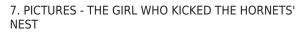


- 0. BEHIND THE SCENES Story Preface
- **1. BEHIND THE SCENES**
- 2. EXPO STIEG'S REAL-LIFE MAGAZINE
- 3. SOURCES for MIKAEL BLOMKVIST
- 4. SOURCES FOR LISBETH SALANDER
- 5. PICTURES THE GIRL with the DRAGON TATTOO
- 6. PICTURES THE GIRL WHO PLAYED WITH FIRE







In this image we see Stieg Larsson, during his boyhood, as a student in Sweden. By this time in his life, his maternal Grandfather had died and the lad was living with his parents. Photo online via Stieg Larsson Foundation.

Soon after he was born in <u>Skelleftehamn</u>, Stieg lived with his maternal grandparents in a tiny, remote village called Bjursele. It isn't easy to find. Even Google Earth depicts the area as a dense forest.

The best way to track-down the place, where Stieg spent his formative years, is to locate the Arctic Circle, as it makes its way across northern Sweden. <u>South of the Circle</u>, by around 250 miles, we find the towns of <u>Umeå</u> (where Stieg lived after his grandfather died) and <u>Skellefteå</u> (where his <u>parents met</u>).

<u>Bjursele</u> lies to the northwest of Umeå and <u>Skellefteå</u>. It is a place where <u>ice forms on windows</u> when the outside temperature plummets.

To find Stieg's childhood village on a satellite map, use its decimal coordinates: +63 30 00 (latitude) and +19 15 00 (longitude). The nearest major airport, at Helsinki, is about 574 km away.

What caused Stieg to live with his grandparents for eight years of his life? His father (<u>Erland</u>) and <u>mother</u> (<u>Evianne</u>) hoped to find jobs in Stockholm (hundreds of miles south) after Stieg (their first child) was born (in 1954). To make that happen, they entrusted the care of their son to Evianne's parents.

With no television and no school, Stieg began his education at his grandparents' cottage. He loved to read and listened, for hours, to his grandpa's stories. <u>Severin Boström</u> (move the slide show forward, to "next, 1955") - who had opposed the Nazi regime during WWII - was a constant source of fascination for his grandson.

Later - when the boy who loved to read became a writer who spun great tales - Larsson wove Bjursele into his storyline:

Bjursele was like a poster for the <u>Västerbotten</u> <u>country village</u>. It consisted of about twenty houses set relatively close together in a semicircle at one end of a lake...At the height of summer, it was as <u>pretty as a postcard</u>. (The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo - paperback edition - by Stieg Larsson, <u>page 362</u>.)

His idyllic life, with the grandfather he adored, ended when Severin died. By that time, Stieg's parents had moved to Umeå with Joakim (their second son). Larsson and his grandmother left their home in the woods and moved into the family's one-bedroom flat. Sleeping arrangements were atrocious:

In their tiny one-bedroom apartment, Stieg's grandmother took the sofa, while Stieg and Joakim had a bunk bed. Their parents slept in the hall, on the floor. Stieg, disturbed by this upheaval and Severin's death, retreated into his fantasies. (Nathaniel Rich, "The Mystery of the Dragon Tattoo," <u>Rolling Stone</u>, Issue 1120/1121, December 23, 2010, page 107.)

To cope with his vastly different life, <u>Stieg</u> - move the timeline to 1962, to see how he looked when he reunited with his family - began to write short stories. He was delighted, at the age of thirteen, when his parents gave him a typewriter (for his birthday).

As a teenager, during the 1970s, Stieg became interested in magazine writing. Sometime after he started his own science-fiction fanzine, he applied to the Stockholm School of Journalism.

Denied admittance, Stieg was undaunted and decided to look for stories in Africa. Surely - if he did good work -Swedish editors would publish his articles? He did ... but ... they didn't.

Larsson returned to Sweden, broke and sick (he'd contracted malaria in Africa). Unable to pursue his dreams, Stieg applied for work at the Stockholm post office where his job was loading packages.

Against the war in Vietnam, Stieg attended a protest rally. He met <u>Eva Gabrielsson</u> - move the time line forward to 1972 - with whom he would spend the rest of his life.

Then ... a friend helped Stieg to catch a break. He secured a position at TT (<u>*Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå*</u>) - Sweden's version of the AP (Associated Press). Although <u>his job</u> was to type other people's words, at least Stieg was working within the journalistic establishment.

Yet ... by the time he was 40 years old, Larsson had not achieved his goals as a writer. Although he'd been promoted from typist to graphic-artist, he was still working with other people's words - not creating his own stories. For whatever reason, TT's editors were bypassing Stieg when they handed-out writing assignments.

It was time for Stieg to start his own magazine in which he could publish his own words. He called it "Expo."

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/BEHIND-THE-SCENES-Stieg-Larsson-Behind-the-Drago n-Tattoo

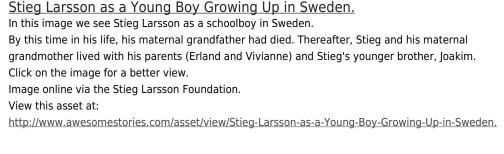
## See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/BEHIND-THE-SCENES-Stieg-Larsson-Behind-the-Dragon -Tattoo

# Media Stream







#### Skelleftehamn - Birthplace of Stieg Larsson

Railyards Skelleftehamn, by Paul in Skelleftea, online courtesy Flickr. Copyright, Paul in Skelleftea, all rights reserved. Image provided here as fair use for educational purposes. To see <u>more of this photographer's work</u>, visit his photostream at Flickr. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Skelleftehamn-Birthplace-of-Stieg-Larsson</u>



<u>Umea - Near the Artic Circle</u> Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Umea-Near-the-Artic-Circle</u>



<u>Umea - A Stieg Larsson Town</u> Photo of Umeå by Eikei, online at Eikei's Photostream via Flickr. Copyright, Eikei, all rights reserved. Image provide here as fair use for educational purposes. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Umea-A-Stieg-Larsson-Town</u>













#### <u>Skelleftea - Meeting Place of Stieg Larsson's Parents</u> Photo of Bonnstan, in Skellefteå, by datoriprogram, online courtesy skyscrapercity.com View this asset at:

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# Northern Sweden - Life Near the Arctic Circle

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#### Skelleftea - Ice on Windows

Photo of Skellefteå window by Paul in Skelleftea, online courtesy Flickr. Copyright, Paul in Skelleftea, all rights reserved. To see <u>more of this photographer's work</u>, visit his photostream at Flickr.

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#### Skelleftea - Town Area

Photo of Morö, Skellefteå, Vasterbotten (Sweden) by Paul in Skelleftea, online courtesy Flickr. Copyright, Paul in Skelleftea, all rights reserved. Image provided here as fair use for educational purposes. To see <u>more of this photographer's work</u>, visit his photostream at Flickr. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Skelleftea-Town-Area</u>

# Erland Larsson

Photo of Erland and Joakim Larsson by journalist, Ali Karim, who had previously <u>interviewed</u> <u>Erland</u>. Online, courtesy the Rap Sheet Blogspot. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Erland-Larsson</u>

#### Stieg Larsson at His Work Desk

Photo of Stieg Larsson, at his TT desk in the late 1970s, online courtesy <u>Quercus</u> (the publisher of Larsson's English-language *Millenium Trilogy*).

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Stieg-Larsson-at-His-Work-Desk



## Vasterbotten (West Bothnia) - Location in Sweden

Map of Västerbotten location, in Sweden, by Lapplänning (with highlighting by Lokal\_Profil) - online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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