

Chapter 120 : Crown Princess Victoria (1977-1996) (I) – High-Born Woman.

The Act of Succession, even in its present diluted form, is not for weaklings:

- Eldest sibling and his or her children inherit the throne. If the eldest sibling is childless, the throne is inherited by the next sibling in line. If there is no remaining heir the monarchy is abolished.
- The monarch is to symbolize the country. There is no description of what this means.
- The monarch is not allowed to choose religion freely. He or she must adhere to the Evangelical-Lutheran doctrine or else be excluded from the succession. This does not apply to in-laws.
- The children's marriage must be approved by the monarch, and the government or else be excluded from the succession. There is no description of what is a suitable consort.
- Children are not allowed to choose their profession freely. They must not hold political office or be economically dependent, else they will be excluded from the succession. The same applies to in-laws.

On July 14, 1977, at 21:45, future Crown Princess Victoria Ingrid Alice Desirée, length 50 centimeters, weight 3250 grams, was born at Karolinska Hospital's maternity ward in Solna. The place was besieged by about 50 journalists, but they did not have much for the trouble. Silvia had got there by the back door wearing a wig and disappeared afterwards through a culvert. CG was supposed to attend, but the delivery was faster than expected.

At 8 a.m. the next day she received a salute of 21 shots five seconds apart from the battery on Skeppsholmen. At 11:15 there was an extra cabinet meeting at Stockholm Castle. She was inspected by Prime Minister Torbjörn Fälldin, Speaker of the Parliament Henry Allard, Marshal of the Realm Gunnar Lagergren, Head Wife at the Royal Court Countess Alice Trolle-Wachtmeister and was apparently approved. At noon, Archbishop Olov Sundby held the Te Deum in the Royal Chapel. At the same time, the country's other batteries started firing: Boden Fortress, Norra Brännan at Härnösand, Oscar-Fredriksborg on Rindö at Vaxholm, Berga Naval Schools south of Stockholm, Fårösund on northern Gotland, Kungsholms fort & Kungshall at Karlskrona and Billingen at the entrance to Gothenburg.

Questioned about the brat Silvia announced that Victoria was sweet, kind, resembled her father and yelled when hungry. On September 27 at 12:16 she was baptized in spring water from Solliden. The official photography had to wait for a couple of months. Meanwhile CG photographed her himself. Christmas was the baptism of fire. Victoria sat on her mother's knees while seven avid photographers took 1,600 photos in 20 minutes. It ended up being too much. The following Christmas, she was more plucky. There is a famous picture of her dragging a Christmas teddy bear, awash with spotlights and curiously confronting her photographers. The comment afterwards was: "The princess, according to the reports of people who were present, looked with pleasure at the commotion."

While a toddler, Silvia, Grandma Alice and the nurse spoke German with her, but this was not appreciated. Her language of choice was Swedish! However, it was okay speaking English with the au pair girls. There are reports that Victoria "received extra language training" with German relatives. Very likely because of her high grades, a 5 in German & a 4 in English. She later improved her English considerably. Neither she nor her siblings saw much of their parents but socialized with each other and with the nannies. Over time, these

became quite numerous: Märta Lillieborg, Anna Högfelddt, Elisabeth Zimmerman, Åse Fotland and Eva Andersson.

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In 1982, Victoria entered the Drottningholm Municipal Daycare. The following year she was moved to the Swedish Church's preschool in Nockeby, Västerled's parish, where they not only played but also spoke about the Christian message. At home there was prayer before dinner and evening prayer. Victoria was very committed to the prayers but not very churchy. She participated in the Skogsmulle nature activities.

CG and Silvia consulted the School Board on a suitable school. Director General Lennart Orehag compiled a list. The choice fell on Smedslättsskolan in Bromma not far from home. It was probably the safety aspects that decided the choice. It was a little remote. Victoria, her parents, two bodyguards, and a host of journalists arrived on August 21, 1984. The teachers would name her Princess, but the children would choose her own address. Afterwards, CG invited the editors-in-chief to the castle and asked them to leave Victoria and her classmates alone in the school yard - preferably not write anything at all. Nearly all information about Victoria's education is therefore from much later.

My little brother Johan was a classmate of Victoria and has told a lot of “stories” about how impressed the guys were by the bodyguards - wow, REAL special police guys outside the classroom! And a big, cool black car waiting to take her home. To the castle! All the classmates of Victoria thought it was supercool, but not herself. She just wanted to be like everyone else. An ordinary girl with normal parents. I also remember when we were at end terms and some (horrible I think) parents promptly tried to get their children to stand near the princess so that they got a picture of their kids with the Queen and Victoria. Know that Mom sighed and said how sorry she felt - that Victoria could not be treated like everyone else.¹

When attending Smedsäng or Ålsten Victoria is said to have run her own “castle school” with the siblings as students. Madeleine is said to have been able to read from the school start.²

She attended secondary school 1987-1990 at Ålstensskolan, also in Bromma, secondary school 1990-1993 at Carlssons/Enskilda gymnasiet and high school 1993-1996 at Enskilda gymnasiet. She was addressed there, even by her teachers, as Victoria. In the press, she was Viccan. Among the siblings Oja. Being addressed as Princess or Crown Princess came later when she insisted on it. She “interned” at the Royal Collections and the Historical Museum. Afterwards, Madeleine described her as a typical older sister who took care of them while their parents were away, invented games and made sure they did their homework. Victoria afterwards thought she had been too strict, but the siblings denied: “Victoria was both nice and fun!”

Victoria's high school classmates were carefully studied. The composition of the class was children who had accompanied her from Ålstensskolan, children from CG's & Silvia's circle of friends, children from nobility & wealth and an “alibi group” from the middle class so that the composition would not seem too challenging. The school's president denied any such

¹ Mia Roswall. Klasskamrat med Victoria! SvenskDam.se, 2009-11-25.

² Tarras-Wahlberg, 2012.

intention. There are reports that early in junior high school there was infighting to become included in Victoria's circle of friend's that led to bullying and that the parents protested it to the principal. However, I have not been able to verify the information. In any case, CG had many long discussions with Victoria on how to deal with her situation. She settled in habits such as laying bum steers - false rumours of what parties, school trips, etc. she would attend - to avoid those who were more interested in being seen with her than in herself as a person. Overt servility was forbidden. Loyalty = silence a must. Probably there were more demands but we don't know anything about them.

Between the confirmation and the coming of age, something went wrong in her social life. What I have been able to document is that she did not want to be treated as a member of the gang but as *primus inter pares*, something that her old circle of friends did not know how to deal with. Some started avoiding her. The void was filled by "fortune seekers" who wanted to bask in the glory of her social position. They competed with each other in different ways for her attention and favour. Money was a must but also social finesse. All accounts of Victoria's high school interaction are consistent in how extraordinarily pleasant and well-dressed these young people were. No louts or snobs! The flip side was a strong and tiresome hierarchy. "You should know your place and not think that you are too much a friend."³ In the end, Victoria didn't know what to think about her friends and acquaintances, but after her graduation broke with them all. Maybe a little too radical. She regretted it afterwards.

She later reconciled with three of her friends: Andrea Brodin, Caroline Kreuger & Josephine G netay. (Perhaps with more - the information is sketchy.) "The girls have in common that their parents are close friends with the king and queen. Together with them, Victoria can relax and be herself."⁴ *Question:* And how was she then? *Answer:* She was exactly like her father. When her friends complained, she could dismiss them with "what are you whining about? You have two legs, two arms and you're healthy..." - *Comment:* "I think they sometimes find me annoying. But real friendship is forever."⁵ - One of the purged friends complained afterwards but also felt relieved that it was over: "When we socialized, sometimes it was all about her and her life. And I can understand why. Victoria's frame of reference doesn't extend very far. I mean, she doesn't want to take the limelight, it just ends up like that."⁶

The graduation party was on June 5, 1996. CG drove her home in a bright red Pontiac 66. The party was held with friend Caroline "Kling" Svedin at Ulriksdal Castle. The hostesses received the guests in dresses of the same cut: Victorias in green, Carolines in pink. The number of guests was 141. A few years later Madeleine and her friend Louise Gottlieb had 160 guests at their graduation party. Advantage Madeleine!

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In primary school, Victoria was diagnosed with dyslexia. She was so bad at reading and writing that her classmates laughed at her. She had trouble with the fixation - "the letters jumped" - and she felt "stupid and sluggish". Silvia tried to instil some confidence in her daughter: "All people had a problem. This was hers." She appears to have trained reading and writing like everyone else. During junior high at  lstensskolan, she received additional training by a special ed teacher. The teachers were very kind, friendly and understanding.

³ Daniel Nyhl n. I Victorias v nkrets m ste man veta sin plats. Aftonbladet, 2002-07-10.

⁴ Catarina Hurtig. Jag br t kontakten med alla mina v nner. Svensk Damtidning, 2003:4.

⁵ Bah & Tarras-Wahlberg, 2002.

⁶ Daniel Nyhl n. I Victorias v nkrets m ste man veta sin plats. Aftonbladet, 2002-07-10.

Laziness & skipped homework could therefore always be blamed on her dyslexia. Silvia employed a governess, Ulla Gitta Kronberg, and later auxiliary teachers in English, German and mathematics. If necessary, she helped her daughter with her homework, viz. quizzed her. CG avoided taking responsibility for this. "I am lazy and unproductive in the evenings and I prefer to watch TV".⁷

Silvia was deeply involved in her daughter's problems. 1984, on the initiative of Professor Curt von Euler The Rodin Remediation Academy was founded, an international interdisciplinary research forum on dyslexia, and in 1989 the subsidiary organizations Svenska Dyslexistiftelsen (for researchers) and Svenska Dyslexiföreningen (for practitioners). Silvia became the protector of the research. Princess Marianne (Sigvard Bernadotte's wife) held honorary positions in all three organizations. Victoria could not therefore complain that she lacked experts in her surroundings. Practical advice was scarce, however. In 1988, the education consultant Sigrid Madison published a teacher's manual "Bouncing Letters". Much of the book was case descriptions and encouragement. At the end, there were some practical advice for the students: Check your vision. Use a reading window. "Stress off" - e.g. through music or exercise. Victoria herself thought of using a ruler when reading - it was slow going but it worked. She wanted silence. In 1992, Madison also published a review entitled "Healing Reading and Writing". In 2001 CG awarded gold medals to both Euler and Madison.

Silvia was in the habit of treating every question she disliked as an attack on the royal house. She was once asked about CG dyslexia. Silvia hit the roof: "You don't talk about your king like that!" and left the room. Self-preservation made the journalists avoid the topic. The consequence for Victoria was that her dyslexia for a long time remained a family affair. Then came junior high. What happened may well be summed up as that the Swedish upper-class elite schools not being as forgiving as the Swedish people's municipal schools with their hidden curriculum that everyone should descend to their proper level. Victoria received two special ed teachers and a schedule. The schedule was to arrive half an hour earlier each morning and do a writing exercise. It took place every day throughout the secondary school and the entire high school. Effective, but boring. She attended a special English course where all teaching was in English and which included creative writing, role playing, drama and rhythm exercises - good for her dyslexia. She played Puck on *Confidencen* (Ulriksdal's theatre) - maybe in English. Her teacher in biology and geography Uno Andersson later said that she initially was too ambitious, had problems coping with it and that the studies therefore took much of her spare time. Victoria added: In junior high, homework often took the whole evening to get through. She didn't have time for friends. She had to stop her riding. However, she continued her piano lessons - 12 terms 1989-1995. Her 9th grade was good - 4.05 average: 5:s in chemistry, home knowledge & handicraft. 3:s in social science & Swedish. 4:s in the rest. She received help from her class superintendent Gerda Johansson, who was later invited to the wedding ceremony.

Enskilda gymnasiet was not an elite school in the sense that it required high admission grades. Up until 1998, a primary school diplomas plus a B language sufficed. There was a queuing system and the principal interviewed the applicant and their parents. But it was a school for the elites children. 73% of the parents had a university education. The children were intent on doing their best. Victoria studied the natural and social sciences. She skipped French. Since it was important to learn as much as possible during the lessons, she preferred sitting at the front of the classroom in order not to be distracted and take notes of what was written on the black

⁷ Anders Johansson. [Om familjen Bernadotte.] Aftonbladet, 1993-08-28.

board and said during the discussions. What she didn't understand, she asked about afterwards. Sometimes she wanted to ignore everything and just cry - did too - but bounced back. Grinders were low status at Enskilda Gymnasiet but she definitely belonged to those. The final score was an average of 4.8: 16 5:s. 4:s in English & Swedish. 3 in mathematics. Her last year project was about "Mittlandsskogen" on Öland. Afterwards, she was very grateful to her English teacher Louise Dinkelspiel, who was also invited to the wedding ceremony.

Victoria did not officially announce her reading and writing problems until a conference on bullying in Örebro on August 12, 2002. Probably in pure self-defence because it was physically impossible for her with her low reading speed to manage university level requirements and she received oral private education. Most likely it would soon be common knowledge. The most detailed description of her dyslexia is from 2006.⁸ On February 13, 2008, she also told of her facial blindness - prosopagnosy. How serious was not revealed but it should have been detected during a routine dyslexia test. This usually includes a facial recognition test. It may be assumed that it was a slight reduction as those with high level deficiencies do not even recognize their closest acquaintances.⁹

It was not until after her 25th birthday that she voluntarily read a book. Even now, she prefers audiobooks and news programs to printed text. During lectures she draws lots of pictures and charts instead of taking notes. In 2003-2010, she presented the Bertil Hult Prize to the Swedish primary school that best incorporated the dyslexia efforts into its everyday activities. The price was 500 thousand kronor.

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On December 14, 1984, Victoria attended the premiere of Ronja Rövardotter and was interviewed afterwards about her opinions. Victoria thought nothing. According to one version, she replied "Don't ask questions. You only get stupid answers!" After that, she long had a reputation as difficult to interview. Two years later she had comments on everything but you had step carefully interviewing her. TV-Aktuellt's Sven Strömberg: "For example, you cannot be blunt and provocative towards Victoria. For she always answers back."¹⁰

When asked, Victoria commented that her first official assignment was to be baptized. Her second assignment was to help her parents inaugurate an exhibition at Gripsholm Castle at the age of 11, but... "Victoria was sour as vinegar, so cranky that even the photographers reacted. Mom and Dad took it easy. Silvia puffed Victoria in the side, smiling heartily but it didn't go so terribly well."¹¹ The third mission was the May 1990 re-inauguration the Forest House on Skansen and to plant a good luck tree. CG, the classmates from Ålstensskolan class 6B and a number of photographers participated. It seems to have passed as it should. The fourth mission was in September 1991. She and Silvia were in Berlin during the re-inauguration of the Victoria Church. Victoria signed a memorial. "[She] looked shy and uncomfortable and did not enjoy the attention. Yet the Mayor of Berlin forced Victoria to the podium. Unprepared and embarrassed, she had a long burst of laughter in front of the cameras and audience."^{12,13} Others have described the performance as very successful. However, I have

⁸ Suzy Persson. Kronprinsessan Victoria om sin dyslexi. Må bra, 2006:10.

⁹ Valter Bengtsson. Victoria: Utan järnvilja blir man avskräckt och ger upp. Föräldrakraft, 2008:1.

¹⁰ Expressen, 1986-12-30.

¹¹ Se & Hör, 1995:28.

¹² Peter Kadhammar. Victoria i Tyskland. Expressen, 1991-09-08.

¹³ Året Runt, 1997:5.

chosen the less flattering version. The following year, things improved. She was shown in a 25-minute television interview as a paragon of 15-year-old virtue. "Straight, artless and unaffected she sat on the island shore at Solliden Castle and talked about life."^{14,15}

The confirmation was in Råpplinge kyrka on Öland – for the occasion newly renovated. The catechists were quartered at Solliden and had spent 20 days with the bible. Victoria was asked what the 5th commandment "Thou shalt not kill" meant for a modern human. Her answer was to avoid abortion, euthanasia & drunk driving. Mona Sahlin protested her view on abortion, but believed that she had been force fed it by some adult.

Victoria's interest in technology was so low that on her 15th birthday she even refused a scooter. She could not avoid her driving license. however - CG thought it was part of general education - but she rarely drives herself. She is recognized by other motorists, which she finds unpleasant. When she drives its mostly in France and America. Nowadays she uses a driver. The hunting exam - this time endorsed by Daniel Westling – had to wait until 2009. There is no record of her using that either.

In 1994, the age of royal coming of age was changed to that of the rest of the population, 18 years, and therefore coincided with Victoria's coming of age on 14 July 1995. The oath of loyalty to king and country was abolished, but replaced by an official ceremony. She was nervous about the event and trained for several months for her voice to carry in the bad acoustics of the court hall. She received help from actress Margareta Krook to learn relaxation and speech techniques. It was kept secret because Krook moved in Republican circles and did not want any trouble. Also Eva Feuer, speech therapist at Dramaten was involved. Come the day Victoria was dressed in a cornflower blue dress and her newly received ribbon of the Order of the Seraphim. She gave a speech:

Your Majesty, dear father,

Coming of age is a major change for everyone, in terms of taking personal responsibility for their actions and for their future. For me, as Crown Princess, it in addition means that I now get to share more information, which the King has, and to help the King and Queen in their important work for Sweden. I would like to thank my parents for all the support they have given me in all areas. It means a great deal and now helps me to confidently to take on the responsibility and the tasks I have as the heir to the throne of the country. I will always be loyal to the King and to the Parliament. I will also scrupulously respect Sweden's fundamental laws.

Dear Dad, I would like to end by thanking you for the Order of the Seraphim, which I have received today. It means a lot and will remind me of my responsibility to the King and our country.

She made a good impression. In an opinion survey at the end of June/July 1995, when asked "Do you think the Crown Princess will be a good Queen?" 80 percent answered yes and one percent no.¹⁶ 1997, according to a listener survey in SR P4, she was the country's 4th most popular person.¹⁷ A little exaggerated. According to Sifo, the correct numbers May/June

¹⁴ Katarina Sjöberg. Grattis Victoria, 15 år. SVT1, 1992-07-14.

¹⁵ Dan Höjer. "Jag är en vanlig 15-åring". Året Runt, 1995:28.

¹⁶ Skop's undersökning juni/juli 1995. TT, 1995-07-14.

¹⁷ Nilsson 2017.

1995, 1996 & 1997 were 87th, 6th & 24th place - the top position was after graduation when she was on the front page. Her real popularity had to wait until 2002 - a 3rd place after Astrid Lindgren & mom Silvia.

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Victoria was already junior high associated with various marriage candidates, royal and others. The first candidate was when Victoria turned 11. One of the invitees was a 15-year-old older brother of one of her friends who was presented by some newspaper as a future cavalier. Many others followed. However, everyone except Daniel Collert seems to be speculation. The relationship with him started in March 1993 and was on and off until the end of 2000. The relationship itself is well documented but since all parties were kept mum about the details it is difficult to know what was going on.

Daniel Collert was born on November 1, 1974, as Per Daniel Gustaf Persson. His parents were Staffan Persson (professor of Information Processing at Stockholm School of Economics; 1933-1984) and Anna Fransson (Social worker & Licentiate in Psykologi; 1939-1993). Both had a simple backgrounds. They met as fellows at Berkeley or Harvard University and married in 1961. Daniel was born in Skärholmen. The family then moved to Stocksund Djursholm. In 1978, his parents separated. Daniel claimed afterwards that it was because of their incompatible personalities: She's social. He's got a touch of autism. Daniel and his mother moved to New York City where she worked as a psychotherapist at the Rockefeller Foundation until 1983 when they moved back to Stockholm. The following year, his father died of cancer. In New York, her mother had met Swiss-based Swedish businessman Hans-Günter Koschland. They married in 1986 and lived in Zurich for a while. The following year, she was appointed staff director at Sparbankernas bank AB. She and CEO Göran Collert (1937-) began to meet. He had three children in a previous marriage, but these had moved out. The marriage between her and Koschland was dissolved in 1990 and she married Collert in 1991. She lived in her first husband's villa in Djursholm. Meanwhile, Daniel had been switching schools and school systems and had to retake a year.

The marriage with Collert was concluded 1991-02-16. He moved into their villa in Djursholm and did his best to make Daniel, then 17 years, to accept him. After one year, the mother was diagnosed with cancer and died 1993-02-28. Before the wife died, Collert adopted Daniel. In the meantime, Collert's son in a previous marriage committed suicide. Collert also had major difficulties in his work due to the current financial crisis. He had no time or energy with his adopted son. Their home life consisted of them having some luxury home cooking in front of the A-Economy on TV. Daniel was left to his own devices.

Daniel attended high school in Djursholms coeducational and subsequently Enskilda gymnasiet. He was an intelligent young man but probably suffered from a depression. He had plenty of money, which he spent on clothes and restaurants. He was even said to arrive at the school with a private driver in his father's Limousine, but parked down the road to avoid arousing too much attention. The reason for his good finances was that his father in connection with distribution of the estate after his mothers death bought the villa from him. In 1996 he had a fortune valued to 2.2 million and an income of more than 200 thousand. The Judgments about his character were mixed friendly and not so. Flattery as handsome, worldly, well-dressed and with a relaxed and charming attitude was mixed with criticism that he with comrades in early 1993 demolished a sports cabin. Nor did he seem to take money or anything else seriously. For example, he had at one point paid his drinks in kind with a Rolex

watch. He also took unnecessary risks. Among other things, he had driven a motorcycle at high speed through busy intersections.

On April 16, 1993, Svensk Damtidning revealed that Daniel and Victoria were a couple. The couple themselves had not thought of themselves in that way but now realized that “okay, we probably are a couple”. CIO Elisabeth Tarras-Wahlberg called the editor-in-chief of Svensk Damtidning, Karin Lennmor, and denied the information. The denials continued year after year until Victoria confirmed the relationship on September 7, 2000, during a visit to Germany, but by then it was almost over. According to Svensk Damtidning, the two met in early February 1993, when asked out by schoolmate Marcus Magnusson. They were to meet at restaurant Mondo, Biblioteksgatan, owned by Marcus's father. Both brought a friend. Marcus brought Daniel. During the evening Daniel and Victoria talked a lot with each other and Daniel told her about his home situation. They exchanged phone numbers. Daniel sent her a bouquet of 10 red roses on Valentine's Day a few days later. Victoria called, thanked him for the last and invited the whole company to Drottningholm for a simple dinner - spaghetti with minced sauce it seems. Thereafter Daniel disappeared on sporting holidays in Val d'Isère, France, or Funäsdalen, Sweden. During the holidays his mother died. Victoria sent a letter of condolence. (There is an alternative version that it was Marcus who started the courtship by sending flowers to Victoria on Valentine's Day. Victoria invited him to Mondo. However, it is not as widespread.)

They started to meet. Daniel was 18 at the time and was in high school class 2. Victoria was 15 and was in 9th grade. Daniel visited Drottningholm frequently and was presented to CG & Silvia as one of the circle of friends. In the summer Daniel was invited to Solliden. Victoria also visited Daniel and met his adoptive father. The first photograph of the two was from May 26, 1994, outside of Daniel's villa. It is impossible to say if they had a real relationship then but they met in their spare time and attended the same parties. It was common for the students to spend breaks in a coffee shop nearby. Perhaps Daniel & Victoria too.

In 1994 Daniel graduated from the social science program with poor grades (last school year he was absent 272 hours!) and began a command training at the coastal artillery regiment KA3 in Fårösund, northern Gotland. During the holidays he visited Stockholm. On Saturday December 3, the following unpleasant incident occurred. Victoria had returned home early after a dinner - her parents insisted on 10 p.m. - and Daniel and friends continued to Sturecompagniet for a post-quiz. Shortly after five o'clock in the morning, a rejected guest, Tommy Zethraeus, showed up with an assault rifle and fired a large number of shots into the premises. Four people were killed. More than 20 were injured. Daniel later believed that he had saved the life of a young woman by stopping the blood flow and giving her a heart massage. She was deaf and had not got down on the floor in time. Story was widely published of course and his father received phone calls where the son was threatened with kidnapping for use in a barter trade against the perpetrator. The father contacted the police and Daniel is said to have stayed away at home or in the barracks. The ruckus around Victoria wasn't just strenuous. It was actually dangerous.

Then everything is unclear. After New Year he changed branch but only served for 84 days before being discharged. General dissatisfaction and stress reactions following the experience at Sturecompagniet has been mentioned. He spent some time in London studying economics. Back in Stockholm he came home late one evening in August after partying with acquaintances. He was somewhat drunk and would visit his father before going to bed. On his way up to the top floor he slipped and fell so unfortunate that he hit his head on the marble

floor. His father awoke to the sound and found him unconscious. He had emergency surgery for a brain haemorrhage. It was a complicated operation that took eight hours. The doctor had to remove a piece of the skull. He spent 10 days in hospital. "A doctor said I had more stitches than Börje Salming. It makes me a little proud."¹⁸ He suffered from memory lapses and concentration difficulties but also got future but these faded – leaving trouble with the balance and "tingling". Victoria was content to send him a bouquet of flowers. Perhaps she did not understand how seriously he had hurt herself - or she did not want to attract attention - or that she was unable to deal with the situation. She later behaved in exactly the same way when her fiancé Daniel Westling was about to have surgery.

Daniel underwent rehabilitation at Danderyd Hospital. For a while, he had a patch over one eye so as not to squint. He and Victoria kept in touch and after the convalescence they met. He studied law at Påhlmans business school and in the spring he interned at the fund commission company Alfred Berg. He was invited to Victoria's student party on June 5, 1996. On June 24, he took his driving license. In the autumn he moved into his own apartment - three rooms and kitchen. Something seems to have gone wrong there. He alternated between partying and long periods of locking himself in with videos and books. He suffered from depression, anxiety attacks, obsessive thoughts and social phobias. "Sometimes I didn't answer the phone. I had obsessions and cancelled meetings because I did not dare leave my apartment." He went out of his way to avoid meeting acquaintances. In the cinema Grand he always sat at line 7, chair 372, to the far right, so that he could go out into the foyer if he had a panic attack. He was surprised that he this period was still regarded by some as perfectly normal, but assumed it was because he was a good actor. His closest friends seriously recommended him some form of therapy.

According to some accounts, he drove his friends down to Paris in the autumn where they met Victoria. It is unclear what else he did. He is said to have talked about travelling the world and working with children - perhaps as a volunteer. In the summer of 1997, he partied in Båstad with his friends in a nouveau riche style swigging champagne and spraying it over the surroundings. Because of the brain damage, it wasn't entirely risk-free: "[I fall] easily if I drink alcohol. Once I fell over a table and was peppered with glass shrapnel. Months later, my then girlfriend would massage me - and cut her hand."¹⁹ "Sliding down the razorblade of life", as Tom Lehrer put it.

¹⁸ Hans Wiklund. [Intervju med Daniel Collert.] Café, 2007:5.

¹⁹ Hans Wiklund. [Intervju med Daniel Collert.] Café, 2007:5.