

My new boyfriend Robert had a pub, a large Bavarian inn with a beer garden in the south-east of Munich. There I was sitting at the source of drink. I drank until I looked puffy and bloated.

Robert was a great guy, with a full beard, long hair and headband: a kind of hippy as a host. He was divorced, in his mid-30s, had a son (12) and daughter (8).

Written by
ROBERT MENKE

I drank my first wines with him in his beer garden under the chestnut trees. His children immediately latched onto me and I read them bedtime stories on the very first night, putting them to bed. They smooched me and asked, "Will you come back soon?"

Gradually, the children drew me completely into the household and toward Robert. Was I supposed to have a perfect family after all?

I had a dream: I wanted to turn the stage of the inn into a really good regional theatre.

I put all my earnings into this dream. I shot "Derricks" to pay for the Art Nouveau lamps for the auditorium and to finance alterations.

I took care of Robert's children, the waitresses and my Leslie at the same time.

30 bottles of sparkling wine! I broke out of the sanatorium, naked

In reality, I was a wreck. In the meantime, I had to shoot again and again to raise money: for example, a film directed by Adolf Vohrer, with Harald Leipnitz as a partner.

I didn't come to the filming in Frankfurt because I drank 30 bottles of champagne in my mother's flat – she was away for two days – and took plenty of sleeping pills.

I hoped to end things completely. I didn't want to live any more.

This time my mother saved me. She found me lying on the floor. My hands were already completely paralysed. I was absolutely smashed and unconscious.

After three days I woke up again in the intensive care unit.

The film company threatened me with a penalty that would have ruined me if I had stopped filming.

I stood there in the flames, covered in blood, beaten blue, unable to get out, Robert had locked me in.

So, I smashed the window with my hand and jumped out into the courtyard. The fire was extinguished in time.

I fled to the elegant hotel "Conti", where I continued drinking until I was exhausted. My mother took me to a sanatorium afterwards.

Her fear: Had I gone crazy?

From there, I had to go to Italy for filming. My mother drove me there again – again with Campari as a cure. She only did that so that I was able to work at all.

It was during this time that I first became afraid of going crazy.

In Venice, we spent the money we had just earned on trinkets: a watch, earrings, a black coat... I emptied a whole chequebook.

**Helga Anders:
Tell me, love:
where are you?**

The "Old Man" Siegfried Lowitz and "Derrick" Horst Tappert with Helga Anders (left) and Heidelinde Weis at the Munich Oktoberfest. During this time, Helga Anders accepted every role to finance "her theatre".

Photo: Franz Hug



I helped out in the beer garden: a thousand meals went out in one evening. I was up until 4 in the morning.

Many celebrities at the premiere

When I fell into my huge heavenly bed at 5 o'clock in the morning, I was exhausted and drunk at the same time. At noon I woke up again in a fog – and first had to drink something.

The first premiere – "The Snowstorm" by Anton Maly – was a huge success. 150 guests sat and ate at twelve tables. Fritz Wepper was there, the producer Herbert Ringelmann, and lots of Munich celebrities. The newspapers were already celebrating me as "The Lady Director".

I had myself discharged from the hospital as my own decision.

My mother put me in the car and drove me to Frankfurt for the shoot.

During the ride, she kept pouring me Campari. The slowly increasing alcohol level made me "fit" again.

Without having slept, drunk again, I played a funeral scene that morning with Brigitta Mira, of all people.

In the chaos of work, drunkenness, stress, the hurry, there were more and more quarrels with my boyfriend Robert. Of course, we also fought.

The last quarrel took place in the large room at the back of the kitchen. We were drunk. After we'd had a terrible fight, Robert started a fire in the room. He wanted to burn down the whole inn.

I was convinced that this was the last time I would be in Venice – in the city I love the most.

My mother brought me back to the sanatorium at Tegernsee. There I was put under heavy medication to calm me down.

Construction workers pushed me. Beer was given through the barred windows. That made my condition even worse.

One night I broke out of the sanatorium, naked. Fortunately, I called my mother from a phone box. Strangely enough, I had the coins for the phone in my hand. My mother brought me back to the sanatorium.

I was now injected with drugs that triggered a jaw spasm. One side of my face shifted completely, as if paralysed. **I got really scared when I saw myself in the mirror.**

**Maggie:
The second eye surgery**

Last night, Maggie Thatcher (57) had to have an operation on her sick right eye – for the second time. Only now did it come out: already on Sunday, the "Iron Lady", who suffers from retinal detachment (BILD reported), underwent a laser operation. Her doctor said "It was not entirely successful". Maggie had to stay in hospital for at least two days.

Please do not send well-wishing gifts (...)

Tomorrow you will read:

Helga Anders has terrible alcohol fantasies. She has to be tied to the bed.

And the rehab isn't helping. When she is sent to an institution again, her mother