

Ripping Reads

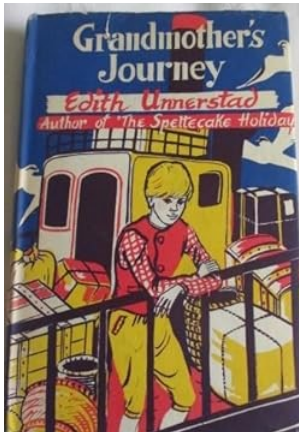
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Grandmother's Journey Edith Unnerstad by Susan Hill

Edith Unnerstad is a Swedish author who was born in Helsinki and lived in Aland and Stockholm.

Published by Michael Joseph in 1960, this is the story of a family of poor farmers who live in the Dalecarlia region of Sweden. The area was well known for hair work – that is the making of rings, jewelry, watch chains, wigs and plaits out of human hair.



When the father is ill and the farm struggling the grandmother decides to set out on a hair weaving trip together with her youngest daughter and her grandson Anders (12).

They start off in Stockholm, staying with an uncle, set up their small looms and set to work. They visit houses looking for work.

Having done well, they next set off for Helsinki. Finland is still a Grand Duchy of Russia. Here they meet a poor boy and a professor who is interested in their Dalecarlian dialect.

The next stop is St. Petersburg which Grandmother has visited before. Here they spend the autumn and winter. Anders sometimes gets tired of the hair work, but he perseveres for the sake of buying back his horse and to help the farm. They become friendly with some students and a rich family.

Eventually they earn enough to consider returning home. The young aunt will marry and Anders can buy back his horse. They have been away for a year.

