

## **Sami Lopakka**

### ***Mud (Loka)***

Original title: Loka  
Publisher: Like, 2019

*“Free: One life, scrap condition. Will also trade for lightly used tombstone. Any name will do.”*

Seppo stands on a bridge in Siberia, watching his former life and possessions flow into waters of the Ob below. He’s botched up his long-term relationship with a drunken-stupor mistake and is trying to run from the situation. From Novosibirsk, he stumbles back west, but he can’t escape the anxiety and suicidal thoughts. His head is jammed with liquor, regret, and the final solutions on offer all the time.

Jorma closes the door to his office, throws off his white jacket, and bites open a bottle in the middle of his shift. An exceptionally talented head and neck surgeon, he has taken the final step and now drinks secretly even at work. Things aren’t much better at home. Jorma finally finds his tribe when Veikko and Pertti are wheeled into the hospital: Veikko has shot himself, and Pertti blew his face up with a blasting cap.

Kari, who loves and hates like a stone, packs his backpack and travels into the wilderness of Lapland, as far from human settlement as he can get in Finland. He has spent more of his life in the backwoods than in his city apartment. Even now in his middle age, Kari has still not come to terms with his sexuality – being gay has hounded him through life, leaving large scars that show in his behavior. Kari’s partner, Samuli, is from the south of Finland, and traveling with Kari, he finds himself in a completely new situation. He has never before spent a single second in the wilderness. He arrives at the Käsivarsi seaplane with a roller bag suitcase in tow.

*Mud* is a merciless dive into the soul of the Northern man, a darkly humorous story of staring into the abyss, in which everyone is fighting his own battle against the world and against himself.

### **Book review quotes**

“The novel *Mud* takes everyone and everything to the limit. I’m not at all ashamed to say I read the last fifty pages with tears in my eyes and a sniffly nose. And even when the book was over, the feeling wasn’t easy to shake.”

–*Turun Sanomat*

“Sami Lopakka is becoming Northern Finland’s leading male writer, and for good reason.”

–*Kaleva* (Oulu)

### **Praise for *Spectral (Marras)***

“Sami Lopakka makes his debut as a writer, and what a first run it is!” –*Savon Sanomat*

“Sami Lopakka’s debut is one of the literary events of the spring.” –*Kaleva* (Oulu)

Synopsis translated by Christina Saarinen.