

Chapter 1 *Shooting in Stockholm*

The woman standing on the wing of the Boeing Stearman plane was wearing dark glasses. The plane flew under a bridge, and then low over the crowd. The woman waved. The crowd waved back.

It was August 9th. The third day of the Stockholm Water Festival had begun. It was twelve o'clock and today there was a flying show. There were over a hundred thousand people in the centre of Stockholm, Sweden. The roads and squares were full of people, who also stood on the bridges which joined the city's many islands. On the water there were thousands of sailing boats and some larger passenger boats.

A jet plane screamed through the blue summer sky. Everyone looked up. A smaller plane flew over the crowd near the Royal Palace.

Half a kilometre from the Royal Palace a tall blonde woman stood in the crowd outside the City Hall. She was wearing blue shorts and a yellow shirt, and had a yellow bag over her shoulder. The woman's name was Monika Lundgren. She was twenty-six years old. Monika watched the woman on the wing of the Boeing Stearman. It would be an exciting job, she thought. It would also be dangerous, flying high in the clouds and low under bridges. And probably lonely.

'Hey, you!' a man's voice said loudly. Monika turned. A

young man was standing next to her. He was about eighteen. He was wearing red, white and blue shorts. His T-shirt said MAD ABOUT FOOTBALL! His head was shaved and his face was red. He was holding a glass in his hand. He was English and his voice was very loud.

Monika smiled. 'Hello,' she said, and turned away. She looked back at the City Hall. The sun was hot and everyone else was watching the planes.

Monika felt a hand on her arm. She heard a voice. It was the English football fan.

'I said hello,' the fan shouted.

Monika turned again to the young man. She pushed his hand away and stepped back from him. Then she smiled again and turned away. A moment later she felt a hand on her shoulder. The football fan pulled her shoulder and turned her around. Then he pulled her towards him.

'Give me a kiss,' the fan said. 'You're lovely.' He smelt of cigarettes.

A few people in the crowd saw what was happening. But they didn't do anything. Everyone else was watching the planes.

Monika looked into the fan's red eyes. He was holding her with one arm and the glass with the other hand. Monika suddenly put her arms up over her head. The fan's arms flew up in the air and he dropped the glass. Monika was free. She quickly hit the fan hard in the stomach. His head came forward and down as his hands moved to his stomach. There was a look of surprise and pain on his face. Quickly Monika brought her knee up into his face. The fan fell forward. Monika moved behind him. Her right hand held the fan's left arm behind his back, while she put

her left hand over his mouth. She moved the fan towards the water. Then Monika kicked him hard from behind. He fell forward into the water. The crowd watched as another jet screamed past in the sky.

Monika looked around, and then walked away from the water. She turned her head left towards her yellow shoulder-bag. She put her mouth near the bag and spoke quietly into it.

An engine started, and from near the City Hall a black boat appeared. The boat went quickly across the water to the football fan. People in the crowd heard the boat and looked towards it. The boat stopped near the fan and two men wearing wet suits pulled the fan into the boat. He was alive and very wet. He was also very angry. He looked at Monika and started to shout something. At that moment one of the men started the engine and the fan's cries were lost. The boat disappeared behind the City Hall. The crowd looked up to the sky again.

Monika Lundgren of the SMI, Sweden's Secret Military Intelligence department, smiled to herself.

'Keep him locked up for the rest of the day, and then let him out,' she said into her shoulder-bag radio.

Then she turned to look at the City Hall. Monika was not there to enjoy the Water Festival. Today she was working with the police. It was important to stop any trouble outside the City Hall.

While the Festival crowds were enjoying the sunshine something much more serious was happening. In the Nobel Prize Room in the City Hall twelve men and women were meeting. They were the leaders of the largest businesses in Europe, North and South America and Asia. The United

Nations had planned the meeting, and the chairman was an important Swedish minister, Kurt Carlsson. He had been the Swedish ambassador in Moscow for three years in the early 1990s. He was forty-five but looked younger. His long brown hair made him look more like a rock star than an ambassador. His voice was loud and clear.

‘The former Soviet Union had tens of thousands of nuclear weapons. The Russian army has destroyed some of these weapons already. Destroying a nuclear weapon is dangerous and expensive work. The Russian army would like to destroy many more weapons. But it doesn’t have enough money to do so. This is where we must help.’

‘But why?’ someone asked. ‘Why must we help the Russians? They are their nuclear bombs, not ours.’

‘It’s possible,’ Carlsson explained, ‘that criminals in the former Soviet Union may steal these nuclear weapons. If these bombs get into the hands of terrorists it would be terrible. The world will only be safe when these weapons are destroyed.’

Carlsson paused for a moment.

No-one around the table said anything. They waited for Carlsson to continue. Then a door opened quietly at the back of the room. A man in a wheelchair moved quickly up to the table and joined the meeting.

‘Let me introduce General Anders Blom, of SMI, Swedish Military Intelligence,’ said Kurt Carlsson.

Anders Blom had short grey hair and a strong face. He was in his mid-fifties. Twenty years ago someone had shot him while he was working with the United Nations in Africa. The shot had broken his back. Since then he had been in a wheelchair.

Blom looked around the table and smiled. He spoke slowly in a low voice.

‘It’s really quite simple,’ Blom explained. ‘Sweden has a very good relationship with the Russian government, and with the other countries of the former Soviet Union. We are ready to help them destroy their nuclear weapons. But they need money to do this – a lot of money. And time is short – we must do something quickly. We know that terrorists are already trying to buy the old Soviet weapons.’

‘As Blom says,’ Kurt Carlsson continued, ‘it is simple. We can help destroy the nuclear weapons, or we can let terrorists get the weapons. And they may destroy the world.’

‘What can we do to help?’ asked a white-haired Japanese woman. She was the managing director of an international electrical company.

‘It will cost one billion American dollars to destroy the weapons,’ Blom replied quickly. ‘And there is something else. If the Russians destroy their weapons, the USA will follow and destroy theirs.’

‘Yes,’ Carlsson said. ‘And that is why you are here. We want you to give one billion dollars and save the world from nuclear weapons.’

Everyone started to talk at once. It was going to be a long meeting.

Outside the City Hall Monika waited in the sunshine. She watched the crowd. Her job was to make sure that no-one tried to get into the meeting. Time passed, and soon it was three o’clock in the afternoon. The side door of the City Hall opened. Kurt Carlsson, with police all around him, stepped out on to a small platform. Journalists,