

The Siblings

Theme: "Free Theme"

My grandpa had eight siblings. Some of them kept living together, and later died, in the same house where they were born. Going to that old family home deep in the Swedish forest was like entering a time warp, and I spent years making visits.

The second part of the photo series, is from the week after the last living brother passed away. When I returned to the house to photograph the sudden absence of the siblings, it also felt like I was capturing the end of an era of an entire generation.

Today Sweden can be defined as a welfare state, but that wasn't the case before WWII. The siblings experienced The Great Depression and the period before the urbanization of the 1940s. By the age of 13, they were working full time in the forest, at the charcoal stacks, or on the farm.

Some of them had habits that we'd now label as compulsive hoarding. But for them, saving every single plastic container meant that you were prepared for the next crisis. By living together, they practiced collectivism as a natural part of life. This seems weird to modern-day Swedes, who live in one of the most individualistic societies in the world.

In the siblings' house the world was small. The concept of the larger world encroaching sparked fear, but it was also a source of curiosity. They often struggled to articulate these conflicting feelings.

I hope this series will be an insight in a previously common, but now rare, Scandinavian lifestyle. And show the importance of understanding between generations, to evade prejudice and fear in quickly changing societies.