

Lauri Ahtinen: *Divorce Diary*

Original title: Eropäiväkirja

Publisher: Like, 2019

What's a man to do when left on his own?

Divorce Diary is an autofictional work, drawn in a collage-like style, about divorce, falling in love, and a man's fumbling attempts at finding himself. The work is a stand-alone sequel to *Mold Diary* (2015). Though Lauri's family has made it through their harrowing experience with the mold pit, a couple of years later, his marriage ends in a devastating divorce. Out of the disorienting emotional turmoil and delirium that follows, however, new love and a new person emerges. This candid autobiographical comic describes what it feels like to alternate between singledom and parenthood on a weekly basis. Will this be the start of a new life full of partying and freedom, or something completely different?

Book review quotes:

“Ahtinen’s approach, both in his text and in his drawings, is gentle but self-ironic. Visually, *Divorce Diary* is multifaceted and collage-like, a strategy that supports the narrative and the fragmentary and contradictory experience it depicts.”

– Anni-Helena Leppälä, *Kansan Uutiset* (Helsinki)

“The roots of Ahtinen’s comics lie more among illustrated aphorisms than in traditional comics. We see this again in *Divorce Diary*, which relies strongly on the text... The illustrations build upon the emotional states in the text and inject various visual elements that are present at the same time... Ahtinen’s collage-like accumulation of images and the layout of textual elements may provoke horror in those more versed in the secrets of graphic design. But Ahtinen has developed his own style, to which he has now returned after *Elias* (2018), which had more in common with traditional comics.”

– Reijo Valta, *Sarjainfo* magazine

“[Ahtinen’s] drawing style is ragged but dripping with humanity. Anguish is emphasized in the exaggerated depictions of skin pores and furrows and splattered tears. At times, the visual narrative, along with the protagonist’s state of mind, fractures into pieces before returning to more tranquil settings and its reassuring depiction of millennial hipsterdom. The work maintains a gentle, ironic narrative distance, and the reader finds himself smiling from time to time.”

– Samuli Hytönen, *Kulttuuritoimitus* online magazine

Synopsis translated by Christina Saarinen.