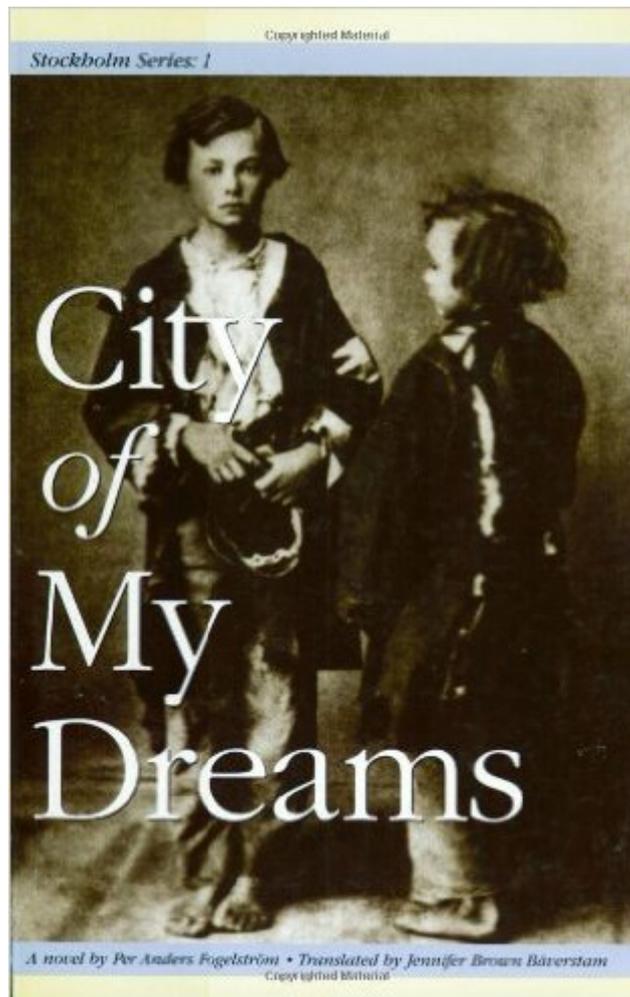


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# City Of My Dreams (Stockholm Series, Vol. 1)



## Synopsis

This is the first book in Fogelstrom's five-volume Stockholm Series, which broke the record for bestsellers in his native Sweden. After reading the series in Swedish, Jennifer Brown Baverstam, an accomplished translator of Swedish and French, and married to a Swede, vowed to make these books available in English to share with her American family and friends. Per Anders Fogelstrom was delighted with this effort and worked with Jennifer until his death in 1998.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

City of My Dreams, the first book in Per Anders Fogelstr m's five-volume Stockholm Series, broke the Swedish record for best sellers. A compelling storyteller known for his narrative sweep, his acute characterization and the poetic qualities of his prose, Fogelstr m was highly acclaimed even before he wrote the series. Ingmar Bergman made one of his earlier novels, Summer with Monika, into a film that is now a classic. After reading his series in Swedish, Jennifer Brown B verstam, an accomplished translator of Swedish and French, married to a Swede, she vowed to make these books available in English. The skill of both author and translator brings into English this superb telling of the tale of Henning Nilsson and his family, a family whose origins and growth in the underclass of nineteenth century Stockholm mirrors the growth of Stockholm itself into a modern European metropolis. Beginning with the arrival in the city of fifteen-year-old Henning, barefoot and penniless, on the eve of the industrial revolution, it continues with the story of an impassioned struggle for a fully human life. Powerfully written, City of My Dreams sweeps the reader along in a historic saga of fortune, love, and acceptance of the existing order of things in a society

experiencing great social and political upheaval. Clearly a masterpiece of historical realism, this novel transports the reader into the inexorable drama of another person's life. A favorite among Swedish readers of all ages, this translation is a welcome gift to English readers.

CITY OF MY DREAMS conveys the way of life--its textures, rhythms, smells, patterns, trials, and joys--of the poor but proud in 19th C Stockholm. It is not a historical novel in the usual sense, but a deeply contemporary reconstruction of the past by a writer who was in love with the city in which he spent his life and knew everything there was to know about it. Framed as a series of sequences that accumulate in emotional power and grip the reader ever more tightly, it is compulsively readable and deeply moving. Although it is set in Stockholm and details Swedish life with loving care, the author's vision is so universal that the reader ultimately forgets its foreignness. The translation is sensitive to the music of the original and creates a strong English equivalent that makes it seem it was written in English to begin with--you forget you are reading a translation. You forget, in fact, that you are reading, and get lost in the story.

First of all, realize that the translator is crucial - and she does a stellar job. Having read various resources as "color" for genealogy, I was deeply moved by Fogelström's characters, his depth of understanding of human nature, and the natural way in which he presents events that are almost beyond our understanding in the 21st century. His protagonist is a good man, yet one that many can empathize with; this is true of many characters, giving us a multi-faceted portrait of ourselves given the same conditions. Moving to the city, finding work, living one among 6 in a room, sleeping on the floor, the simple joys of a picnic by the river - the reader will find himself immersed in the life of the time to the extent that you can actually picture it. For once, I cannot imagine an improvement - except, perhaps, to get the rest of the series translated!

I am an avid reader; and this is one of the best books that I have had the pleasure to read. My grandparents immigrated to the US from Sweden in the 1880's/90's and I visited Stockholm and Southern Sweden in 2010 so I have a special interest. However, this book has universal appeal in that the struggles and joys of poor Europeans in the late 1800's is the story of many of our ancestors. I will soon be reading "Children of the Dream"; and I hope that the third, fourth and fifth books are currently being translated and will be available soon.

This five-book series was recommended by my just-met Swedish cousins who visited me this

month, and whom I will visit in one year. A bleak and grim time in early Stockholm, but quite well-written I'm getting a deeper perspective for the early times in Sweden, long before my two paternal grandparents emigrated from northern Sweden to Alaska. I will certainly be reading the other four books!

As I was going to visit Stockholm, I thought I would read about the city via these historical novels. Fascinating, what a hard time they had in 1860 and right through to the end of the century. A great read.

An incredible picture of the Stockholm of the mid 1800s. The book seems to capture the social and economic factors that created the modern Swedish society. It balances the struggle and resignation of the working classes with their passion and desire to improve their lot. Fogelström deftly captures the different emotions and worldviews of the desperately poor and their perspective on the injustice and exploitation they faced. My only criticism is that the prose (either the writing or the translation) is not great. I like the simplicity, but it can be distracting.

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