



TALKING WITH THE: WORLD'S STRONGEST WOMAN

From time to time, we will reprint articles of one sort or the other. The following article-interview with Katie Sandwina appeared in a German newspaper, the *Woven Man Spricht*, on December 8, 1910.

The orchestra starts to play. The curtain is going up and a woman with a golden coat of mail appears. She is of colossal build, a German, a Brunhilde. She is the Iron-Queen Katie Sandwina, the world's most powerful woman, currently amazing the audience in the Schuhmann-Theater in Frankfurt.

Experts and physicians call this "weak woman" an "incomprehensible phenomenon." Within a few minutes she makes a spiral out of a two meter-long, flat wrought-iron bar, thick as a finger. She does this with just her bare hands.

Out of an iron bar, thick as a thumb, she bends a horseshoe and tears apart the heaviest chains as if they were made of paper. She forms the pillar of a bridge on which fifty people from the audience have a walk.

What kind of strange woman is she? What made her what she is? How does she live? I pluck up my courage, arrange to meet this woman in her hotel. As a precautionary measure I am carrying some carbolic acid and bandages. Better safe than sorry...a woman who breaks iron like a pretzel!

"Oh, you journalists, it's impossible to escape you! The first thing you probably want to know is my age, right?"

I blush like a youth and timidly answer in the affirmative. Again she is smiling.

"If I tell you my actual age you wouldn't believe it. And if I add some years I would cheat myself."

"Honestly, I guess you to be thirty."

"Well, write it so."

"Have you been in this profession for a long time now?"

"Since my childhood, I come from an old, famous family of athletes and I've been trained from my early days on to get strong."

"I assume you have to eat a lot?"

"I wouldn't say a lot, but well. Above all, nourishing food like meat, eggs and vegetables."

"Do you have any objections to alcohol?"

"Me? Heaven forbid! There's nothing to beat a good glass of beer or a fine bottle of wine. I think it's nonsense when athletes avoid these things. Beer and wine are part of a good digestion.

"A very discreet question, my dear madam! Are you married?"

"No, I'm not married. I'm still single but nobody dares to end this situation."

"Are you interested in men, anyway?"

"What shall I say? Men are like air to me, you can't live without them. Every now and then I breathe good fresh air, you know. I'm just a 'weak woman', after all."

"You must have travelled all around the world, right?"

"Yes, with the exception of China and Africa you can say that. My next destination is America where I stay most of the time, although it's also quite beautiful in Germany.

"How long will you still be able to practice this 'heavy' profession?"

"If all goes well - three years. Sometimes I regret that I'm working too honestly. People always question my abilities, although at every show I allow someone to see for himself that my act isn't a fake."

"What do you think of today's women?"

"Women should do more for their personal hygiene and exercise more often, so that the new generations become a better kind of people."

"My dear madam, I'm now going to ask a most indiscreet question: Do you wear corsets, and what do you think of them?"

"No, I don't wear them. And what do I think of them? From the point of view of health, it is a most foolish thing to wear them. And, besides, a man who is embracing a woman wants to hold a supple and warm body in his hands - not a lobster!"

Keep that in mind dear ladies! I say good-bye and shake hands with the world's strongest woman. It was a very tight grip, appropriate for a Brunhilde.

