

EXCLUSIVE INSIDE R.F.K.'s DARING 1968 CAMPAIGN
WITH NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN PHOTOGRAPHS

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"Great is the guilt of an
unnecessary war."
—JOHN ADAMS

Bobby Kennedy

*The HOPE, the TRAGEDY,
AND WHY HE STILL MATTERS*

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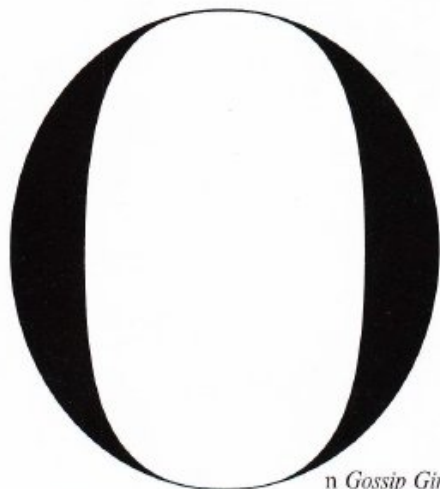
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JUNE 2008
WWW.VANITYFAIR.COM



n *Gossip Girl*,

Blake Lively plays Serena van der Woodsen, a rich girl-next-door who navigates the treacherous terrain of Manhattan private-school life while wearing a lot of amazing-looking clothes. (Just witness the killer gold leather jacket she was rocking when frenemy Blair Waldorf told her "there had to be somebody left on the Upper East Side" Serena hadn't slept with. At Thanksgiving dinner, no less. So rude.)

In just a few short months, the latest adolescent soap opera from the CW network has become for girls what *Sex and the City* was for chicks in the 90s—a fashion inspiration. And that goes for Lively as well. "Being on a show where fashion is so important, it's become a huge part of my life," she says. "Our fashion guy, Eric Daman, is a genius. He has made me *hungry* for fashion."

And so it only made sense that the 20-year-old Lively would get herself to a place where she could gorge—Paris during fashion week. This January was her first time at the couture shows. "It was like stepping into a fairy tale," she says. "Meeting Karl Lagerfeld and Mr. Valentino—it was mind-blowing."

Not to mention the special attention the newly minted American star received at the elegant Le Meurice hotel. "They even had a tag made for my dog, Penny," says Lively. "She's a red teacup Maltipoo."

"To be watching these models on the runway and thinking, Oh my gosh, can you ever imagine wearing something like that?" she says. "I don't even have words for how wonderful it was, going around the city in these clothes. It's every little girl's dream to run around Paris in couture gowns."

Her fairy-tale photo shoot began in her room at Le Meurice, in a Versace ballerina gown with endless layers of tulle. "It was a little too tiny; we had to fudge it," she confesses. "I've got some curves."

Then it was on to a "random café"—with, randomly, the French alterna-pop group BB Brunes—in a Chanel number Lively describes

as "Sofia Coppola's take on *Alice in Wonderland*. It had a Mad Hatter vibe to it."

On the lantern-lit Rue Visconti—in a pose inspired by an iconic Helmut Newton photograph—Lively wore Jean Paul Gaultier: tight, sexy, black.

But the *pièce de résistance* was the gigantic yellow taffeta Dior gown in which she posed in front of the Eiffel Tower. Two hundred hours of sewing and 900 hours of embroidery went into the making of the 33-pound dress, which features 33 yards of satin, 300 pieces of Swarovski topaz, and 6,000 sequins (hand-stitched with gold thread). "Couture," Lively declares, "is huge."

"When I was a little girl," she says, "my mother made a beautiful Belle gown for me"—she means the yellow costume worn by the Disney princess in *Beauty and the Beast*. "And my friends were like, 'Oh my gosh, you finally get to be Belle!'"

Lively, who grew up in Burbank, says, "I don't think my entire wardrobe in high school added up to the amount of money of one outfit" worn by some of the New York private-school girls she sees lurking around the *Gossip Girl* set.

"You definitely see these girls with Chanel purses and Diane von Furstenberg coats. Some of them are 12 years old and they're on iPhones and Black-Berrys," she says. "I don't know what you could do with a BlackBerry at 12."

Maybe they're e-mailing each other about Serena van der Woodsen's wardrobe. "I have noticed their style change since the show came on," says Lively. "We copied it from their lives, and now these girls are copying us. It's so crazy that it's translating."

She says she's even found herself dressing more and more like Serena, whose style she describes as "urban equestrian chic." But now that she's done couture in Paris, says Lively, "I'd love to have a beautiful dinner at my house and wear beautiful ball gowns. It's the little girl in me." □