

The Story of My Children **Essi Kummu**

Synopsis

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One morning an 8-year-old daughter comes to her mother and asks her if she had been lovely as a baby. The author can't tell her daughter the story of her birth because she doesn't remember it. But a birth story is vital.

Why shouldn't every little girl have the right to hear the story of her birth in the way it should be told? My little girl including. It starts here.

So begins a story of becoming a mother to prematurely born twins.

The connection between the human seedlings, sleeping in the aquariums of the ER, and their mother begins as a frail thread.

When Kummu opens up about the stage of her life ten years ago, it is hard to offer negative criticism. The milk carton-sized babies survived after resuscitations, surgeries, brain hemorrhages and other overwhelming difficulties and they become normal, bickering children.

When the healthy babies arrive at home, their mother realizes at some point that she is scared. For the new mother, the children's "rough start" at life, in the doctor's words, means lessons in sorrow and getting to know the emotional history of her own family and heritage. While exploring them, the fear of losing turns into love, connection and mutual relief.

The Story of My Children goes where fathers and mothers understand each other's anguish without regard to how happy their own early childhood was.

The book is an intimate story of recovery, and despite the real life background, it is written in fiction style. Its inspirations were storytellers the likes of Joan Didion and Siri Hustvedt. After its publishing, the book was part of a public discussion about the taboos and unspoken sides of motherhood. It expands from the question that started it all to a discourse about falling in love and whether loving is unavoidable even with the threat of losing.

"The Story of My Children is a novel about a big subject. And Essi Kummu seems to tell it shockingly honestly."

- Mervi Kantokorpi, Helsingin Sanomat

Synopsis translated by Hanna Gnann.