

## Chapter 108 : Silvia Sommerlath (1972-1973) (II) – A Queen for Sweden.

*"A sorte protege os audazes."*  
[*"Fortune favours the brave"*]  
Francis Xavier (1506-1552)

There are five "official" accounts of how Carl Gustaf and Silvia met: Carl Gustaf's own, Silvia's, Prince Bertil's, Princess Birgitta's and sports official Wolf Lyberg's. Over time, these have been supplemented by a plethora of details that may be true, or perhaps not. Silvia commented afterwards:

Question: You have by now read the most diverse stories and variants about your "romance" with King Carl XVI Gustaf (during the time before the engagement). Is there some inaccuracy that has come up again and again or some fact that you think has been missed in the description?

Answer: No, I cannot say that there is anything wrong in particular. The fact is that the weeklies have described a "romance" of which they know nothing. That is the main error! The king and I have never spoken to anyone about it.

Question: So there is nothing you wish to comment on? Nothing that's been missed in particular in the stories?

Answer: (laughter) Yes, they missed everything!<sup>1</sup>

Silvia later stated that she did not keep a diary and that, in order not to reveal herself, she never intended to write her memoirs. She also asked her family to refuse interviews. She herself used to tell a "redacted" version of Carl Gustaf's courtship without bothering the listeners, not even her daughter Victoria, with too many facts. It was love at first sight. Dot. End. Finish. And remember that. "I know because I was there." Pressed on details, she blamed her bad memory. The most detailed account was Aller's 1976 novella, No. 22-24, which the paper claimed was in line with known facts. Having read it, I can confirm that here and there are some known facts, but not to any annoying extent. In order not to leave the readers completely in the lurch, I have reconstructed Carl Gustaf's schedule based on UD's (the foreign office's) archive and supplemented with eyewitness accounts.

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The presence of Carl Gustaf at the Munich Olympics had already been decided on in 1970. The Secretary of the Swedish Olympic Committee Bo Bengtson and the Information Commissioner Wolf Lyberg regularly visited the castle to deliver progress reports. Carl Gustaf was remarkably unenthusiastic at these meetings. He was interested in winter and water sports. Definitely not in athletics.

On August 4, 1972, Carl Gustaf and adjutant departed by car to Prince Bertil and villa Les Mirages on the Riviera. Because it was a long ride, they used one of the Mercedes of the court. They stayed at the villa from 6 to 15 August. The week after is hazy but they probably visited Carl Gustaf's friends in Switzerland Tore Bergengren and Björn Kreuger. On 22-25 August, Carl Gustaf was a guest in Grein, Austria, at his uncle Ferdinand von Coburg. On

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Jägerblom. En dag med drottning Silvia. Vecko Journalen, 1977:14.

August 25 he arrived in Munich and slept in a suite at the Hotel Continental. The next day was the opening of the Olympic Games. Carl Gustaf got his first glimpse of Silvia in a Dirndl dress. His description is famously brief: "It clicked".<sup>2</sup> Silvia's description is slightly more detailed:

[Silvia:] I remember so well when I went down here on August 26, 1972, at three o'clock in the afternoon, when the inauguration began. I was on my way to my place [in the vip section] when I stopped because I felt that someone was watching me. And when I turned around, your dad sat and looked at me through binoculars - like this. Though the distance between us was only two meters. ... It felt very funny, so I just laughed. I stood there and just laughed. That's what happened. ... He looked very sympathetic. ... He laughed himself, he probably thought it was a little ridiculous himself.<sup>3</sup>

[Wolf Lyberg:] [Carl Gustaf] sat in front of us together with his adjutant, Commander Bertil Daggfeldt. After a while he joined us, kneeled in front of us and pointed to his back.

- Could you possibly tell me the name of the young hostess down there? The Crown Prince wondered...! Do you think she'll be in the German president's office later tonight?

- The hostess is Silvia Sommerlath - she is in the service of Willi Daume, one of the leaders of the organization. I'm sure she will take part in the reception.<sup>4</sup>

[Silvia:] In the evening there was a reception and all the heads of state were there. Suddenly a man came up and asked if I had time, because the crown prince wanted to say hello. I asked: "What language?" The man replied: "Well, whichever you want." I repeated "I can use any language you like." ["Well use Swedish" said the man. Silvia replied that in this language she could unfortunately only say "how do you do" and "yes".] ... And then your Dad was standing there. He was very nice and I suddenly got nervous. I don't know why, I hadn't experienced that before.<sup>5</sup>

[Princess Birgitta:] [After the reception] Carl Gustaf told his adjutant: "I would like to get to know her". It was not an expression of arrogance or convenience on my brother's part, he was very capable of making contact with a woman himself if he so wished. But he was there as the official representative of the Swedish royal house, and as such he could hardly go up to her and suggest that they should see each other. Consequently, a few days later, Silvia Sommerlath received from the adjutant's hand an official dinner invitation to the restaurant Chalet Suisse in Munich.<sup>6</sup>

[Prince Bertil:] "It was one of the first nights down there. My wife and I had invited my nephew and his sister Birgitta to dinner at a nice, Swiss restaurant. - 'Well...', said my nephew. 'This hostess that I have been assigned... She's very good at her job and pleasant company... Do you mind if I take her to dinner?' - 'On the contrary!' I said. 'You can bring whoever the hell you want!'"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Eriksson, P O. Kungens förlovning - Jag älskar dig. Expressen, 1976-03-14 [baserad på en gruppintervju med kungen och Silvia i samband med förlovningen].

<sup>3</sup> Magnergård Bjers, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> Lyberg, 1997.

<sup>5</sup> Magnergård Bjers, 2001.

<sup>6</sup> [Prinsessan] Birgitta & König, 1997.

<sup>7</sup> [Prins] Bertil m fl, 1983.

Carl Gustaf's adjutant commander Bertil Daggfeldt checked for Silvia at the chancellery and was connected to her home telephone. Silvia accepted Carl Gustaf's invitation, but did not arrive until 11:00, as she had also accepted an earlier invitation. At the table was Carl Gustaf, his adjutant and bodyguard, Prince Bertil with Lilian Craig, Princess Birgitta with "Hansi" and some friends. Lilian, usually introduced as a neighbour, was here temporarily upgraded to secretary. Carl Gustaf lit up on Silvia's arrival and serenaded her with a drinking song. Silvia moved around among the guests and was in her nicest mood. "Not a shred of uncertainty, false modesty or flattery, only intelligence, humour and charm," Birgitta stated afterwards. At two o'clock the party broke up.

When the adjutant paid the bill at Chalet Suisse in Munich, we left the restaurant and stood together for a while on the street outside before we parted for the evening. This sudden encounter with fresh air was a pure oxygen shock for some in the company.

Uncle Bertil was in a bright mood and suddenly felt called to take on the role of Spanish toreador.

"Where's the bull?" He cried laughing. "A toreador must have a bull, that's the point of a bullfight." His gaze fell on Silvia, who had a long black cape over his shoulders, and immediately lit up. "There's my bull," he exclaimed, "'an extraordinarily beautiful specimen! The rest of you can be my picadors and bandrilliers."

Lilian asked laughingly what bandrilliers and picadors would be good for in Munich at two o'clock at night, but Silvia at once switched into full gear. Scraped her feet and even tried for a little bull roar. She then lowered her head, marked two horns with her index fingers at the temple and attacked Uncle Bertil, who did his best to escape the "bull" as elegantly as possible.

"In a real arena he would be dead by now," said one of Carl Gustaf's adjutants dry, which gave rise to a collective and loud outburst of amusement. ...

Finally, the Toreador Bertil was winded and had to stop fighting. "The bull" was thankfully alive and met with the picador Carl Gustaf the next day.

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Silvia and Carl Gustaf had found each other. ... The Olympic weeks were [however] crowded for them both. My brother had a number of official duties and Silvia's work as chief hostess took virtually all her time.<sup>8</sup>

Carl Gustaf & Silvia also strolled around the city, talked and should actually have visited Bar Kinki before their respective duties pulled them apart. Bild-Zeitung published a photo from Chalet Suisse or Bar Kinki which prompted a denial on Silvia's part:

As the head of the Olympic hostesses, I had contact with Crown Prince Carl Gustaf on several occasions during his visit to the Olympiad. In return for these services, he invited me to dinner in the company of several of his family members and friends. Yes, of course, we spoke to each other in the course of this evening. No, we did not

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<sup>8</sup> [Prinsessan] Birgitta & König, 1997.

meet at a later date. That is all there is to say. Everything else is plucked out of the air.<sup>9</sup>

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On September 2, Carl Gustaf attended a birthday party for Leopold von Bismarck, brother of fellow schoolmate Gunilla von Bismarck. The next day he continued to Kiel where he looked at the Olympic sailing contests and also visited his old school ship Falken which was there on an anniversary reunion. Afterwards Carl Gustaf and guests visited a nightclub with two Olympic hostesses in tow. The hostess Bodil Malmström had a diffuse memory of the well-rehearsed courtesy laughter when Carl Gustaf deigned to joke. On September 7 he returned to Sweden with the car ferry.

In the case of Silvia, the host work continued at a high pace until September 5. Early that morning, 11 Israeli athletes were taken hostage by the Palestinian terrorist group Black September and later that day executed. Silvia thought it was awful, it felt like her heart would break, and she sat by herself in the chancellery crying. The following day, a large memorial ceremony was held. A lot of Olympic planning now had to be redone again and she was busy with that until the closing ceremonies on September 11.

Carl Gustaf and Silvia's relations immediately after the Olympics are unclear. They exchanged phone numbers and Silvia gave him a photograph to keep on the nightstand. They corresponded and phoned almost daily. Silvia, who was used to celebrities, was interested in Carl Gustaf but hardly overwhelmed. The emotions seem to have grown gradually.

On October 21, Silvia was involved in a car accident. Her Volkswagen had a flat tire, was hit from behind and wedged under a small truck loaded with tomatoes. She was then hospitalized for three weeks at Kohlgrub in Bavaria 100 km outside Munich for a whiplash injury and for stress symptoms. The whiplash injury would bother her for the rest of her life, occasional back pain and migraine.<sup>10</sup> It seems to have aggravated a previous back and neck injury from the gymnastics in Luisenschule.<sup>11</sup> Responsible doctor: "Miss Sommerlath was exhausted. Not least in the nerves. Her blood pressure was also bad." Wolf Auler visited her and they seem to have argued about Carl Gustaf. Auler had difficulty taking Silvia's acquaintance with Carl Gustaf seriously. He believed that he would soon tire of her. He later portrayed Silvia as a suitable mother for his two-year-old daughter, and that he was prepared to wait for her until she recovered her senses. Silvia lay there in her sick bed and tried to decide on her future, a king or a director. She seems to have been on sick leave for the rest of the year. (According to another statement, it was her parents who visited her, but Walther has denied that. He claimed not to know of the car accident.)

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In November 1972, Carl Gustaf interned at Hambro Bank in London. Silvia was on a short visit that went unnoticed in the press coverage. They met Carl Gustaf's sister Margaretha with family. On November 28, Carl Gustaf's mother died. Silvia immediately called him when she learned of the news and expressed her condolences. They decided to meet, but not until the

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<sup>9</sup> Pressuttalande av Silvia Sommerlath. I: [Prinsessan] Birgitta & König, 1997.

<sup>10</sup> Svensk Damtidning, 1989:36.

<sup>11</sup> Jenny Alexandersson. Silvia 70 år. Aftonbladet, 2013-12-23

end of the mourning period in six weeks. From December 27 to January 9 Carl Gustaf was on a private trip to Munich and Klosters. It is possible that they met then. On 16-28 February 1973 they had a joint winter holiday in Zermatt, Switzerland, below Matterhorn and Easter 20-23 April they met in Storlien. Silvia took the train up through Norway there (possibly in the company of a friend) and was involved in the Easter Carnival without arousing any attention. The tradition is that Carl Gustaf will visit the high mountain hotel on Easter Eve to join the ski boot dance and award prizes in various competitions such as Påskaloppet, "Jokes on skis" and various down hill competitions. This year Carl Gustaf performed in miniskirt (?) and one ski only. The spectacle was covered by the press. Silvia was caught filming Carl Gustaf but no one knew who she was. She was not identified until much later.

All accounts agree that Carl Gustaf and Silvia became a couple sometime during this half year but the dates differ. The most likely is Easter, as Carl Gustaf the following month broke up with his then girlfriend Liv Porjé and with his "holiday fling" Lone Østergård. Silvia seems also to have ended her relationship with Auler at that time. He and she were seen arguing in public at an outdoor swimming pool in Munich.

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On June 1-5, Carl Gustaf and Silvia attended the Monaco Grand Prix. They were photographed by an American photographer and Silvia was identified by name. A private party at the Hotel du Paris was said to have been wild: "Approaching midnight all the males jumped into the pool naked. The girls refused to make them company, instead switched on the surrounding floodlights so the bathers could be seen in their full glory. Adjutant Svedlund denied that they were naked. "The only thing that is true is that 1) we were at a party, 2) there were models there, 3) we swam in the pool."<sup>12</sup> The women's magazine Svensk Damtidning learned about the photograph on July 13 and tried to order a copy. The negatives, however, were in New York and from there the wrong picture was sent.<sup>13</sup>

On June 25-30, Silvia seems to have stayed at Djurgården - possibly with Prince Bertil and Lilian Craig. At least she and Carl Gustaf had dinner there. Later in July, Silvia was a guest at Solliden where Carl Gustaf arranged a large party for his Swedish circle of friends for them to get to know her. Carl Gustaf was a bad host. "His eyes didn't leave her. They held hands in silence for hours at a stretch. Some of the guests found it annoying, but the lovers didn't care."<sup>14</sup> Carl Gustaf made no attempt to hide Silvia from the surroundings. For example, he offered the photographer Oscar Hedlund and the cartoonist Martin Lamm a drive in to Borgholm with Silvia in the front seat. Hedlund afterwards cursed his lack of foresight:

In the sports car sat the Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Sweden. And not only that. Next to him sat a young lady in a lemon yellow dress giving us her most dazzling hostess smile. Who could know? The only thing we knew was that the Crown Prince's new amour was a feature of the celebrity press. We considered such nonsense beneath our dignity, failing to grasp the news value of an unknown lady in lemon yellow at the side of the crown prince.<sup>15</sup>

Instead, it was the photographer Bertil Jigert who was first:

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<sup>12</sup> Ebbe Samuelsson. Extra. Sanningen om kronprinsens fest på Rivieran. Svensk Damtidning, 1973:25.

<sup>13</sup> Svensk Damtidning, 1973:30.

<sup>14</sup> Lars C-G Ericsson. Här träffar kungen sin stora kärlek Silvia. Svensk Damtidning, 1973:40.

<sup>15</sup> Oscar Hedlund. Min mest missade nyhet. Svenska Dagbladet, 1993-12-19.

In the summer of 1973, the freelance photographer Bertil Jigert was in Borgholm, sent by Husmodern magazine, to cover an event where the king also participated. On his own initiative, he stayed for another day and suddenly saw the king drive off with a couple of passengers in his light blue Porsche. He followed - although it was difficult to keep up with - and saw a passenger being dropped off. A dark girl remained in the car. After a few kilometers the king stopped to fill up and Bertil Jigert got his moment and took one of the most talked about and published pictures of Silvia Sommerlath.<sup>16</sup>

No one knew who she was however. Silvia came to Jägersro and then Falsterbo. They slept in a private villa nearby. Silvia was not on the derby but attended a big dinner afterwards. Carl Gustaf had her schoolmate Charlotte Klingspor to the table, danced with several others, but suddenly disappeared behind a pillar to embrace someone. At 4 o'clock in the morning, they were seen kissing behind an overturned parasol. Silvia was photographed in a big-flowered pretty scary dress. The next day they went back to Solliden. She was invited to Princess Christina's 30<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 3. She had a long conversation about Carl Gustaf with his school friend Meta Bergqvist. Apparently, Meta managed to dispel her doubts about Carl Gustaf whatever they were.<sup>17</sup> Probably necessary. It wasn't just Sister Margaretha who was "secretive from head to toes". I quote a person from Carl Gustaf's entourage: "He is quite honest and fearless but, and almost everyone agrees with it, Carl Gustaf is incredibly difficult to understand. It is not enough to meet him at a party or the like. You must know him for years in order to realize what makes him tick. Yet he is both spontaneous and lively in his circle of friends."<sup>18</sup>

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During the summer, several independent journalists worked to identify Carl Gustaf's new amour. The starting point was Jigert's photograph of Silvia in the Porsche and in Falsterbo there was that stray brunette. Something was obviously going on. For the Swedish Women's magazine Svensk Damtidning it went quite geschwindt, one of their journalists received an anonymous tip: "Early Saturday morning, September 24 [August 25th seems more accurate] someone called my home. One person who refused to identify himself alleged that "Sylvia" was to be sought in Munich, Germany."<sup>19</sup> The informer probably did not try to be secretive by intention. Many of Carl Gustaf's friends didn't know any more. Even Vecko Journalen got a tip that it was the daughter of a German prince named Silvia and something with Summer. No such de Gotha could be found, but through Walther's employment at Uddeholm. Family acquaintances knew of a Sommerlath with Swedish connection. They were given Silvia's Munich address but just then Gustaf VI died and everyone got other things to think about. In Germany, Norbert Loh, a journalist for the women's magazine "7 Tage", was able to identify Silvia by mutual acquaintances, the Blase family, where Silvia had been boarding. Loh recognized her from a photo album he had been browsing on a visit. Bild am Sonntag supposedly was the first to announce what was going on, but was unable to contact Silvia.

Interviewing Silvia was not an easy task. First you had to find her. Lars C-G Ericsson at Svensk Damtidning, took the flight to Munich and spent several days at discotheques and

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<sup>16</sup> Silvia-bilagan. Svenska Dagbladet, 1993-12-19.

<sup>17</sup> Hänt i Veckan, 1974:20.

<sup>18</sup> Greger Stenström. Sådan är han, våran kung. Året Runt, 1976:14.

<sup>19</sup> [Lars C-G Ericsson.] Svensk Damtidning, 1974:4.

other places with a photograph. The bartender at The Yellow Submarine near the Olympic Stadium knew who she was and that she was in the telephone directory. Ericsson called her the same night and asked for a meeting. Silvia asked for a time to consider - she was going to call back - but did not. Probably Carl Gustaf had advised her. The next day, Ericsson and the photographer Carl Hesslefors tried her home address but only got to meet her neighbour Jürgen Schröder - the legal representative of the local Olympic Committee. Schröder - former discus thrower, two meters high and 120 kilos of muscles - introduced himself as Silvia's lawyer and announced that she was not giving any interviews. However, he provided them with some suitably innocuous information: "She likes children, speaks several languages and is our best hostess."<sup>20</sup> Ericsson who had a deadline phoned Silvia again the following night, caught her sleeping, and obtained an interview, her first.

The following day, Silvia appeared on restaurant Mövenpick's porch wearing "a jeans jacket with embroidered flowers and a pair of washed-out pants". Like all later journalists and photographers, he was struck by how short and thin she was. Actually no more than 163 or 165 centimeters. Silvia's first line was "Hello Nightingale and Congratulations" (German *nachtigall* referring to last night's conversation). "How did you do to find me?" She seemed a little prickly when she heard how easy it was. "Damn. What I thought was such a safe hiding place. Like hiding money in the mattress!" Silvia then explained that the interview was a one-off event. They were the first to find her and then it was only fair that they received an award. But they had to understand that it was the first and only time. Then she took the command and wondered if it really was a work for an adult man to hunt for the king's amours.<sup>21,22</sup> (The alternative version by Carl Hesslefors widow<sup>23</sup> is that Ericsson was never in Munich but that it was her husband alone who was there looking for Silvia. However, this is contradicted by a some photographs with Silvia and Ericsson in it.)

The resulting article was very flattering: "She has remarkably easy to talk and socialize. Her humour is of the warm and friendly kind but she also has a witty irony that directly takes the edge off the questions she does not want to answer. She's definitely a very intelligent woman with a delightful and stimulating temperament."<sup>24</sup> - "When asked whether she could imagine giving up her private life and forever becoming a public person, she did not want to say anything. She only meant that you could surely live two lives in that case and absolutely remain faithful to your personality."<sup>25</sup> Silvia wore a smooth gold ring on her right hand. What that meant was never settled, but a secret engagement was suspected.

It has since been claimed that Silvia was perhaps a little too much of a superwoman for the readership to warm up to. Kerstin Hallert, a great Silvia admirer, 20 years later claimed that after the first interview there was a pronounced desire by the chief editors to bring Silvia down on earth:

Silvia gave her first interview to journalist Lars C-G Ericsson who portrayed her as a superior and confident intelligence at the same time as the old king suddenly suffered his last illness. But how would this well-organized professional woman be handled within the confines of royal journalism? There was nothing self-effacing in a woman who, week in and week out, constantly smiled from the front pages of the weekly

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<sup>20</sup> Christina Magnergård. Drottning Silvia : hennes egen berättelse. TV4, 1998. [Intervju med Jürgen Schröder.]

<sup>21</sup> Svensk Damtidning, 1974:4.

<sup>22</sup> Lars C-G Ericsson. Intervju med Silvia. SE, 1975:4.

<sup>23</sup> Helga Hesslefors. Epost 2014-07-27. Intervju 2014-07-28.

<sup>24</sup> Lars C-G Ericsson. Den första intervjun med Silvia. Svensk Damtidning, 1973:36.

<sup>25</sup> Lars C-G Ericsson. Här träffar kungen sin stora kärlek Silvia. Svensk Damtidning, 1973:40.

press. Suddenly, articles appeared that this fearless woman with years of experience of standing on her own two feet actually had a very strict upbringing, constantly supervised by her three brothers. It made her more tangible.<sup>26</sup>

A few days after the interview, Silvia visited her parents and Ericsson got an interview with them as well. Ericsson: "Silvia Sommerlath is to a great extent her father's daughter, they are tremendously similar in temperament, filled with humour, warmth and wit. They also both have an honesty and frankness, which is disarming, however difficult and pressing the situation." - Walther: "She is so firm of character, but "principles" does not mean much to her. Some people are never prepared to improvise and change, but she is. It makes her so flexible, mobile, and in that way we are probably quite similar. It's a valuable quality, I think, life doesn't get so boring and monotonous then."<sup>27</sup> - "If she's going to get married, she should of course choose the one she wants - out of love. I have never tried to influence her in any direction."<sup>28</sup>

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There was much speculation as to when the relationship between Carl Gustafs and Silvia actually began. The "official" version was that it started immediately. There is no evidence whatsoever of that version. When the relationship the following year became known among Swedish gossip journalists, it came as a total surprise also to their Munich colleagues: "It struck like a bomb. At first, we did not believe it to be true. Nobody knew who she was. Silvia Sommerlath - an ordinary girl who lived in Munich - she would become Queen of Sweden...!"<sup>29</sup> There is an interview with Sister Birgitta after the Olympics where the interviewer wonders if Carl Gustaf's reputation was not damaged by him hanging out and flirting with bourgeois girls. Birgitta: "Let him have fun. When he marries it's over."<sup>30</sup> Birgitta does not seem to have been referring to anyone in particular.

Silvia's colleagues were interviewed at length but seemed to second-guess themselves. In the November 1973 interviews they said: "During the Olympics Carl Gustaf came and picked her up every day. She clearly was in love. But she never said anything. She is very discreet."<sup>31</sup> - "The king seemed so shy, almost boyish. That he fell for Silvia didn't surprise them. The king was raised by women and unable to say no." She believed that Silvia had decided from the beginning on becoming Queen of Sweden. And what she decided on, she pushes through.<sup>32</sup> - "It was great to see how love changed her. Silvia was a hyper-effective person and I actually thought she made a little chilly impression. But practically overnight she became like another human being. They didn't let each other out of sight."<sup>33,34</sup> Silvia strongly disliked these interviews, which she saw as a way of basking in her glory: "The good thing was that you discovered who your real friends were."<sup>35</sup> Real friends kept silent.

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<sup>26</sup> Kerstin Hallert. Kungliga distansens historia. I: Silvia-bilagan. Svenska Dagbladet, 1993-12-19.

<sup>27</sup> Lars C-G Ericsson. Jag har sett Silvias förälskad förr. Svensk Damtidning, 1973:43.

<sup>28</sup> Kvällsposten, 1974-01-11. [Intervju med Walther Sommerlath.]

<sup>29</sup> Roger Carlsson: Vår är Silvia? Kvällsposten, 1974-01-14.

<sup>30</sup> Allers, 1972:45. [Referat av intervju med Birgitta & Hansi i tidningen "Frau".]

<sup>31</sup> Clas Göran Olsson. Om Carl Gustafs nya liv. Husmodern, 1973:49. [Intervju med Gudrun Moutain.]

<sup>32</sup> Mark Lippold. Silvias kamrat säger grattis. Kvällsposten, 1974-05-08. [Intervju med Roswitha von Benda.]

<sup>33</sup> P O Eriksson. Vår nya drottning : sån är hon. Expressen, 1976-03-12. [Intervju med Ehrengard von Reden.]

<sup>34</sup> Husmodern, 1980:25. [En äldre intervju med Ehrengard von Reden.]

<sup>35</sup> Stina Dabrowski. Stina möter Silvia. SVT1, "20:00 Special", 1986-06-19, kl 20:00-21:00.



From January 1974, there are reports that they met at Carl Gustaf's favourite place in Munich "Bar Kinki" but not when: "The king was here maybe five times with Silvia. He always drank vodka and lemon. The two seemed completely bewitched by each other. They kissed and danced, but it's nothing unusual in a nightclub."<sup>36</sup> Brother Jörg was interviewed by Expressen but only knew what he had read in the newspapers. He may have been more outspoken in an interview with Allers from that time, but he forbade it afterwards to be printed.

In early 1975, three photographs of Carl Gustaf and Silvia were published, allegedly from one of these meetings at Bar Kinki. They were originally published in Bild Zeitung in 1972. Svensk Damtidning re-published one of them in its September issue 1973:36 with the text: "Our picture is taken during a party in Germany. It was at this party that King Carl Gustaf got closer to Silvia Sommerlath for the first time." Neither Carl Gustaf nor Silvia are "dressed for the Olympics". In the photograph Carl Gustaf has a dark suit and a patterned, probably red, tie and Silvia has a light knee-length dress. During the Olympics Carl Gustaf wore the official blue-yellow suit with crowns woven into the tie and Silvia wore her blue hostess uniform or a dirndl dress but maybe they had a change. In Bar Kinki, Carl Gustaf is said to have had vodka lemon and Silvia sipped wine. In the photographs, they each have soft drinks. Carl Gustaf seems to be trying to impress Silvia who's non-committal. He does not seem to react to three flash bulbs at a distance of about four meters. It is probably an amateur photo from Chalet Suisse. The rustic tables in the background indicate that as well as the poor picture quality. A press photographer has better lenses. The images are also in some versions manipulated in such a way that the background is painted over and Carl Gustaf and Silvia are moved closer together.

Further details were published long after. That Carl Gustaf and Silvia should have met already on March 16 at a reception at restaurant Tiffany's. - That Silvia at the inauguration day met Carl Gustaf at the airport with a bouquet of red and yellow carnations and that they the same evening visited Bar Kinki. - That after dinner at Chalet Suisse Carl Gustaf followed Silvia home and that they ended the evening with a drink at Bar Kinki. - That Carl Gustaf every day sent his adjutant to Silvia with flowers. In fact, Silvia was pressed for details until her 60th anniversary of 2003. Silvia never wavered: The episodes with the reception, the binoculars, the dinner and Bar Kinki had not taken place the same day. Adjutant Daggfeldt had approached her at the opening day reception day. The rest was private and besides she didn't remember.<sup>37</sup>

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Silvia had been offered a position at the Winter Olympics in Innsbruck on February 4-15, 1976, as deputy "protocol director" of the organizing committee. She had brilliant credentials from Willi Daume and others. High work capacity and organizational ability, a smooth way, happy, relaxed and efficient. The work was a public relations task, to spread knowledge about the city and about the event. Silvia would appear on commercials, TV shows and cover photographs as Innsbruck's "face", receive prominent visitors, attend conferences and inform, inform, inform. However, this employment did not begin until January 15, 1974. Her current position ended in September. She filled her time with an employment of 2-3 months as a hostess at an exhibition in Spain, possibly in Barcelona. Her mother accompanied her. They may have visited relatives. In October she quit her apartment. There are reports that she

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<sup>36</sup> Året Runt, 1974:5. [Intervju med servitrisen Astrid Krok eller Krzok.]

<sup>37</sup> Agneta Bolme Börjefors. Drottning Silvia 60 år. Film, 2003. [Intervju med drottning Silvia.]

ambulated between Sweden, Spain and Emmy Schwabe's, who had an apartment in Munich. Schwabe is said to have been the only person Silvia had informed about what was going on between her and Carl Gustaf.

Court journalists have the ability to add 1 and 1 and get it to 2 ½. They sensed a classic romantic love story which, given the course of other love stories between kings and commoners, could well end with the abdication of Carl Gustaf and the extinction of the Bernadotte dynasty on the sword's side because Prince Bertil had no children. The photographers chased photographs with Carl Gustaf and Silvia on the same frame while journalists tried to get someone to confirm the relationship. Silvia's father, Walther, received 25 phone calls a day and was accosted by journalists whenever he went out. Friends and acquaintances were asked to leave a message to his former landlord that Walther contacted from a telephone booth. "One night, he [dad] and mom were going to dinner. The host people had to park a block away, put out the car lights and then my parents had to rush in through the door."<sup>38</sup>

No one, not even close friends, seems to have known at this time whether the relationship was serious or not. Within Carl Gustaf's family it was unthinkable to confide or ask. Princess Birgitta even cut off Carl Gustaf when he tried to. Moreover, Carl Gustaf was now king, it was not up to his sisters to interfere in what he did. There are reports that Silvia visited Sweden several times during this time and stayed at the Grand Hotel under the name Miss Jonasson.<sup>39,40</sup> There were many rumours circulating. Princess Birgitta tells an anecdote:

At that time, I had a friend who got fed up with her society life and tried to ease her boredom by taking a job in the booking centre at Arlanda. One day, she called me to tell an improbable and very comic story.

"Yesterday it was a high demand for tickets to Barcelona," she said.

"Is that so unusual?" I asked.

"Yes, in this case it actually was," she replied. "The airplane was full of photographers. Some had booked in advance, they were obviously better informed than the others. But most came rushing at the last minute and practically fought for the last seats. First class or cheapest charter flight, the price didn't matter, the only thing that mattered was that they came to Barcelona."

"You could almost think that they were hunting Carl Gustaf," I said.

"They were hunting Carl Gustaf", she confirmed. "One of them told me that he had suddenly travelled to Barcelona for a few days to meet his German girlfriend."

I started laughing out loud. "Then they had really invested in the wrong horse. My brother is actually away for a few days right now, but hardly in Barcelona."

Probably some cunning person in Carl Gustaf's circle had offered them a red herring in order to divert attention from Carl Gustaf's real journey.

"Where is he?" asked my friend.

I would have liked to have told her that Carl Gustaf was in fact in France to take care of some more or less official matter - and perhaps to meet Silvia. But I didn't say anything.

"I'm sorry dear, but you don't have the need to know"<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Expressen, 1974-01-18.

<sup>39</sup> Anders Lagerquist. Livvakten som har koll på kungafamiljens liv. Dalarnas tidning, 2011-02-19. [Intervju med Ola Selin, livvakt 1973-1980.]

<sup>40</sup> Calle Hesslefors. Kungens hemliga nyårgäst på slottet: Silvia. Svensk Damtidning, 1974:2.

<sup>41</sup> [Prinsessan] Birgitta & König, 1997.

What is absolutely certain is that Silvia celebrated Christmas with her parents in Heidelberg together with her brothers and that Carl Gustaf celebrated Christmas at Drottningholm castle with sisters Christina and Desirée and their respective. They exchanged Christmas greetings by telephone. The day after Boxing Day, Jörg drove her to the airport. Carl Gustaf paid. The New Year was celebrated at the castle with a small party for friends and relatives - 40 people. Silvia acted as hostess. Then they drove out to Stenhammar to be for themselves. On her return to Stockholm, to escape journalists, she was installed in a flat on the street, Bältgatan 6, near Fältöversten that his good friend Hans-Erik "Jejje" Brodin had at his father's disposal. Jejje later helped out with two more apartments at Skeppargatan 70-72 and on Birger Jarlsgatan. She also lived in a villa at Djurgården.