

The Flying Missionary of Naantali

Based on an experience by Craig Petersen and Mike Nyborg

In Naantali town, so small and neat,
Where seven thousand souls would meet,
I served with Mike, my cousin third
(Though at the time, we'd not yet heard).

He came with President Wade one day,
An assistant on a splitting stay,
That morning Mike asked with a grin,
"Have you tried business tracking in?"

"I've knocked on doors," I did confess,
"In every corner, more or less, But businesses?
Well, that's brand new—
Let's give the Finnish shopkeeps a review!"

We entered one, all bright with hope,
The owner there? He couldn't cope.
He muttered something, curt and quick,
Like "Ei kiitos"—he dismissed us slick.

We left his store without delay,
And carried on throughout the day,
But evening came with brilliant plan:
"Let's visit flats above each span!"

Now here's where Finnish culture shines—
They value silence, crossing lines,
Disturbing peace not once, but twice?
That's not considered very nice!

The first door knocked—oh, what bad luck!
The same man answered, clearly stuck
Between his shop below and bed,
And steam was coming from his head.

He yelled in Finnish, fast and fierce,
With words that seemed my soul to pierce,
Mike wouldn't translate what he said—
I knew those words would turn me red!

In Finland, folks are known to brood,
They're not fans of the pushy dude,
And missionaries at the door
While watching sauna steam and more?

We turned away, towards the stair,
I followed Mike with utmost care,
But suddenly—oh, what a scene!—
The angriest Finn I'd ever seen!
He grabbed my jacket from behind,

Between my shoulders, you will find,
And launched me like a javelin throw
(The Finns are strong,
you ought to know!).

Past Mike I sailed through Finnish air,
Down one flight of the wooden stair,
I landed with a gentle thud,
Like Moomintroll who hits the mud.

I stood up quick, still in one piece,
But Finland's rage would not yet cease,
He came again with fury bright,
And threw me down the second flight!

Perhaps he thought I was a pest,
Or maybe failed his anger test,
Or maybe in his sauna brain,
He'd had enough of our refrain.

Now Finns are famous, this is true,
For silence, sisu, coffee too,
For Santa Claus and midnight sun,
But throwing missionaries? That's not done!

A few weeks later, strange to say,
I saw him in the store one day,
Among the rye bread, fish, and Fazer sweets,
I waved to him between the meats!



He tried to hide behind the shelf,
Perhaps embarrassed with himself,
But I smiled wide and waved some more,
Like nothing happened weeks before.

For this is what forgiveness means,
In Naantali's little Finnish scenes,
To show him that my heart was light,

No resentment from that flight!

President Wade and Sister too,
Taught us what the Lord would do,
With love and faith and service pure,
They made our testimonies sure.

I served as Secretary those last months,
And witnessed faith that never slumps,
The love they showed to everyone,
Reflected Christ, the Holy One.

Though I flew down those stairs that night,
And landed in a sorry sight,
I learned that Finnish hearts can warm,
After they've weathered every storm.

So here's to Finland, land of lakes,
Where even angry stairway shakes
Can't dim the gospel's shining light,
Or stop a missionary's flight!

To President and Sister Wade,
For all the difference that you made,
Your service blessed us one and all,
Even those who took a fall!

And to that man in Naantali town,
Who twice did throw this elder down,
I hope you found some peace one day,
And maybe even learned to pray.

For Finland taught me many things,
Like how forgiveness grows its wings,
And even when you're thrown about,
The gospel helps you work it out!

So thank you, Finland, cold and bright,
For lessons learned in morning light,
For saunas, salmiakki, and rye,
And teaching missionaries to fly!