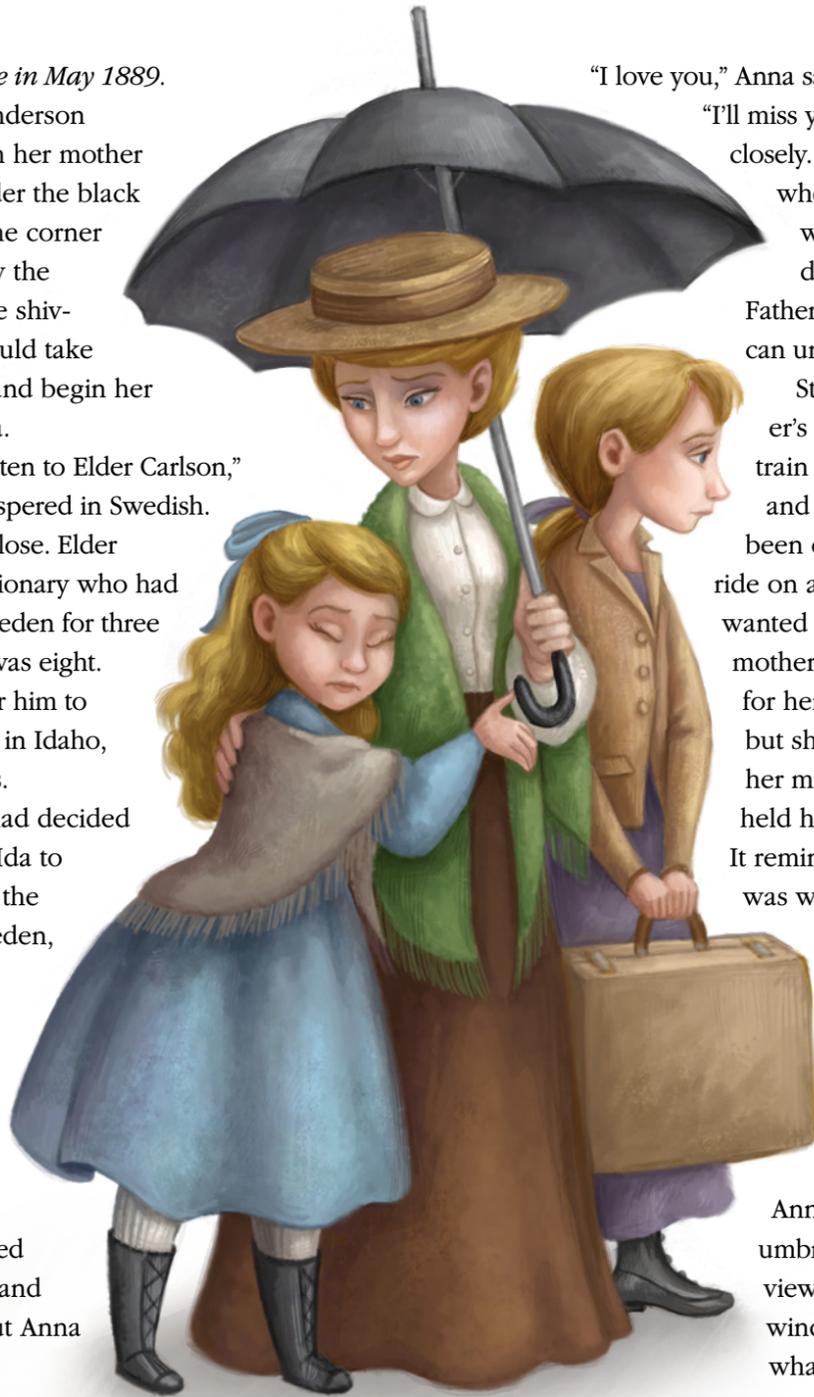


This story took place in May 1889.

Anna Matilda Anderson huddled with her mother and sister, Ida, under the black umbrella. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw the train approach. She shivered. This train would take her from Sweden and begin her journey to America.

“Be good and listen to Elder Carlson,” Anna’s mother whispered in Swedish. She held the girls close. Elder Carlson was a missionary who had been serving in Sweden for three years, since Anna was eight. Now it was time for him to return to his family in Idaho, in the United States.

When Mamma had decided to send Anna and Ida to America to escape the persecution in Sweden, Elder Carlson had offered to watch over them. Now he stood by the train. He motioned for the two girls to join him. Ida hugged her mother tightly and moved forward, but Anna stayed behind.



“I love you,” Anna said. “I’ll miss you.”

“I’ll miss you too. Now listen closely. If you come to a place where you can’t understand what the people are saying, don’t forget to pray to your Father in Heaven because *He* can understand you.”

Still thinking of her mother’s words, Anna got on the train and settled next to Ida and Elder Carlson. She had been excited about her first ride on a train, but now she only wanted one last glimpse of her mother. The train was too tall for her to see people’s faces, but she smiled when she saw her mother’s black umbrella held high above the crowd. It reminded her that Mamma was watching.

With a great bellow of smoke, the train lurched forward. At first it moved so slowly that Mamma ran beside the train. The black umbrella waved at Anna. But soon the black umbrella disappeared from view. Anna leaned against the windowpane and wondered what lay in store.

Anna’s Journey

By Jessica Larsen
Based on a true story



Several weeks later, Anna leaned against the windowpane of another train. This one was taking her to Salt Lake City, Utah. “America looks different than Sweden, *ja?*” she said to Ida.

“*Ja,*” Ida whispered back in Swedish. “But America is home now, and if we work hard enough, we can bring Mamma here too.”

There had not been enough money for Mamma to buy her own ticket. A family in Ogden, Utah, had paid for Ida’s passage to America. Ida would stay with them on their farm and work to repay them. But Anna would be staying with her aunt in Salt Lake City. Anna’s aunt had come to Utah several years earlier, and Mamma had written to tell her that Anna was coming.

After the train, they had taken a boat over the North Sea to Denmark. Then they sailed to England and

Ireland before crossing the Atlantic Ocean and landing in New York City. Anna had been seasick for most of the 15-day journey. She had been relieved to board a train in New York headed to Utah.

“Ogden, Utah!” the conductor called. Anna still knew no English, but she recognized the name of the city. Her heart sank. It sank even further when Elder Carlson stood and picked up his and Ida’s bags.

“Do you have to go?” she asked her sister.

“Yes,” Ida said gently. “Don’t worry, Auntie will be there when you get to Salt Lake City.”

Anna watched as Ida and Elder Carlson met his family at the station. They would take Ida in a covered wagon to her new home on the farm and then travel on to Idaho. Now Anna felt truly alone.