

**Awesome  
Prices  
at Stake!!!**

Solve the special UpsideDown Word Puzzle below and **win free housing** and food for as long as the newly wed's can cope at their new place!

Marian & Christer King-Edeborg  
Exercisgatan 5, SE-211 49 Malmö

Christer 0709-599 888  
Marian 0708-14 64 74  
E-mail: [kingedeborg@home.se](mailto:kingedeborg@home.se)

“...highlighting how much I was [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] and smiling to myself...”

“when Christer [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] what he wants he goes after it”

“...a lot more friendlier and [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] began to flow...”

“Rolf and Thomas did a [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] dance”

“...this guy was a [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] cause he found her and...”

“...clothed with [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] and dignity...”

“Intence excitement in human [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]”

“...had to thaw his toes out with a [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] when he got home...”

“...with my family in [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] and ice cold Edsbyn...”

## Qualities found in Marian & Christer

C: A Loving & Caring Godly Man  
M: She Lights Up A Room!  
*Vilma Strayhand*

C: Persistent, entertaining, chivalrous,  
persistent, God-sent  
M: Funky, giving, deserving, steadfast,  
hopeless-romantic  
*Sarah Matteson*

C: Romantic, talkative  
organised  
M: Wonderful, zany,  
loyal, a party, family  
*Peter and Simone Ridley*

C: Brother, friend,  
caring, good listener  
(when not expecting  
a call from his love)  
and creative  
M: Funny, caring,  
friend, good kisser  
(I've heard)  
*Thomas Edeborg*

C: Independent, well-dressed, food-loving, christian and happy  
M: Colourful, determined, artistic, musical and christian  
*Margaretha and Rolf Edeborg*

C: Wild, innocent soul breaking free  
M: Intense excitement in human form  
*Lars Dahlberg*

C: A great man of God  
M: Unique, wonderful,  
spunky, classy, loyal  
*Judy King*

C: Caring,  
intelligent,  
faithful guy  
M: impulsive,  
creative  
woman  
*Andreas  
Söhnel*



**Christer and Marian** – it has surely been a privilege working with your amazing story and we would have **loved** being with you on this day. When you get home – don't miss to log on to [www.thelovestory.com](http://www.thelovestory.com), which offers the story in full colour. **We love you! See you in Sweden...** /Frida, Samuel & Mårten

# UPSIDEDOWN\*





## The beginning

**M:** I was on my way to live in Sweden. I believed God had called me to go to Europe and bring life, training and encouragement to Christians, and to see God being made famous once again right across the face of Europe. Making an eternal impact on European culture.

I had a friend from Sweden who put me on a mailing list for a big church I had heard about in the north of Sweden. This would help me know some of what was happening in the church world of Sweden.

It so happened that my friend put only an email address, which was not enough information for this church to post my mail. So my email address came across the desk of a very handsome, 20 something, blonde haired and blue eyed Swedish guy, whose job was to get my full address. His name was Christer.

**C:** The absolute first thing that happened was that Marians name and email address came in thru our website. It was there 'cause she wanted the newsletter from Livets Ord. When this happens I always send a polite reply saying that we cannot send the news report to people unless we have their postal address (I later found out that Marians name and email address was submitted by one of her friends from Sweden, not herself). Anyhow. Marian replied to the email saying

*«Hej Hej Christer!*

*I am very excited that you will send me your newsletter, as I am moving to Sweden sometime in 2001. I will be visiting for 2 months in March/April, and really look forward to visiting your church then.»*

...and then she introduced herself as working with YA. At the end of her email (her work one) there was a link to the YA website. I was thinking that “this is interesting, I wonder if I can find her on the YA website” My heart was actually beating a bit faster as I clicked the link... once



“My Swedish boy, Hmmmm... you are so nice.”

*What do you admire the most with each other, (Upside Down asks)?*

**M:** His enthusiasm to get the best out of this life, his commitment to making a difference in the lives of others, his integrity and depth of character and the way he loves me

**C:** Her devotion to and heart for “her kids” around the globe, she emails and sends postcards with words of encouragement all over. The way she made way to go to Europe as a missionary. And of course the way she makes sure that I know how much she loves me.

*It all starts now. The life they are going to live together. The dreams and plans are already settled.*

**M:** Twins, a boy and a girl

Adopted tribe of kids once the twins are a few years old

Australia

London

Dream Center

Change Europe

Creating a home that is a house of refuge for kids/teenagers on a short or long term basis

Mentoring an ever-growing global tribe of young men and women to be all they can be

Make God famous

**C:** building the kingdom of God with our various gifts. Living in Malmö, London, Los Angeles, Sydney and maybe San Francisco. Visiting many nations in Europe while encouraging the body of Christ to do its very best to communicate the message of Jesus. Having an open home where people can come and visit, stay and get refreshed and inspired.

Number of kids – twins, one boy, one girl (that means 2 kids), plus adopting kids in future.

*And with them, this chapter ends in the book that will continue to sparkle with vibrant life.*



**// Yes, there is a God in Heaven!**

*[Lars Dahlberg  
Christer's friend]*

/// Now I know a couple which met over the Internet – and it worked out!”

[Andreas Söhnel  
Former university colleague  
to Christer]



**C:** The wedding planning started right after this big event and we have been finding places online and had lots of help with this kind of stuff from our friends and family. I have mostly planned our awesome honeymoon. Marian has planned most of the wedding stuff, as she knows more people than me in Australia. We were very glad when Darlene and Mark said they would marry us, and so many of Marian’s friends have contacted us to see if they could help. Thanks you guys! Marian has, as you saw, been handwriting all the invitations and I stamped them. It has been busy planning and doing all this, but it is so worth it.

## Now

**M:** Simply the most amazing and incredible time of my life, but I will be so relieved when all the flying to see each other is over.

**C:** We have been sponsoring SAS for almost one year now, flying back and forth from Uppsala to Malmö. Now we are setting up a home in Malmö and it is very exciting. We are establishing a new life together maKING the best out of our future.

## And forever after...

*And so the marvellous, sparkling story about Marian and Christer starts. As they have told it in their own words. The electricity between them could supplies a village for a year with power. When trying to ask Marian to describe her man-to-be, she simply don’t find the words. Christer, on his hand, gives it a try.*

**C:** Marian is a passionate, creative, Jesus-and-people loving person that does not wait for things to happen, but makes sure something happens.



Regarding the car... my dad is addicted to BMW:s. I am sure that it is not the car that I want or need at the moment. A red beetle... well, maybe, would you be impressed?

at the site I found something called “The Zoo”. It was pictures of the staff at YA. One of them was the girl that emailed me, Marian. Cool I thought. She looked really good. I even thought, “what if she would be...” but then thought, Nah. How would that be.

My reply to the above email was that we would add her name to our mailing list and that “You are welcome to visit our church when you come to Sweden.” It was a bit trippy that she was gonna come to Sweden, and I thought that I would gladly guide a pretty girl like her thru our church if she came to visit. Who knows what that could lead to... (She has told me she thought I was a bit stiff, but I thought I was trying to keep this at a professional level...)

**M:** Christer carried out the mission extremely well and somehow managed to make an imprint of interest on the Australian Girl’s mind. I read the name and job title at the bottom of the signature, and thought to myself that this would be an interesting person to get to know, so one day you would have a friend to visit in the church up North.

The friendship of someone in that church would be really nice, so I chatted back when sending my full address, thinking I was about to make a new GIRLfriend. How wrong I was.

I received a rather impersonal, yet polite email back from this mysterious Christer, saying thanks, and if I was ever in Uppsala they would be more than happy to meet me for coffee. I of course sent back another polite reply, and asked this new email friend what they actually did for this big church. I also told a little of what I did, trying to some how connect with this potential new friend.

In the second email my potential new friend was a lot more friendly, and conversation began to flow easily. Even suggesting that when I came to visit this part of Sweden we could connect for Fika, and that they could show me around Uppsala. This was a promising sign of future friendship.

**C:** After this we had a 5-day break in communications, I had no plans really to continue, but something made me contact Marian again when we had a project/competition at work. The project was to find a good way of illustrating

/// I thought this guy was a psycho cause he found her and looked up her photo and hunted her down and Maz loves attention!!!! (it’s a good thing)”

[Sarah Matteson,  
Marian’s American friend]





**// At Christmas time** Christer was at home in Edsbyn and used his father's computer **very intensive,** and for long periods."

*[Rolf and Margaretha Edeborg, Christer's parents]*

the concept "A new wave of missions", I thought about waves and somehow my mind led me to think of the pretty Australian girl I was emailing with the week before. Maybe she could help me (besides, I would not mind to stay in touch with her). I sent her an email asking for warning signs for big waves at Australian beaches. She was willing to help and we continued to send a few emails, introducing ourselves, what we do for a living etc. She told me about her plans to move to Sweden and Malmö.

On October 12 Marian emailed me the good news about that there was a special sign for when surf is up. The weird thing is that I cannot find any reply or thank you from me after that email. It looks as if this could have been the point when our relationship could have ended (run out into the sand as we say in Swedish). After this email there is no emailing between us until December 23 (Sat, 23 Dec 2000 01:19:49), when Marian sends an email to all of her friends in Sweden This did something to me, really. That brings us to point 2.

## The developing

**C:** I was really wondering, why am I still in her contacts list? How could this be that she is emailing me when we have had no contact since October (12)?

Anyhow, I was really excited and my heart was doing all sorts of things. I was at my parent's house in Edsbyn and I replied to her email immediately! (This was on my Christmas break and I was checking my work email ...hmm, well, I am glad I did).

I told her I was at my parents house, apologised for not emailing and told her what happened with the "wave-project" and thanked her for the effort she put into helping me finding a sign (and hoping that she was trying to give me a sign ;-)).

I also told her to join our conference online.

In this email, I also told her that I was helping my sister to move ("so big brother (me) is helping her"). Marian has told me later, that uptil me telling this, she had thought that I was a girl (the only name that resembles Christer in Oz is Christa



**"Disclaimer:** This letter was written during a **peak state of an emotional trip.** The contents may be unnormal for the writer and is therefore intended solely to be read by Marian King and **not to be spread to people of whom the writer has no idea...**"

soon we found a large clearing where 3 fires were made for the group.

**C:** As it started to get dark we all put on warm clothes to go to a place just outside Edsbyn. The horse and sleigh was waiting in the cold and we all fitted into a sleigh, had torches and furs to warm ourselves up. After 15-20 minutes we came to an opening in the forest, the water was running in the river and it was really chilly. The driver and his people made three fires and started to make pancakes in the fire. As all this happened, I decided to take Marian to the side, to our own little fire.

**M:** After some traditional Swedish 'bush' food Christer took me off to a separate fire that was nearby. Once there he hugged me for the longest time, under the moonlit sky with the running waters of stream as a romantic soundtrack and with his sister nagging him in the background to get more wood, he asked me if I would be his wife, share the rest of his life with him and grow old with him.

**C:** I looked her in the eyes, told her I loved her and asked if she wanted to marry me. And she said ... YES! That was an awesome moment. We turned to our families at the other fire a few meters away, and I introduced Marian as my fiancé. Everyone was cheering, Peter and Tezza did an Australian kangaroo dance and Rolf and Thomas did a moose dance. It was all a very happy atmosphere. It was also very cold, both Rolf and Tezza had very cold toes.

**M:** I of course indicated that I was positive about this request, and indeed said "YES, YESS!" He then asked if it was okay if he did not kneel (in the sub zero temp) and took my glove off so he could slip a pretty band of gold with red sparkles on my finger.

The newly engaged couple then made our way back to the group around the main fire. Christer got everyone's attention to introduce his new fiancée to them. A cheer went up and spontaneously my brother and dad broke into a traditional aboriginal corobaree. To which the Edeborg boys responded with a wolf and moose dance and call to also welcome the couples to the families.



**// Dad had to thaw his toes out with a hairdrier when we got home to Christer's parents place.**

*[Judy King  
Marian's mother]*



/// ...then the "photo shoot" expedition to ask Dad for his girl's hand ("I want ALL of her")...

[Judy King  
Marian's mother]



## The Proposal and Wedding Planning

**M:** The fact that my parents and brother were over for Christmas, to meet both Christer and his family, made for fairly strong suspicions on everyone's part that a proposal and announcement would take place.

**C:** In true anglo saxian tradition the girlfriend knows not when the boy is to propose. Well, we had a brilliant opportunity to do this Christmas 2001. So I guess it was not that big of a surprise, but at least Marian did not know exactly when it was going to happen.

**M:** The particular chosen day, the day after Christmas (26th December) started out with Christer taking the future Parents in laws out for a scenic drive to ask them both for their blessing to marry their one and only daughter. Of course the answer was yes. By this time they were already jumping out of their skin in anticipation, so they were relieved to finally know something more was coming.

**C:** I had arranged for the whole families to go on a horse and sleigh ride when Marian's family was celebrating Christmas with my family in snowy and ice cold Edsbyn. In the morning that day I took Judo and Tezza out in the car. The official reason was to show them the area of Edsbyn and to take photos. My hidden agenda was to ask Tezza for the hand, and all, of Marian. We agreed that it was a good idea, and I was an even happier man. We also went out in the blistering cold on a frozen lake with snowmobiles, but that was only the warm up ;-)

**M:** Christer had organized for a horse drawn sleigh ride through the moonlight forest, extremely romantic. Even in 19 degrees BELOW zero! Both families were rugged up and excited to be treated to such a nice suprise. The stars were bright, in the sky and in the eyes of the lovers sitting in the sleigh. A big fire torch lit up the path, and

(female)). I'll leave that story for her to tell. Anyhow, the last thing I said in this email was: "do you have messenger?"

**M:** Several emails followed, with just light friendly conversation, about two months worth. One fateful email Christer had answered a question from me on what the weekend had contained. As I sat at my computer reading the email, things went into slow motion as I read the words "I helped my sister to move, you know the big BROTHER thing to do"

I read the sentence again slowly as my brain caught up to the horrible realization that this new girlfriend I had been chatting to was actually a Swedish BOY! A boy I had been chatting to for a few months now.

"Oh S---!" I screamed at the computer screen – thoughts whirling around my head, desperately hoping I hadn't said anything embarrassing about the general Gorgeousness of Swedish males.

Then several emails followed over the next few months, and then some silence followed. Christmas came around and I sent a Christmas greeting to my new friend in Sweden. Little did I know that it really made an impact on the recipient.

Christer eventually asked me if I ever used MSN Messenger, and of course I was quite an expert on that by now. We connected Messenger for over an hour and I could not sleep after that session.

**C:** I am not sure when or how she told me that she had messenger, but I know that I got her onto my messenger list. She sent me another email on December 29 (me is back at work then). I sent her a quick reply.

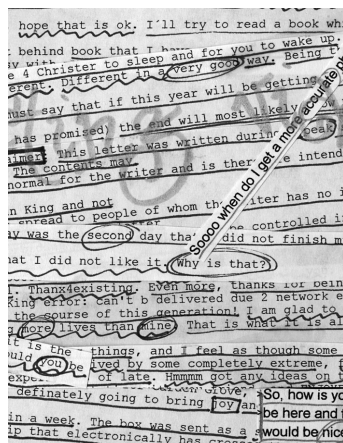
The next step in our relationship happened at 1.34 AM (the same night for me, after coming home from church). I was just checking my email like I always do b4 going to bed. All of a sudden that characteristic sound of someone logging into messenger was heard and Marian was online!!!! My heart was trying to get out of my chest – it was beating so hard! That was our first chat session; we covered many subjects talking for two hours. (My sister was sleeping in the kitchen, or actually she even saw that I was chatting b4 she went to bed). I helped Marian install real player on the computer as well during this session, wanted her to hear

/// Christer and I had a **brothertalk**; "I've kind of met a girl, but **it's a secret** so don't tell the folks!

[Thomas Edeborg  
Christer's brother]



I tried to imagine for about two hours what standing in LAX waiting for my svenska killen will be like.



[Judy King,  
Marian's mother]

our new CD and join conference.

This midnight adventure even made me sick. Next day at conference I had to go home early, I slept lots and was very sick. Felt better next day, still not awesome. Marian went away with friends for a few days and we missed one opportunity to chat on the 2nd of January. That is when I figured out "Swatch Internet Time" and asked Marian for an online date ("fika") the first time. We were going to meet @417. We were both very punctual, I did not dare to leave my computer. We started with a 3-minute break to get some "fika" (I was gonna get tea, but ended up getting coke).

**M:** The following chat sessions online were becoming more and more easy, fun and intriguing. My heart would start to race as I logged on, just hoping that Christer's icon would be active.

My parents started to make fun of the amount of time spent at the computer when I was holidaying 15 mins away from some of the best Australian beaches. They also started highlighting how much I was giggling and smiling to myself while sitting watching a computer screen.

I myself wondered why my mind was so preoccupied, and my heart rate kept increasing each time I sat down to chat. I wondered what was happening to me, was I hallucinating??

Christer eventually asked if he could call me, of which I was totally cynical of ever happening. So I gave him my mobile number, which I knew was out of range. He also discovered this. When he did call 8 seconds after I gave him a reachable number, I was in such shock I could not speak and gave the phone to my mum, so Christer and my mum chatted for about 10 mins first. Basically until I caught my breath.

From that moment I knew my life was about to change. This was really becoming something that dreams were made of, especially mine. That first phone call cemented something in my heart that the future was looking bright, and yet I still tried to keep a sense of detachment.



Oh, About the title of this email... yes, **I do find it quite addictive talking to you on the phone.** I love to do it and I cannot wait to be in the same room, or just being in the same geographical area as you... **it makes me all whoozie(?)**.

list had been in progress, as a result of some guidance by some of my mentors, for several years. It had been added to time and time again, some times changing emphasis as I discovered myself who I really was.

The scary thing was discovering more and more as I emailed and chatted to Christer, that he indeed possessed each of these qualities.

## 2. I had always told God that He had to send my future husband to me.

I was very determined about this one, so when Christer first asked if he could come to L.A. to meet me face to face, I was totally shocked, but also very hesitant to believe that it would indeed happen.

The fact that he travelled half way around the globe to meet me spoke very loudly to my heart.

**3. I also asked God to give me an obvious sign** while Christer was with me in L.A. So imagine my surprise and astonishment when the first thing Christer did at the Coffee club was give me a gift, a gift that turned out to be a Swedish road SIGN! I was always a details girl, but God was really overdoing it here!

**C:** I had a big green light when it came to how I was going to handle my relationship with Marian. I fell more and more in love with her for each email, chat session, sms and phone call. I remember during this time, before we met, that we had a guest speaker at our church. He said that we have to do something and not just sit and wait for something to happen. He said: As long as you do not have a red light - just go for it. When I heard him preach, I thought to myself that regarding my situation with Marian, I had never had such a big fat green light in many years... And I was already on my way to go see her in L.A...

Marian to me is the woman that is described in Proverbs 31. In my asking God moments, that passage of the scripture turned up again and again.

<sup>10</sup> A wife of noble character who can find?

She is **worth far more than rubies.**

<sup>11</sup> Her husband **has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.**

<sup>12</sup> She **brings him good**, not harm, all the days of her life.

<sup>13</sup> She selects wool and flax and **works with eager hands.**

<sup>14</sup> She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar.

<sup>15</sup> She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls.

<sup>16</sup> She **considers a field and buys it**; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.

<sup>17</sup> She **sets about her work vigorously**; her arms are strong for her tasks.

<sup>18</sup> She **sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night.**

<sup>19</sup> In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers.

<sup>20</sup> She **opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.**

<sup>21</sup> *When it snows*, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet.

<sup>22</sup> She **makes coverings** for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple.

<sup>23</sup> Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.

<sup>24</sup> She **makes linen garments and sells them**, and supplies the merchants with sashes.

<sup>25</sup> She is **clothed with strength and dignity**; she can laugh at the days to come.

<sup>26</sup> She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.

<sup>27</sup> She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.

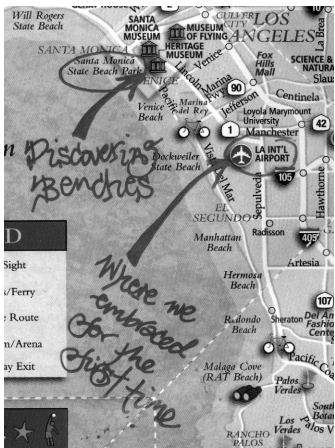
<sup>28</sup> Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

<sup>29</sup> "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."

<sup>30</sup> Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who **fears the Lord is to be praised.**

<sup>31</sup> Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate. wool and flax and works with eager hands.

PROVERBS 31:11-31



a puzzle.

The next few days was truly like a movie, beach walks, restaurants, benches car rides. We went to Santa Monica beach, church (cottonwood and crystal cathedral, Disneyland, Universal Studios and working at the LA Dream Center. The more time we spent together, the more we liked being together.

I had planned that we should go to San Francisco while I was there. My plan was to pop the question to Marian there, “Did she want to be my girlfriend?”. I even had a plan as to where I wanted to do it = Lombard Street... I had been there b4 and remembered it to be a cool place with the steep curly road with lots of flowers... Driving to SF from LA took us at least 8-10 hours, but we had a really good time. Talking, holding hands, singing, dreaming... The more time went on I was more and more sure I could love this girl all my life. We prayed together and God spoke to us and we noticed how we had common dreams of what to do with life.

The following day we went to pier 39 and looked around. and we had a meal at Bubba Gump Shrimp Company but that was just to kill the time before five o’ clock that day (Feb. 10). I knew what street we needed to get to, but first when we found the street, we ended up in the wrong end (which was nice too). After looking at the view over the bay from the telegraph hill we came to the curly part of the street. We walked up the hill and laughed, took pictures and chatted away. As we got to the top and watched the view I did what we came there for. I asked her: Do you want to be my girlfriend? ...and she said YES! After this, we had the longest kiss and were holding each other for probably 15-20 minutes. I was the happiest man on earth.

## The Asking God Moments

**M:** There were three main things here for me.

### 1. My extensive palm pilot list.

I had long been talking to God and writing down exactly the characteristics my future husband HAD to have. This

Protecting my heart from possible disappointment, even though I could not sleep that night or most of the following nights. Wondering what exactly was happening here.

## The Growing

**M:** From that first phone call and until the present day Christer called me, no matter what part of the globe I was in, every day. Usually more than once. Phone calls became a lifeline, a sweet and intimate part of each day. A sense of closeness and deep friendship, heading towards a first real life encounter. Laughing, telling stories, praying and more laughing were an essential part of each day.

Upon arrival in L.A. I received not only an amazing care package stocked full of fun surprises from Sweden, but also a huge bunch of exquisite blood red roses. More cues of the romance to come.

A treasury of love letters, a catalogue of postcards and an Olympic marathon of phone calls followed. Never dull and never boring, each one deepening an already strong friendship.

**C:** Important date: January 6 2001, Marian gave me her cell phone number. I immediately put her into my www.mtnsms.com list of people I sms daily. And that was really a frequent happening. Hundreds of sms:es... everyday the phone kept beeping. It always made me smile

Important date II: January 9 2001, I send a box of stuff to Marian in LA (B4 she has gone there, to be there B4 her). Same day I tried to call on M:s cell.

Important date III: January 9 2001, I call and talk to Marian and Judo. (Marian thought she had dreamt it she said when we chatted next time)

January 11 (?) I say the words “I love you” on the telephone. I had a song in my head, “Say the words”, by DCtalk, I had it for several days and when talking I just said it.

By this time getting SMS:es and emails and talking on the phone was making me totally speeded and smiling all the time. Coming home every day was (and is) an adventure, cause you never knew how many creative postcards and letters would be found at the doorstep, just

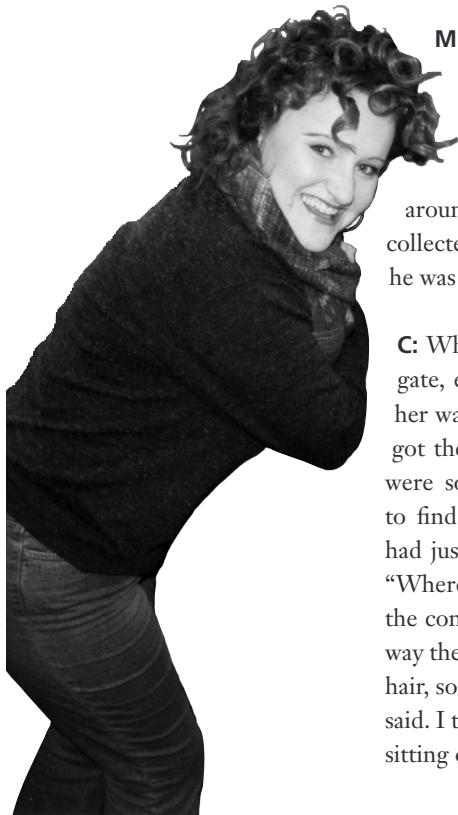
/// They would last for at least an hour each! **What would they chat about???** Only they know... but one can speculate that they have already found a cure for cancer, solved the o-zone problem and ended world hunger...

*[Sarah Matteson, Marian's American friend]*



**//** That morning, she tried to eat, but couldn't. Her hands were shaking, she had butterflies in her stomach.

*[Vilma Strayhand, Co-worker with Marian at LA Dream Center]*



as well as coming to work for the same reason.

I knew I had 2 weeks of vacation to USA from last summer, so I thought I could go and visit Marian while she was in LA. I asked her if she would think it was weird if I would do that, but she said it would be cool.

**M:** Eventually the day of Christer's arrival in L.A. dawned. Weeks of sleeplessness had passed for me, and finally I was on my way to the airport. Having paid close attention to every detail I was as ready as I could be, and heart racing I stepped into L.A.X.

**C:** When the day finally arrived to go to LA I was calm collected and ... excited. It was snowing in Sweden and my friend Mårten drove me to the airport and took a picture of me leaving and emailed it to Marian. On the plane I had a printout of all of our emails and chat sessions to read. I was praying for a good trip and for a good first IRL-session ;-)

**M:** My phone rang, and the warm familiar voice I had grown to love greeted me, and asked where I was – I was racing into the baggage claim area when the same warm voice said “stop”, I stopped, “turn right” I turned right, and there he was just around the corner. HE was sitting there cool, calm and collected. Smiling right at me, feet up on the phone booth he was using, right there in real life.

**C:** When I arrived at the airport I saw no Marian at the gate, end no Marian was there so I assumed she was on her way. I made my way to the conveyer belt and when I got there the bags had not even arrived yet. BUT there were some phone booths there, so I got out my Revo to find Marians phone number. When I called her she had just got out of the car and was entering the airport. “Where are you, where are you” Marian said. I said go to the conveyer belt and I am there... she said, “I am on my way there, where are you?” I then saw a pretty girl with red hair, so I said, “Turn to your right”, “Where, Where?” she said. I then repeated myself and finally she saw me as I was sitting on the “shelf” of the phone booth.

**M:** I stopped dead in my tracks, feet frozen to the floor. At that moment I truly experienced that over used phrase, that “time stood still”. Now it was up to Christer to make a move, walking slowly towards me, in what seemed like a lifetime.

**C:** She saw me and came half running, half walking to me...

**M:** He then took me in his arms and hugged me tightly. We stood in that tight embrace for the longest time, well at least 3 minutes anyway.

**C:** ...and we embraced each other as if we had not seen each other for a very long time (which was very true...).

We then walked up to the conveyer belt holding hands and holding each other. It was sooo good to finally meet in real life. It was truly electrifying to be with each other. We took the bus to the car-rental place (thanks Scott for fixing that). Once there we picked a car out and started our trip in to LA. First thing that happened was that I got lost in the roundabout trying to leave the airport. We started holding hands as soon as we were on our way in the car. I am blaming the handholding and the loooove that was in the air for me not finding my way out of the roundabout...

**M:** Eventually we made our way out of LAX, and to the hire car yard. Once in the car we were on our way downtown – well that was after Christer in his nervousness and excitement drove around and around and around the same loop of LAX.

The Coffee Club was the perfect cosy venue for our first face to face date. I chose it especially as it had both tables and chairs and comfy sofas. Thankfully Christer chose a huge and inviting sofa. Perfect for the two of us.

**C:** When we got into LA, Marian had done her homework and found a supercool café where she directed me to. We sat down on their supersofa and ate some food and talked all night. It was amazing to see how good we connected right away IRL. With a risk of sounding a bit cliché, but when we met IRL, it was just like finding the last piece of

**//** Expensive phone calls and flights to every part of the world. When Christer knows what he wants he goes after it.

*[Peter and Simone Ridley Marian lived with them about four years]*

