

Stuck in the elevator – through a small gap, we could get fresh air

Jacob Knagenhjelm got stuck in a Swedish elevator together with two American tourists.

Sigrid Nese Thue 27.05.25 06:00

A Kauping (person from Kaupanger, Norway) and two American tourists encountered an unexpected challenge in a Swedish castle.

– Now it's three years since last I was stuck somewhere with some Americans, so it was about time it happened again, Says Jacob Knagenhjelm.

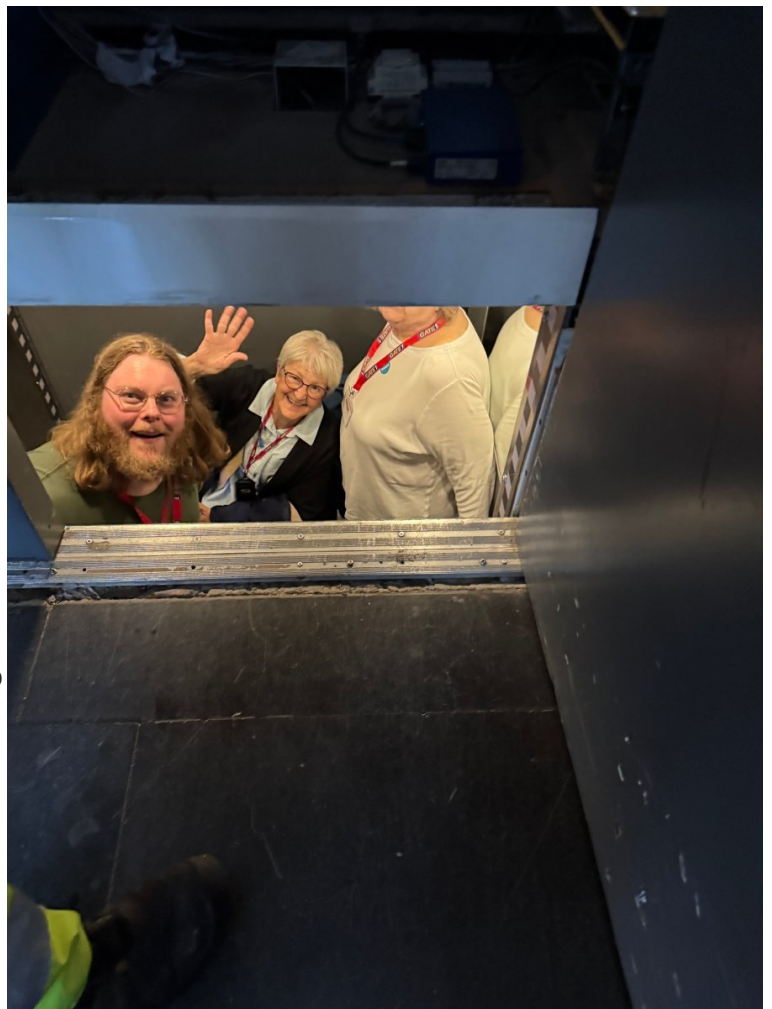
He works as a tour leader and is currently visiting Copenhagen with 22 Americans.

- We went for a brief venture into Malmö to learn – and see – Swedish culture. I just wanted to show them how safe & tranquil life is over there.

The Elevator Stopped

On Sunday they were supposed to visit Malmö Castle.

- We had to go up one level, and some of the ladies in the group rather felt that the elevator was safer option, compared to the Swedish steps.



- And then?

- And then the elevator promptly stopped.

- What went through your head?

- I thought that I had to push all the buttons, so to speak. Then I pressed the alarm and the siren started howling through the castle. I was worried that they might have claustrophobia, we all started to sweat.

But Jacob knew what to do.

- Luckily I managed to keep the mood up. I tried to lighten it by a good combination of humour from Sogn (*my home region, Jacob*) and off the record discussions about politics. I'd rather you don't publish this part, because I'm *really* not supposed to touch that subject, but, as the old quote goes, "*in time of dire need, even the devil will eat a fly*".

In the elevator, selfies were taken and, illicitly, American politics might have been discussed.

Got fresh air

It took some time before help arrived, even though a Swede tried the best he could.

- We could receive fresh air through a small opening in the door, and a Swedish employee at the castle popped by every now and then with updates. They mostly consisted of him saying "they're just around the corner", and "five minutes more". After an hour, he got increasingly agitated. At the end, I could hear him, hoarsely shout into the phone: "*Jammen du måste jo komma nu for faen, dom sitter fast i heisen*" – "*but you have to*



arrive now for f's sake, they're stuck in the damn elevator!" in Skånsk (the local Swedish dialect, Jacob)

After an hour, they were finally free.

- It went surprisingly well. They were two lovely ladies to be stuck in an elevator with, but if we had to be there for another hour... It wouldn't have been a very pleasant experience for anyone. I already had to go to the bathroom *before* we entered the elevator, so I was slightly tripping back and forth in there, says Jacob about the experience.

But even though they emerged from the elevator into freedom, the danger weren't over – yet.

- The castle offered the guests free beer and lunch. So that no-one would think about suing.

- Because you were afraid that they might?

- Oh God heavens, no. Not at all. It's not like they'd have any success in Sweden if they did. The courts here would throw it out instantly, remarks Jacob about the Swedish judicial system.

- Though I did call my office, and they offered them a drink each as compensation upon arrival at the hotel. Which I've completely forgotten about, come to think of it, Jacob comments.

- Were you afraid?

- What I feared the most, being stuck in the elevator, was that I'd never get to see the beautiful Stave Church in Kaupanger (*my hometown, Jacob*) again.

7 av 10

It's not Jacobs first rodeo as a tour leader. He's been stuck before. Last time was famously on the top of Mt. Sogn, also with a band of travelling Americans.



Stuck on Mt. Sogn – There's a river in the middle of the road!

– *How would you rate this experience in your career as a tour leader?*

- *Being stuck on the mountain was a 10 out of 10. This one was 7 out of 10, no, wait, 7.5 – thanks to the great company. I'm sure you'll hear about the next time I'm stuck as well.*