

Chapter 123 : Crown Princess Victoria (2010-2018) (IV) – In the Waiting Area.

*She is, when forty years have fled,
With happy children young again.
Staircase of ageing*

After her wedding June 19, 2010, Crown Princess Victoria's bore children and showed her self. No positions of trust, however. February 23, 2012, she gave birth to Estelle. March 2 2016, she gave birth to Oscar. There were rumours of another pregnancy, but it has not been confirmed. She kept a low profile. In 2016, a brochure was published in Swedish, English, Arabic, Pashto, Persian, Somali & Tigrinya so that everyone, even the newcomers, would know who she was.¹ July 14, 2017, she turned 40. Expressen published an opinion poll in which as usual she was far more popular than her father.² She was interviewed for TV4 by an extremely courteous Ebba Kleberg von Sydow³ & for SVT by a similarly courteous Claes Elfsberg.⁴ Victoria was impersonally friendly and what little new she told them von Sydow & Elfsberg had to pull out of her with pliers. No newspaper interview but Expressen & Svenska Dagbladet published interviews with her surroundings.⁵ I summarize & comment on "The Victoria image" anno 2017:

- According to the brochure, Victoria was indeed a Crown Princess, but politically a "lame duck". Because of her dyslexia, she had difficulties in school and then personal problems that manifested themselves in eating disorders. In 2010 she married her personal trainer "a simple commoner". She had two children.⁶
- Victoria's surroundings praised her for being both ambitious and capable. I quote some opinions. Fellow student from the diplomatic program Helena Storm-Roy: "As a "[diplomat]colleague", i.e. a representative of Sweden, Victoria is a thoroughbred professional - a model. She has the ability to read and manage tricky situations without anyone needing to lose face, as we say in China. She has a long memory and a sense of detail. For example, remembering personal information about a person and what you spoke of the last time makes it easier to get your message accepted and achieve results."⁷ Center politician Annie Lööf: "The Crown Princess is an important and skilled representative of our country. When we meet in professional contexts I am struck by the fact that she is very well-read, knowledgeable and driven - but above all genuinely interested in social issues and in trying to understand other people's situation. She takes her mission very seriously and I'm proud of the work she does for Sweden."⁸ Pediatrician Claude Marcus (speaking of a meeting with a sweaty Victoria at Daniels gym): "She handles the role with integrity and folksiness but remain Crown Princess. She can crack joke and ease the mood without losing her dignity."⁹

¹ Söndergaard, 2016.

² Elias Giertz. Enkät om kungahuset. Expressen/Demoskop, 29-31 mars 1017. <expressen.se> (2017-04-30).

³ Ebba Kleberg von Sydow. Kronprinsessan Victoria 40 år, del 1-2. TV4, 2017-05-25 & 2017-06-01.

⁴ Claes Elfsberg. Hennes vanliga (vänliga) höghet SVT 1, 2017-07-14, kl 21.00.

⁵ Karin Sörbring. Kronprinsessan Victoria fyller 40. <expressen.se> (2017-07-13); Victoria 40: "Tiden mogen att kronprinsessan träder fram mer". <svd.se> (2017-07-16).

⁶ Söndergaard, 2016.

⁷ Karin Sörbring. Kronprinsessan Victoria fyller 40. <expressen.se> (2017-07-13).

⁸ Kändisarna om varför de älskar kronprinsessan Victoria. <galamagazine.se> (2017-07-12).

⁹ Karin Sörbring. Kronprinsessan Victoria fyller 40. <expressen.se> (2017-07-13).

- Since the university years, Victoria has been involved in peace work and since 2016 also in sustainable development within the framework of the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) & Stockholm Resilience Center (SRC). These were led by professors Johan Rockström & Johan Kuylentjerna - together with Carl Gustaf her environmental mentors. Rockström 2017 joined her for a visit to Japan: "She expresses the same message that a Greenpeace activist would like to convey, but can wrap it in her future role as head of state." [She never deviates from her moral compass. It is straight talk all the way.]¹⁰ Kuylentjerna: "She has mastered so many issues, not least social issues. She travels a lot, asks questions and has a lot to contribute herself. Historically, environmental issues have been quite easy for royalty to get involved in because they have not been perceived as political, but they have become political. Some royals live the easy jet set life, but our royal family is truly committed to issues such as the environment and dementia - and that is probably a prerequisite for the monarchy to survive." [But it is a balancing act.]¹¹
- Victoria was also a patron and/or honorary member of a number of associations, foundations, etc. but did not work actively in them.

In the television interviews, there was more focus on her traditional role. Victoria had difficulty expressing herself - blamed the dyslexia - but was determined to live up to the (unstated) expectations: Sweden was divided. She would represent the whole, set a moral example and have a personal relationship with the inhabitants. It gave her performance anxiety, "but so be it".

Her 40th anniversary was all praise. I have found one (!) critical voice. The Republican Association hoped she would realize the futility of her activities and abdicate.

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Autumn 2017, Victoria began a series of one-day visits to the Swedish countryside. The walks, a kind of mini-tours, were combined with representation, interviews & photo opportunities. The first province was the county Västergötland. The walks were also "eco-activism" with the aim of making people pay attention to outdoor life, exercise, health, nature conservation and similar topics that Victoria has made "hers".

In 2018, Dagens Nyheter published a long report about her efforts as UN ambassador for Agenda 2030 on sustainable development.¹² During the interview Victoria was on the move between meetings & spoke more about the importance of sustainable development than about herself. But something was said. *Question: What can the royal house do? Answer:* "I have an opportunity to gather people and groups around me and I see my role as enabling others to meet. I'm the reason for people to come, but not their reason to stay. However, I do not support any party, I do not enter into polemics & if the discussions gets too heated I leave the room." *The surroundings:* "[She] is a good speaker and a dedicated partner, who takes endless notes and constantly ponders how she can mediate contacts and reach out. When she's at a meeting, she's already thinking about what might be the next step. She has a pretty relaxed way of looking CEOs in the eye and saying 'you'll fix this'."

¹⁰ Karin Sörbring. Kronprinsessan Victoria fyller 40. <expressen.se> (2017-07-13).

¹¹ Karin Sörbring. Kronprinsessan Victoria fyller 40. <expressen.se> (2017-07-13).

¹² Karin Eriksson. Kronprinsessan Victoria. Dagens Nyheter, lördagsbilagan, 2018-10-27, ss. 8-19.

Regarding environmental work as a political activity, Victoria didn't want to overthink it: "I can't walk around and be worried about what might become [forbidden] politics. I know my role very clearly and what I should not interfere with. I know my ball park. I'll keep to it. But Let the future come when it will." An unsigned editorial (probably by Republican Per Svensson) commented: "The DN interview shows that Victoria is aware of the difficulties [with her commitment to the environment], but manages them by imagining that environmental issues are so great and so crucial that they are, so to speak, above and beyond politics. It is an illusion. Every climate issue is political. Every political issue has a climate dimension. Victoria's impressive commitment to important issues will make the future difficult not only for the monarchy's opponents but also for its defenders."