It is a delightful thought that the actual "memory of the city", the City and Regional Museum, are now located in this former trading house.

The museum collections are as old as the building, i.e., a little over a century. The memory of the exhibits does, however, stretch much farther. The oldest exhibits have seen the town in its original



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location, next to the old castle, as well as the Swedish and Russian times, the big fires and the distress of the famine years.

Some memories are of the more private kind: stories of birth and death, festivities and daily life. You cannot see or remember everything at once, and only a fraction of the memories of the museum are exhibited at one time. I wonder what is on exhibit right now?

Wetterhoff: Extracts

Spring 1884

Home at last! Summer has almost arrived in Hämeenlinna! The trip home was a pleasant one, as my dear friend Lucina Hagman came to Stockholm to meet me and we travelled home together.

In February 1885

I am delighted to have made use of the knowledge that I acquired in Stockholm, and to pass it on to my students at the Lyceum! I have such fine students. One of them, Janne Sibelius, is musically very talented, but I do wish he took his French studies more seriously.

I decided to write an article in Hämeen Sanomat to propose the establishment of a school for young women to learn a trade and thus encourage them to live a decent life. The purpose is that we could offer these young women a trade with which they could earn a living and not fall into temptation. Handicraft and sewing skills would help them to stand on their own feet.

23 March 1885

"It is official! Together with some friends of mine, we have announced in the newspaper that we will establish a school of handicrafts. God bless our effort!"

The main story continues...

"Thank God!" Elli Palander's mother, Ottilia, exclaims.

Elli's fever has finally broken. She is looking at her mother, confused, and wonders why she is under the covers in her bed, even though the sun is shining outside.

"Mother, I am so sorry about the ring. I could not find it."

"You are wearing it, darling. You were hallucinating and did not calm down until I put it on your finger."

Elli looks at her hand. The ring is there.

"I travelled so far. I even met Elias Lönnrot, and saw what the town will look like

in the future. I saw how people will remember us, and what Janne was like when he was small, and what will happen in our bakehouse when enough time has passed."

"You had a high fever and were hallucinating for days. Stop thinking about it now, your father and brothers want to see



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you. We are all so happy that you will be fine. I will not let you go out to town so lightly dressed anymore, we were so worried. Janne has inquired how you are, as well as a young man, Kaarlo Wegelius, who is studying to become an apothecary, do you know him? "

"He was here for father's name day party with the apothecary, don't you remember? You yourself said he would be good fiancé for me."