

By Jessica Larsen

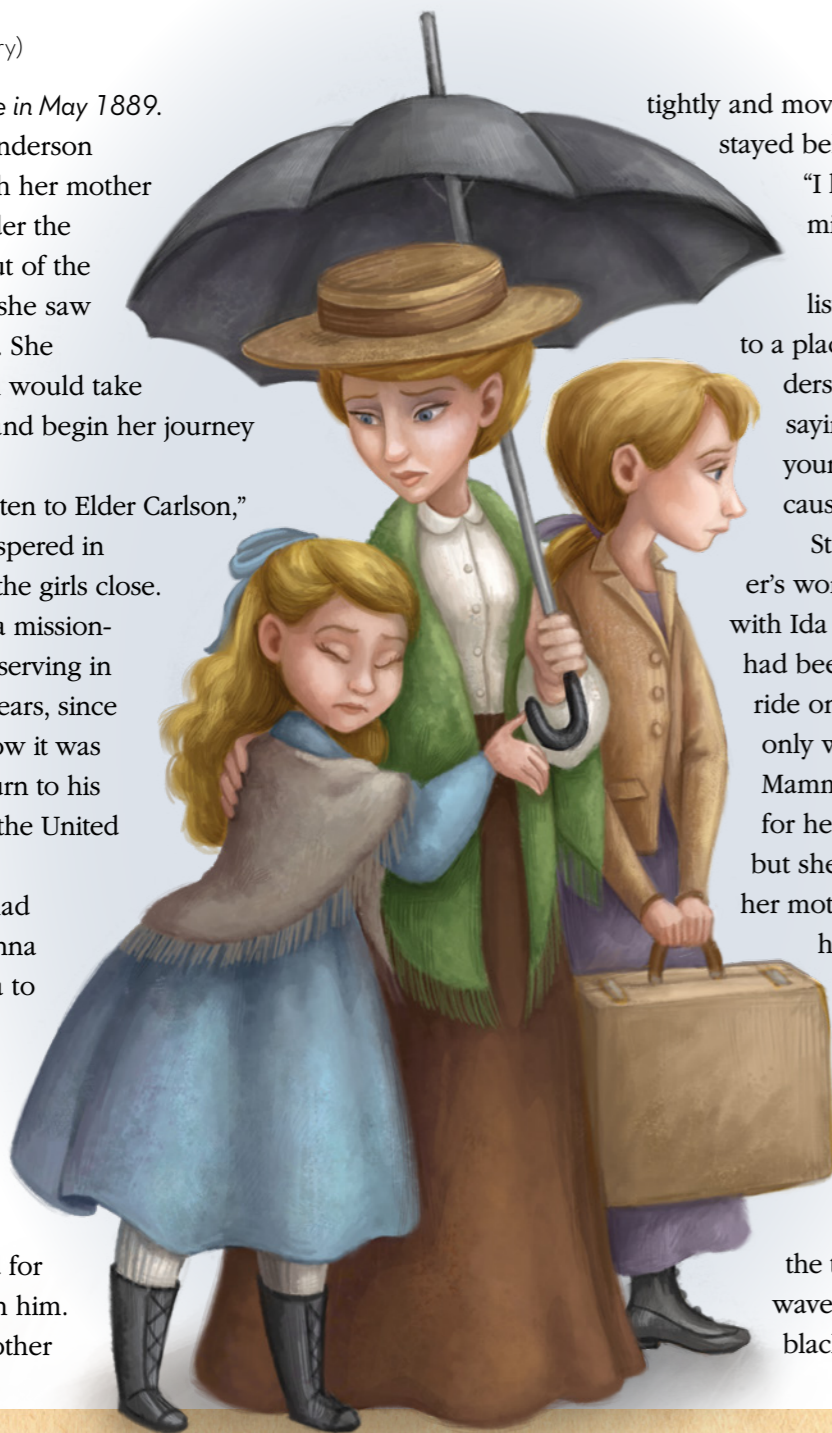
(Based on a true story)

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 with Ida and Elder Carlson. She had been excited about her first ride on a train, but now she only wanted one last glimpse of Mamma. 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. She knew it would be a long time before she saw Mamma again.

There had not been enough money for Mamma to buy a 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 stay with her aunt in Salt Lake City. Anna's aunt had gone to Utah several years earlier, and Mamma had written to tell her that Anna was making the long journey too.

After that first train trip, they took 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 was seasick for most of the 15-day journey. She was so relieved when she finally stepped off the boat!

"America looks different than Sweden, *ja?*" she said to Ida as they boarded the train in New York that would take them to Utah.

"*Ja*," Ida whispered back in Swedish. "But America is

home now, and if we work hard enough, soon we can bring Mamma here too."

At last they were on the final stretch of their journey. Anna would have been excited for it to end if it didn't mean losing Ida. There weren't enough days left!

Finally Anna heard the conductor call, "Ogden, Utah!" She knew no English, but Anna recognized that name. 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 from the train as Ida and Elder Carlson met his family at the station. They would take Ida to her new home on the farm and then travel on to Idaho. Now Anna felt truly alone. ♦

To be continued . . .

LEAVING HOME

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SHAWANA J. C. TENNEY

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