

Chapter 20 : “1974/75 – Between two Olympics”

We are now writing 1974. Silvia had intended to visit the skiing world championship in Falun February 16-24 in order to gain experience and meet CG but hesitated considering the feared press coverage. Her immediate boss, Emmy Schwabe, also thought it was too early for a study visit. Better that she familiarized herself with the business first. All newspapers, both Swedish and German, now knew who she was but not where she was. There were journalists stationed outside her Munich apartment, outside her parents' apartment in Heidelberg and outside her workplace in Innsbruck. The journalists rang the doorbell at her parents' house, but they refused to open, and after a while they also refused to answer the phone. Then they went underground (visited friends, to be exact). Before the job began, Silvia payed a short visit.

I was in Heidelberg with my parents, with the press hot on my heels. I had a meeting [with a dentist] scheduled for the afternoon. In the morning, my father said: ”There's a journalist waiting around the corner.” ”Oh, I said, and I didn't think much about it. We had lunch and I was going to my meeting [with the dentist]. Then I heard two men discussing something rather loudly in front of the front door. One said something I did not understand, and the other replied: “We don't do this in Sweden”. I looked out the window and saw that one was a German journalist, the other an older Swedish journalist who I had not seen before (but who I later came to meet several times). The Swedish journalist probably did not know how much he helped me that time by preventing something that probably was not so nice.

Generally speaking, Swedish journalists are fine and decent, but there are exceptions. And now, when I'm confronted with them, I always think of the journalist who said, We don't do this in Sweden. I think it was nice.¹ [Silvia seems to have heard positive things about Sweden from childhood. Her father told her after his visits there that “Sweden was so clean, so blue-yellow (patriotic), so friendly, so correct”.]

The Swedish journalist appears to have been Vecko Journalen's Michael Jägerblom, who then got an interview with Walther. Walther would not comment on a possible engagement between CG and Silvia but made a kind of “declaration of principle”: ”My daughter is an adult and does what she finds right. She's going to marry the man she loves - even if he's king.”² Jägerblom even tried with moderate results to check some facts. Silvia or her friends seem to have maintained that she was three years younger than CG and as tall, which Walther refused to comment on. (Silvia's length appears to be a state secret. There are no consistent reports.) Her parents' silence seems to have been partly due to Silvia not entrusting them with any facts – maybe to give them credible deniability – they had to follow the events through the newspapers. They were very worried about how the relationship would pan out. Especially because they thought her so inexperienced in love:

A telephone interview with Walther January 1975:

* Have you ever met King Carl Gustaf?

- Personally? Oh, no. Neither has Silvia told us anything about him.

* How long have you known about your daughter's friendship with the Swedish King?

¹ Christina Magnergård Bjers. Drottning Silvia. Ekerlids förlag, 2001 [baserad på intervjuer med Silvia m fl].

² Michael Jägerblom. Silvia Sommerlath - visst passar hon till drottning! Vecko Journalen, 1974:4

- Actually not until I could read about it in German newspapers. But they have kept me all the more informed.³

An interview with Alice in March 1977: "My husband and I were terribly worried that she would become a toy for the king, an adventure. We were sorry for her. Silvia didn't tell us anything until a week before the official engagement. We raised Silvia very strictly. When she was younger, she was never allowed to go anywhere alone. It was absolutely impossible for her. Her brothers followed her everywhere."⁴

Silvia then settled in Innsbruck and buried herself in her new work. She studied Innsbruck's history. The journalists were so annoying that she hid out in the village of Igis. She had 25 binders of application documents to select 200 hostesses among the 1000 who had applied. CG learned not to call her early. Silvia needed her cups of coffee to get started. The salary was SEK 2,100 per month plus daily allowance and free housing. The Secretary General of the Organizing Committee was the lawyer Karl Heinz Klee. The mayor of the town was Alois Lugger. The head of protocol was Emmy Schwabe. Everyone had long prior experience of similar events. None of them seems to have opposed the ruckus surrounding Silvia because it was good advertising. Silvia did not have to appear at press conferences and such as often as in Munich, for which she was grateful. She had a press release printed:

In order to stop any speculation about my private life, I would like to refer to the fact that I have signed a firm agreement with the organizing committee of the 12th Winter Olympic Games in Innsbruck in 1976 and that I have thereby committed myself to working for the next two years in Innsbruck and to devoting all my time and energy to this work.

I see no reason, now or in the future, to give an interview on my private life and would ask you to understand that, for reasons of fairness both to yourself and to your absent colleagues, I cannot deviate from this line.⁵

It seems to have been distributed during a more than usual chaotic press conference:

Personally, the situation can be likened to a siege. The Austrian police are on high alert. In the posh newly built headquarters where the Olympic Committee is located, everything is cordoned off. Everywhere there are men in plain clothes with walkie-talkies. On the third floor is the headquarters. That is where Secretary-General Karl-Heinz Klee resides. According to well-informed sources, he is supposed to have lost 6 kilos from the moment Silvia Sommerlath arrived in Innsbruck. Klee and his associates are playing hide-and-seek. His meetings take place down in the building's garage or in private apartments all around the city. Each lift is guarded by the largest police officers available. They're checking that no one unauthorized lets him- or herself through. A transport with soft drinks and an unidentified secretary triggers a big alarm. Maybe it is Silvia. SE photographer Jan-Olof Fritze had been informed that Dr. Klee would hold a press conference. Like everybody else, he took the elevator. But before he knew it, Innsbruck's chief of police had hit him on the chin.

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³ Hant i veckan, 1975:3.

⁴ Franz-Josef Wagner. Intervju med Silvias mor. Bild am Sonntag. I: Svensk Damtidning, 1977:18.

⁵ Bo Hansson. Allers utsända genom "järnridån". Allers, 1974:10.

Dr. Klee calls a press conference. [His standing line is: “You see, she's here to work. Therefore she simply cannot participate.”] A secretary in miniskirt stands on the floor of the magnificent room and distributes a stencilled paper. It's the reclusive Silvia who writes. “I want to be alone and I'm not going to tell you anything about my private life. Please let me work in peace and quiet.” An unimpressed German journalist gets angry. She screams: I just want to tell you, Mr. Klee, that we will be scandalizing you if you do not let us talk to Mrs. Sommerlath. By the way, how did she get a work permit here? She's German!

...

But in the end we found her. After a tip off from a good friend who told us that Silvia is actually going to have dinner with some colleagues. Silvia's sat picking at her food looking hostile when we showed up at the pub.

- How do you do, we say, we come from Sweden. Do you intend to become Queen of Sweden, Fraülein?
 - There is no question of marriage at all. I know the Swedish King very well, we are good friends, that is all. Is it so strange that young people meet and have fun?
 - Do you feel tired?
 - I'm stressed out and soon I will have a melt down. Can you imagine having over 250 journalists and photographers tailing you wherever you go? It's a nightmare. Can't you leave us alone?
 - The ring you're wearing, is it an engagement ring?
 - Oh, no, it's just an ordinary ring with a diamond.
- Silvia distractedly fingers the ring while we leave her to her own devices.⁶

Silvia also met Hänt in Veckan journalist Kerstin Chrigström & photographer Charles Hammarsten. It was an accidental encounter but they were up to the task, Chrigström: “- How is it going with you and the king?” Silvia: “- What a question!” Then Silvia as usual started talking about this and that making further inquiries impossible. Afterwards she complained in letters to her friends: “I can't do anything any more. I can't even go out for dinner.”⁷ - “It's a good thing that I own so few clothes. Everything fits in a suitcase. I'll pack it in no time at all, then I can just disappear.”⁸

During the year, 300-400 journalists applied for an interview. In mid-January, the court's press spokesman Sten Egnell telephoned the Swedish embassy in Bonn and asked them to try to put an end to at least the German writings. Difficult to censor German press from Sweden, however. A few hopeful photographers always waited outside the office building. Silvia kept a courteous distance. When someone addressed her as “Silvia”, the answer was “Miss Sommerlath if you please”. Against her will she was provided with bodyguards. (According to another version with “companions” = a couple of colleagues from the secretariat). She donned a wig, a blonde and a dark one, so as not to be recognized and alternated between a very spartan bedsitter and various hotel rooms. Sometimes, a friend pretended to be her let Silvia slip away unnoticed after the end of the day, home or to some activity. Silvia afterwards denied this with the wigs. There are no such photographs. Silvia thought Innsbruck a very nice city. The Alpine nature was breathtaking. She backpacked in the mountains and often attended the opera and theatre that had fantastic guest appearances.

⁶ Jag vill bara gråta. SE, 1974:4.

⁷ Året Runt, 1986:25,

⁸ Året Runt, 1986:25,

No nightclub life though. She socialized with her work friends. CG sent roses and proposed several times over the phone. Silvia had direct line to the castle.

She declined (almost) all interviews. The journalists who persisted were dismissed with the discouraging news that the relationship with CG was over. In March, Silvia was in Munich to study the organization around the World Skating Championships there. She met old friends who were of course curious. Silvia said nada, shrugged her shoulders and they got the impression that everything was over and that she wanted to forget the whole thing. One of them commented afterwards: “She is a modern woman who walks her own path with or without royal escort.”⁹ (According to one report, Silvia had actually by this time begun to regret the relationship. She is said to have undergone something of a transformation. From 1973 to 1974, she changed from her former happy and outward-looking self into a shy and suspicious Greta Garbo. The writings, both the Swedish and the German, did not help her mood. She was implied to be a Creole gold-digger, etc. The Swedish court did not want her to speak to journalists, but there was no risk of such. “I will never tell a journalist anything, not even the time of day,” she assured Princess Birgitta.)

Since CG called Silvia through the workplace switchboard and apparently presented himself under his proper name, everyone was very committed to how things would turn out. For CG's birthday, the office girls on the 3rd floor bought a bottle of German champagne and invited Silvia from the 4th floor to drink the king's toast to candlelight. Silvia smiled, expressed her thanks and emptied the glass.

She followed the Swedish writings with interest through telephone conversations with the journalist Norbert Loh. He was able to translate the Swedish newspapers for her. Silvia alternately commented on the articles with “ohh” or with “ahh”. Difficult to decipher. With all the writings, Silvia always thought she was recognized. Afterwards, she told a long story, the moral of which seems to be that she was no longer able to distinguish between the treatment she received as a person and the treatment she received due to her social position. It worried her. She was offered large sums of money to host fashion shows and exhibitions, even to eat at a particular restaurant or sleep in a particular hotel. Unknown people called and invited her to a party in reference to their old friendship.

On March 1-9, CG skied in Zermatt without Silvia. As usual during the holidays, he did it incognito as “Duke of Jämtland”. They had plans to meet in Munich at that time, but there were too many journalists around both of them. They are said to have met by Silvia taking the ski lift from the Italian side up to the customs station and then skiing down to Zermatt.¹⁰ It took until CG's birthday before they were seen together again. The secrecy was extensive. CG had himself photographed in the company of other women to appear preoccupied with other things. There are many unverified stories from this period. She was flown in a private air plane from Innsbruck to F1 in Västerås “by a sworn captain”, and from there by helicopter to Noppe Lewenhaupt's estate Geddeholm not far away. Noppe arranged a party where everyone wore traditional suits and they rode around in the neighbourhood. She spent April 19-21 there. She is also said to have been flown to Nämdö where she and CG met in Sten Krüger's summer villa Ideborg at Bullerö and at the Stenbock farm Sundby on Ornö. However, it usually appears to have been scheduled flights or trains and then car.

⁹ Mark Lippold. Silvias kamrat säger grattis. Kvällsposten, 1974-05-08. [Intervju med Roswitha von Benda.]

¹⁰ Björn Fremer. Kvällsposten, 1974-03-27.

During Princess Christina's wedding on June 15, 1974, Silvia visited Stockholm and stayed at Grand Hotel. Silvia arrived at Arlanda masked in wig, sunglasses and a floral head scarf. For safety's sake, she was escorted to the limo behind an umbrella. She and CG were photographed driving her around Stockholm in his open Porsche, but it was impossible to identify her. According to a court source, Silvia shifted with a moment's notice between her usual outspoken self and her alter ego as stunted Russian babushka hidden in a scarf. They were also seen walking hand in hand at Djurgården.

After the wedding they cruised in the Mediterranean Sea two weeks. They took separate flights to Milan on August 14 to confuse their pursuers. In Milan, they were met by a number of photographers who caught them greeting each other, Silvia as usual disguised as somebody unrecognizable. As only the closest those closest had been informed of the flight plan, Princess Birgitta suspected some kind of spy network. Whatever, the photographers thanked them for the photos when they were finished and CG and Silvia continued to Genoa. They also spent a few days in Switzerland with CG's Sigtuna friend Tore Bergengren. Engagement rumours circulated, but otherwise the newspapers were silent. On August 30, CG was back in Stockholm.

In the autumn, Silvia travelled a lot: She was twice in Canada, where the next Summer Olympics would be held and she would participate if relationship with CG came to nothing. She interviewed future Olympic hostesses and led delegations. During the weekends, she was inaccessible, at least for journalists. She disappeared in her old Volkswagen and was not back until Monday. For the most part, this meant that she worked at home. The turmoil when she appeared at parties was such that she stopped coming.

In mid-December Silvia was once again in Stockholm and they visited Stenhammar. She celebrated Christmas 1974 in Heidelberg with her parents, brothers and sisters-in-law. On Boxing Day, Ralph drove her to the train station where she bought a second-class return trip to Klosters, Switzerland, where Hansi and Princess Birgitta had a house. CG celebrated Christmas at Sister Desirée on Koberg. On 30 December, he chaired for the last time a cabinet meeting under the old constitution. The same evening he left for Klosters.

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Silvia hosted the New Year's celebrations at Klosters, to every bodies satisfaction it seems. The following days did not go well however. CG was still intent on the relationship continuing in its then semi-secret form. In practice, this meant that they were not allowed to appear simultaneously in picture. Such a thing could be interpreted as an official engagement photo. The village was full of photographers waiting for Prince Charles. In the meantime, CG was also photographed extensively. The photograph of Silvia and CG in the same picture seems to have become a fixed idea for all parties. Expressen and Bild Zeitung collaborated on the task. CG was watched to such an extent that he could not stay outdoors without the photographers gathering around him. Silvia did not reside in the same house as the others but spent her waking time in their company. Every night, she was picked up by a black limo who drove her back to the pension nearby where she lived. Princess Birgitta:

The Swedish security chief wasn't too worried. Of course, when my brother left the house to go somewhere, he immediately had the photographers on his heels, but the head of security always delayed them or led them on a wild goose chase. It was even established that he, in consultation with the local traffic police, arranged routine traffic

checks which, as if by chance, affected all vehicles following the royal car. And if the police saw cameras on the seats or for other reasons suspected that it could be a photographers car, the control of their particular paper happened to take a particularly long time. Meanwhile, Carl Gustav's small convoy could disappear from sight.

But even the photographers realized the value of cooperation. While some followed the car with my brother, others stubbornly held the positions outside our house in the hope that something could be gained there. In other words, Silvia had to resort to tricks and cunning. Carl Gustaf of course lived in my apartment. Silvia was accommodated in the same house, but in another apartment. Thankfully, the house was equipped with a garage in the basement plane, which facilitated the escape manoeuvres significantly.

When Silvia left the house, she was always hidden under a blanket in the back of a car driven by a civilian-dressed bodyguard. In this way she could meet Carl Gustaf at a lonely ski slope without anyone noticing them. Throughout Carl Gustav's skiing holiday, no one in the press had any idea that Silvia was also present in Klosters.

For us adults, this whole game of hide-and-seek was a tiresome and troublesome routine, but my children loved the spectacle and enjoyed the full-blown secretiveness. My daughter Désirée was ten at the time and thought it was all “great fun”, while the boys Carl Christian and Hubertus, then eleven and six respectively, experienced it all as an exciting agent story in the middle of their everyday lives.¹¹

Despite the precautions, Silvia was actually photographed.

Expressen photographer Kenneth Jonasson was ordered to Klosters: I saw a woman I didn't know, who I knew was her. I shouted “Please turn around Silvia.” Horrified, she turned around. I took the picture. Then she rushed into a Range Rover standing by. “Quick, take me to the hospital,” she cried. I met the driver the next day. He said he didn't know her at all. It was fucking cunning of her. The king came skiing down the hill. He looked completely calm. I guess they would have made some kind of plan for how they would act if a photographer showed up.¹²

The resolution was not so much fun however...

On the third or fourth day, a whole armada of press photographers hid behind a snow bank they had built up. When the king appeared in the door, everyone wanted to come first with their cameras, there was congestion and confusion, the snow wall burst and a lot of photographers ended up at the king's feet wildly waving their arms and legs.

In that moment, the otherwise calm and reclusive king lost his mind, became furious and began to hit his tormentors with his fists. It would have been a world scandal if his brother-in-law Hansi of Hohenzollern had not intervened.

¹¹ Prinsessan Birgitta von Hohenzollern & König, Fred. Prinsessan Birgitta. Min egen väg. En memoarbok. Albert Bonniers förlag, 1997.

¹² Silviabilagan. Expressen, 1993-12-19.

The scene was so embarrassing that Silvia quietly turned her back on it, packed and departed the same day.¹³

According to another version, CG was furious but mastered himself.¹⁴ Silvia later expressed it as that she liked CG's humor but not his mood.¹⁵ Adjutant Peter Forssman was gently interrogated about their feelings. The answer was diplomatic: "When you sit with them one evening, it's hard to see how serious it really is between them. We'll see." On the evening of 6 January there was a party and the next day Silvia went back to Innsbruck. There was a lot to prepare for the pre-olympics off January 24. CG stayed until the 9th when he and the adjutant returned to Stockholm via Zurich. There was heavy fog and the regular flight refused to take off. CG identified a couple of businessmen he knew superficially and got a ride in their private jet.

Immediately after his return he sat down with 1st Marshal of the Court, Tom Wachtmeister (1931-2011) and the press spokesman, Sten Egnell (1907-1998), to protest his treatment by the press. Wachtmeister and Egnell were also annoyed, as the court was inundated by foreign journalists wondering what was really going on at Klosters.

The protest was discussed for several hours and ended up relatively diplomatic in nature. It was published on January 12 and was basically an appeal to respect CG's private life. Wachtmeister stated that journalists did not have to worry because "The King could not get engaged in secret". Since the court had denied Silvia's presence at Klosters, the protest was openly scorned. Even the most loyal journalists wondered; What exactly CG was up to? However, an opinion poll proved CG right. 86 percent believed that the press had breached good publicity practice.¹⁶

In the meantime, things were also going on in Innsbruck. The newspaper's foreign reporter Jussi Anthal had been asked to produce something about CG's elusive forest fairy. Anthal was supposedly better positioned than most, as he was stationed in Vienna and actually knew German. He got one of his Austrian government contacts to put so much pressure on Emmy Schwabe that she felt compelled to at least receive him. Anthal arrived at Innsbruck on Friday January 10, and was escorted to Schwabe's office. Silvia's office was a module further away but could just as well have been on the moon. Schwabe described at length how extraordinarily hard it was for Silvia who never got any rest from these obsessed journalists. Anthal countered that a superficial portrait of Silvia's background and character would probably satisfy most of them. Schwabe left the room for a conversation with Silvia: "After a few minutes she returned with a little brunette, which gave me a beautiful smile - the beautiful smile that has become so famous since. Silvia was dressed in high-necked white pullover, red-patterned silk shawl, red ski pants and outdoor shoes. (In the ski slope she wore green leather pants and a high-necked green pullover.) Her neat figure was obvious, but the face, the dazzling teeth and the laughing eyes caught my attention."^{17,18} They agreed to an interview the following day. Then Silvia must have called CG. "In the evening I sat in my hotel dining room. I had just ordered a wienerschnitzel when the phone rang. Miss Sommerlath wanted to cancel our

¹³ Artikelserie: Sanningen om Silvia Sommerlath. Året runt, 1976:20-26.

¹⁴ Vecko Revyn, 1975:5.

¹⁵ Helena Wiklund. Drottning Silvia i öppenhjärtig intervju. Svensk Damtidning, 1993:49.

¹⁶ Kvällsposten, 1975-01-15. [KvP:s "riksdag", en läsarpanel.]

¹⁷ Jussi Anthal. Sanningen om Silvia. Expressen, 1975-01-12.

¹⁸ Jussi Anthal. Jagad i OS-tider. Expressen, 1986-06-15.

meeting the following day. We spoke for an hour on the phone. The language was German. My wienerschnitzel cooled. Silvia agreed to help me with the portrait if I promised to translate the article before I called it in.”¹⁹ The interview, as it now turned out, must have been this phone call because Anthal arrived at Silvia's hotel room at 10 the following day with a finished article in German that Silvia after some hesitation approved.

- Isn't it too flattering?

- No, I said, the king is lucky.

- But it is not at all certain that I will marry him. I'm going to finish my contract. I shall be working here for another year. A lot can happen. Who knows what's going on and then I stand there as the king's discarded mistress and what do I have for it?

The phone rang. It was Dad Walter Sommerlath. When the father heard that I was there, he asked his daughter to be careful.

- Talk to my father and calm him down, Silvia said.

We had a nice conversation. The father agreed with me that the king was very lucky if he had won Silvia's heart.²⁰

Much of what has since been taken as Gospel stems from this phone conversation with Dad Walther: Silvia was an intelligent, beautiful, worldly, witty and hard-hitting idealist. A mature, hard-working woman and a virgin waiting for Mr Right. A citizen of the world with a European head and a South American heart. “She is a grown woman. She is the kind of woman who can be a good friend, a sweet hostess and an understanding friend within the same half hour.” - “Probably a much deeper person than the King of Sweden encountered among his Swedish girlfriends.” Apparently, Silvia not only hit one cord in the male sex, but ten cords at once. Future comments from the female sex would not be as flattering.

Bild Zeitung then sent special teams to find Silvia but she had gone underground, i.e. sat at home and talked on the phone, among others with her parents, they used to call each other once a week when she told them how she had it. Her parents also visited her once or twice. In her conversations with her parents, she took care to adopt an up beat tone, not so with her friends. She had a need to talk. Eventually, information leaked from these conversations and Silvia ceased to confide. She received several calls from CG who was deeply remorseful of his conduct. He had, against his habit, entrusted himself to Prince Bertil, who gave him approximately this advice: “If you don't marry her, you're an idiot.” CG's adjutant Bengt-Herman Nilsson took a holiday in Innsbruck for a week in February and met Silvia there. Maybe he explained CG's situation to her. Cecilia, Bengt-Herman's future wife, was one of the Olympic hostess during the Winter Games and after the Olympics worked as Silvia's lady-in-waiting. However, there is no information about their relations - at least she was not one of Silvias immediate subordinates.

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For the rest of 1975, CG and Silvia devoted themselves to work, love holidays and meeting relatives, including the Danish and Norwegian royal houses and CG's relative Lord Louis Mountbatten. Silvia was in Sweden when two of CG's friends married. To avoid

¹⁹ Jussi Anthal. Jagad i OS-tider. Expressen, 1986-06-15.

²⁰ Jussi Anthal. Jagad i OS-tider. Expressen, 1986-06-15.

photographers she didn't take part in the marriage ceremony, but was smuggled in to the wedding dinner afterwards and presented as Miss Lindqvist. She is alleged (like Cleopatra!) to have been smuggled into the castle, rolled into a carpet from the dry cleaners. Maybe so. On May 11 she was with CG in Monte Carlo. CG looked at the rally while Silvia was lying on a bed in the hotel room staring at the ceiling. A bit boring but still pretty nice.

CG had acquired a Labrador puppy "Ruppie" the year before, but he had a hip defect and would never be able to hunt. Silvia smuggled in a replacement puppy in her shoulder bag as a birthday present. CG named it Ali after boxer Muhammed Ali, which a few years later, as already told, had unexpected consequences. CG arranged for Ali to appear in as many pictures as possible to show Silvia that she was never out of his mind. Maybe the dog Ali was necessary as an insurance. Whether CG and his circle of friends exercised some restraint when Silvia was present is not known. When she was not present, it could be like this:

During his time as a bodyguard he [Ola Selin, bodyguard 1973-1980] wrote a daily diary. He remembers, among other things, a very slippery event in Anderstorp during a Formula 1 race [on June 8] 1975. The King then ended up at a dinner where guests would only sit with sheets on them. Two unknown women attended the dinner table.

- I only had underpants and a shoulder holster, says Ola Selin.

After the wet dinner it was time for the guests to move to the swimming pool and relaxation area. According to Selin, the king's then adjutant was very drunk. He jumped in with his suit on and had to be helped home by the bodyguards.

- We bedded him down and hung up the clothes on the dryer. Then we went back to the party.

Ola Selin found the king in the sauna. There was also Sven "Smokey" Åsberg who arranged the F1 races in Anderstorp and one of the "lady companions" who made overtures to the king.

- But he was not interested, says Ola Selin.^{21,22}

In August, they made a 10-day cruise with stops in the Mediterranean. It was the third year running with the same sailboat "Silan" and a hired crew. The first year was with Anders Lettström, the second year was with Tore Bergengren, the third year was with Björn Kreuger. The cruises used to end with a visit to Philippe Niarchos. In 1975, they visited the resort of Costa Smeralda and the regatta in Porto Rotondo. In Sweden, Silvia often lived at Lettströms place Sköldnora kungsgård in the direction of Norrtälje. Lettström afterwards told about the impression she had made on him and his sister with her "incredibly diplomatic orientation and charm. You fell under her spell. You were also struck by her intelligence and - of course - by the fact that she was so attractive."²³ During the summer there were archipelago trips, often to the friend Anders Philipson's villa at Ingarö, and parties at the castle. At Stenhammar they could be for themselves.

²¹ Ulf Lundén. Nya avslöjanden runt monarken: Vågade partyn och en asfull adjutant! Dala-Demokraten, 2010-11-02.

²² Thomas Sjöberg, Deanne Rauscher & Tove Meyer. Den motvillige monarken. Lind & Co, 2010. [Intervju med Ola Selin, livvakt 1973-1980.]

²³ Svenska Dagbladet, 1976-03-19.

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In the long run such a long-distance dalliance will be very expensive. Silvia insisted on at least paying for the train journeys. If you receive too many gifts, the donor expects something in exchange, unclear what but certainly not acceptable. Silvia had her pride:

The second class Stockholm - Munich round trip was more expensive than her monthly rent - 474,80 DM last year in July.

A plane ticket cost 1246 marks in tourist class and Silvia Sommerlath, with her net income of 1300 marks a month, could not pay that much.

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Silvia Sommerlath wanted to pay her way, and the king respected her and admired her for it.

This sense of self-respect and pride is a distinctive characteristic of Silvia Sommerlath. It placed her in a special position among the many who had hopes for the king. Undoubtedly, these characteristics played a part in the final decision of the king regarding his marriage.

When Silvia, for example, in July 1975 spent a week with the king, she boarded the Express train "Diplomat" Thursday July 21, 1975 at 10.41 at Munich Central Station.

She wore an ashblond wig over her dark hair and covered her hazelnut brown eyes behind giant glasses.

She arrived in Hamburg at 18.15 and hurried to the platform from which the Hamburg Express departed at 18.21 over Copenhagen to Stockholm.

The Hamburg Express was scheduled to arrive the next morning at 8.44 a.m. in Stockholm - which meant 22 hours travelling in an overfilled compartment. Silvia thus saved 152 marks.

But Silvia did not get off at Centralen but disembarked in Södertälje. There was a taxi waiting for her to Brännkyrka, where a royal car with a chauffeur dressed in civilian clothes was waiting to drive her to Saltsjöbaden outside Stockholm. There was a boat [Green Beam] waiting in the harbour. At 10 o'clock it started with Silvia on board and steered its course towards Barnens ö in the Stockholm archipelago.²⁴

The visit to Barnens ö was with CG's diving teacher. There were journalists there but Silvia hid in the cabin. CG had earlier in the year been issued a sports diving certificate at Tomtebodas diving school for the blind. CG's final test was to dive down to the shipwreck Riksäppet (which was shipwrecked in 1676 outside Dalarö) and nail a bronze tray that read "King Carl Gustaf inspected Riksäppet on 25 June 1975". CG had previously only dived at 4 meters, now it was 20 meters. He brought a film camera to document the occasion and peeled a piece of the hull to show Silvia. The security was rigorous. The police and the coastguard kept everybody at 300 meters. Silvia hung over the rails, followed CG's diving in every detail and sighed that she was relegated to the role of spectator, to a sports or sailors widow. She

²⁴ Artikelserie: Sanningen om Silvia Sommerlath. Året runt, 1976:20-26.

was determined to never let it happen again. As usual, the court was worried about CG's life. He was provided with a security line. Afterwards the place became a tourist attraction. Lots of people dived to look at the bronze tray. Eventually it was stolen. After that it was the Mediterranean. At the end of August they spent a few days at Fölskär in the Åland archipelago.

Later in the autumn Silvia was at a fashion show in Vienna to select the hostesses' Olympic outfit: white blouses, red costumes, red cape and yellow ski suit.

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In 1973 CG and Silvia met about five times. In 1974 there were dozens of meetings and in 1975 there were about twenty. There are no details of all these meetings, but Silvia was introduced: First in CG's circle of friends and family, then in a wider circle and in the Nordic royal houses. Silvia charmed (almost) all of them and if CG ever doubted that she was his lady of his heart, there were always people around him who urged him to have his head examined. He would never find a better-suited queen than Silvia. A person from CG's "inner circle", probably Anders Lettström, added: "It doesn't really matter what her name is or what kind of princely birth she has. The important thing is that she is at the King's side and will apparently be there in the future. This girl is the best thing that happened to Carl Gustaf. He has a respect for her that he has never shown any of his former temporary 'girlfriends'. She is wise, strong-willed and mature. She has never been blinded by Carl Gustaf because of his royal position. She fulfils the extremely strong demands placed upon a future Queen of Sweden. If this woman becomes Queen of Sweden, then Sweden will also have a good king."²⁵ Those who still doubted the relationship could hear: "Here he keeps on year in and year out looking meetig no one but Silvia. A girl he always has to speak English with. If it's not serious, then what is..."²⁶

Since both CG and Silvia regard everything related to emotional life as a private matter, it is difficult to describe what they saw in each other. On one occasion, CG stated: "She's so different." Unclear what he ment. It must be remembered that CG was not a man of the world. His male companions consisted mostly of businessmen and military. His female ditto of schoolmates, party girls and photo models from the suburb. None of them aspired to becoming Queen or had any ambitions. Silvia was something completely different. Much later, CG claimed he fell for her openness and beauty. Then he gradually came to respect her for her capacity, warmth, charisma, organizational talent and ability to socialize.²⁷ Still later he discovered her to be "elastic" - meaning that as soon as he released the pressure she bounced back. She, for her part, fell for CG's honesty: "He is loyal, honest and never misuses a trust. The rest is secret."²⁸ and "He had a great sense of humour. He saw those little things that were important to me. All those years when we had to hide... Sneak... It was secretive years, troublesome years, but glorious."²⁹

CG never seems to have entrusted his feelings to anyone. Even his closest friend Anders Lettström seems uncertain: "Carl Gustaf was certainly not only influenced by Silvia's charming smile. What he needed in his immediate neighbourhood was somebody who he

²⁵ Extrabilaga om Carl XVI Gustaf. Allers, 1973:41.

²⁶ Helena Klein. Om Carl Gustaf & Silvia. Husmodern, 1975:4.

²⁷ Bengt Magnusson. Carl Gustaf - kung i tiden. TV4, 1999-01-01.

²⁸ [Fransk intervju med drottning Silvia.] I: Svensk Damtidning, 1993:27.

²⁹ Catarina Hurtig. H.H.H. Victoria – Ett personligt porträtt. 2010. [TV-intervju med Silvia. Odaterad.]

knew was 100 percent loyal and honest. And that's Silvia."³⁰ In 1984 Svensk Damtidning published an article about Silvia and the male sex that perhaps clarifies the matter:

All men who have ever met the Queen usually say the same thing: "It was like she saw only me." Because Queen Silvia has an ability to smile at people - and then perhaps especially men - in a way that makes them feel completely unique.

What then does the Queen have that makes the male sex defenceless?

Yes, her eyes, her abundant hair, her kindness, that she "neither is the menacing type of woman that many men have difficulty coping with: the independent professional", she is the good wife, the mother who takes time with her children and does not leave them in the kindergarten, the wife who lets the man come first, who lets the man decide, who does not go out and realize herself through career and education, who spends her time on the family; they admire her long beautiful elegant dresses, her sparkling diadem, "she becomes something of the fairy tale, a real fairy tale queen, almost like in the cinema", her un-Swedish charm and softness, the very quiet of her voice, the femininity, the listening to others, her flexibility when meeting with other people, the Queen's feminine essence, a foreign bird, her adaptability, that she can cope with the demands made on her, she is a modern fairytale character, the girl of the people who marries the prince or king, listens to people, lets them talk without interrupting, you feel significant, charming and spiritual, she has the brightest clothes and the country's most elegant.³¹

CG's press spokesman Jan Mårtensson described the matter in a more down-to-earth way: "I am impressed by the Queen's sensibility, naturalness and loving ways. In a group of 25 talking people, she can find that the 26th is shy and outside. Then she manoeuvres him or her imperceptibly into the context."³²

With time it also leaked that "Carl Gustaf admires Silvia because she is so diligent and thorough; she never cheats on a representational task. He is also proud to have a wife who can be firm when needed and does not shy away from speaking out. Carl Gustaf is also pleased with her enormous loyalty. She always backs him up. Silvia has good judgment, does not antagonize her surroundings and can relax in the private."³³ And her father: "Silvia, he said, has probably always had a rare ability to rejoice, even at the most insignificant small things. She laugh is more catching than that of any person I know. Heartfelt, without ever becoming excessive. Silvia has such a bright and cheerful core. Besides, I think she possesses extraordinary strength."³⁴

Silvia felt a little embarrassed by all this unqualified praise and pointed out several times that she actually had a temper. This was interpreted favourably as an expression of her German-Brazilian background. Eventually, diffuse information surfaced that she had on several occasions become so enraged that the objects in the future avoided her.

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³⁰ Okänd källa, 1976. [I samband med bröllopet.]

³¹ Anders Jährner. Därför faller männen för drottning Silvia. Svensk Damtidning, 1984:19.

³² Expressen, 1979-06-05.

³³ Svensk Damtidning, 1983:8.

³⁴ Svensk Damtidning, 1978:36.

The ambition to capture CG and Silvia simultaneously on picture led to a short period of paparazzi photography with telelenses, the first time such a thing had occurred in Sweden. I have found three occurrences in 1974-1975: From Stenhammar, from Solliden and from the Norwegian winter sports resort Gudbrandsdalen:

It was the Norwegian local newspapers that first recognized the king and his entourage in Golå ten kilometres from Lillehammer. [CG's friend] Tore Bergengren's family had a luxury villa on the outskirts of the sports complex there. The king and his friends had a few quiet days before they were discovered. Then came the photographers and the journalists. A newspaper managed to get some pictures of the king and Silvia together. The photographer had been hiding under a spruce 40 meters from the private sports villa. Here he lay and waited for three hours in the cold of five degrees below to get a picture of the king and his friends.

There was a bit of panic among the other photographers when the rumour that an evening newspaper had "succeeded" spread. A competitor tried to repeat the feat. He sneaked up, but was discovered by the king's friends. The door slammed open and three agitated men caught up with him. One filmed him, another stood on his skis and all of them asked for his film rolls. The men got the film and the frozen photographer could leave.

But then the king's friends discovered another photographer sneaking around their house. - There's another one, they shouted. The photographer took off but the friends were in better shape and caught up with him. - I'm pretty big, explained one of the the royal friends and also received these film rolls. - Why hide under the bushes, why not come forward instead and ask to take your pictures, asked the king's friends.

This happened on Easter Eve [1975-03-29]. The next day it was time for official photography [of CG]. Hundreds of photos were taken. That's when it happened. The photographers from evening and weekly newspapers were about to leave when the door to the Norwegian cottage opened and a girl bewilderingly like Silvia stepped forward. She was dressed like Silvia. And here she stepped out in front of the nose of all the photographers, who had sacrificed weeks chasing a picture of the king's girlfriend, even if it was several hundred meters away. The girl blushed before all the cameras that buzzed. She put on her skis and before anyone could really understand what was happening, the king and the Silvia-dressed girl left the premises. The snow was too deep to pursue them.

Who was she? The adjutant replied that everyone who was with the king on the ski holiday wanted to anonymous. Today we know. The girl who dressed in the king's girlfriend's clothes was Peggie Kirsipuu. She is a pharmacist at the hospital pharmacy of the Seraphim Hospital in Stockholm and a girlfriend of the King's good friend Tore Bergengren. [Bergengren got the idea when Peggie was taken for Silvia at the Rome airport.] And after this joke the king and his friends were left alone. No photographers hid freezing under the trees and no telescopic lenses were directed at those who walked out of the sports villa. The king, Silvia, Peggie and their friends were left alone. It was certainly two days before April first, but this time there was a little different aspect in the hunt for pictures of the king and a girl in gray ski dress and earrings.³⁵

³⁵ Eva Tivell. Kungens för tidiga aprilsämt. Lektyr, 1975:19.

One of the journalists was Lars Klint. CG and his company (among them Anders Lettström) were reported to the police to have forcibly restrained the two photographers of Kvällsposten and taken their film rolls. CG's adjutant Åke Lundin in turn reported the journalists for trespassing and harassment. The film rolls were returned.³⁶

Despite the posse of photographers, it is sparse with pictures from Silvia's time in Innsbruck. She did not want to be photographed and by then had such clout that she could demand the photographer return the film. It happened at least once when she was photographed with Mayor Alois Lugger. She even visited the Innsbruck passport photographer and reclaimed her negatives

³⁶ Lars Klint. Min relation till kungahuset. Kvällsposten, 2011-06-09.
