

The mysterious life and death of Annie Borjesson

A Scottish Review
special investigation

4 December 2013



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by Kenneth Roy

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| | |
|--|----|
| Part I A body on the beach | 3 |
| Part II Four minutes 41 seconds | 6 |
| Part III At the water's edge | 8 |
| Part IV 'I have to take care of myself' | 11 |
| Part V In the Mood...with an imposter | 14 |
| Part VI My friend Annie by Maria Jansson | 17 |

Part I

A body on the beach

I

Eight years ago today the body of a young Swedish woman was recovered from an Ayrshire beach. A few days later, on 7 December 2005, a local newspaper published a brief account of her death:

An area of Prestwick beach was cordoned off at the weekend after a woman's body was found washed up on the shore.

A dog walker discovered the 31-year-old woman's body about 8.30am on Sunday near to Maryborough Road.

A police investigation team quickly sealed off the area but there are no suspicious circumstances surrounding her death.

As the Post went to press the dead woman's details had not been released.

In this 72-word story there were two minor inaccuracies and potentially one major one: the dead woman was not 31 but 30 years old and her body was found not near Maryborough Road but near Grangemuir Road. But the most intriguing assumption in the report was that there were 'no suspicious circumstances' – an innuendo commonly used by the police to rule out foul play and suggest the probability of suicide.

While the Ayrshire Post was reporting this news, a post-mortem on the body of Annie Borjesson was being conducted in the mortuary of Ayr Hospital. Why, on that very day, did the police confide in journalists that there were no suspicious circumstances when they were unaware of the post-mortem result? Why did they not confine themselves to a factual statement, familiar in cases of unexplained death, that the cause was unknown?

The rush to judgement, without any forensic support, became the first of many questions about Annie Borjesson's death – questions still unanswered despite the personal intervention of the first minister, Alex Salmond, who had a meeting with Annie's mother in Edinburgh; a petition to the Scottish Parliament signed by 3,000 people; and a tenacious campaign by family and friends. Yet the authorities have consistently refused to reopen the case.

After a thorough investigation during which we were given access to many documents never before made available to the media, the Scottish Review presents its dossier on the case, including new evidence which in our view points to the need for a fresh inquiry.

II

On 27 July 2007, the then solicitor-general for Scotland, Frank Mulholland, who is now the lord advocate, replied to a letter from Eva Seiser of the Swedish embassy in London. He repeated the initial police opinion, 20 months earlier, that there was no evidence of suspicious circumstances and cited the autopsy report as one of the justifications for his conclusion.

There was no acknowledgement from Mr Mulholland – doubtless because he had no personal knowledge of it – that the police had reached a view of the case in advance of the post-mortem. He was at pains to point out that the procurator fiscal at Kilmarnock had undertaken 'a full investigation...assisted by the local police' and that there were 'no lines of inquiry to pursue'. For that reason, he had decided that the case would not be reopened – although he did add the qualification 'at this stage'.

We have obtained a copy of the autopsy report, signed by the two doctors who conducted the post-mortem. It noted that the body was heavily contaminated by sand and seaweed, that the lungs were congested, that the air passages contained 'a frothy material'. Conclusion: death by drowning.

No sinister significance was attached to an unexplained 'depression' in the skin, small areas of bruising in the right temple, scratched abrasions on the left arm and 'two patterned roughly square contused areas' on the right arm.

Although there was no penetration of the skin, the police were satisfied that these minor injuries had been caused by contact with rough objects in the water.

Annie's body was flown home to Sweden on 16 December. The family were shocked to discover areas of more extensive bruising, which had not been recorded in the post-mortem report nine days earlier, but again it seemed there was an innocent explanation. They were assured that bruising could occur between eight and 10 days after death.

The undertakers in Vargarda, Sweden, were surprised by what they found when they opened Annie's coffin. Gun Daneberg and Lennart Svensson discovered 'big bruises' on her right arm and side – 'about the size of a palm' – as well as bruising behind her right ear. They insisted that these bruises, far beyond anything included in the autopsy report, were not the result of post-mortem lividity ('We consider we have the knowledge to state the difference between bruises and corpse patches on a body').

The striking divergence between the undertakers' observations and the autopsy report disturbed the Borjesson family.

III

Pieces of body tissue removed during the post-mortem were examined by RMV, the Swedish forensic service. RMV sent bone marrow from Annie's body to a professor in Strasbourg for analysis. He found tiny diatom shells – algae – in the sample and identified them as *navicula lanceolata*.

It was an unexpected discovery. Far from confirming that Annie had drowned, it tended to cast doubt on the result of the post-mortem. *Navicula lanceolata* is a freshwater rather than a seawater diatom.

The family independently contacted other diatom specialists. One who checked the salinity in Prestwick bay found only a 'weak influence' of freshwater inflows and said it was more likely that *navicula lanceolata* had entered Annie's body through drinking tap water. 'Annie,' he wrote, 'may have had it in the bone marrow long before she passed away.'

A second specialist corroborated this view. 'Although the species might be found in low numbers in a coastal environment,' he wrote, 'it would not be one of the common species living or transported there. The source of the diatoms found in the bone marrow is therefore very unlikely to have been from the sea.'

In the opinion of these marine experts, the presence of *navicula lanceolata* in the bone marrow had failed to establish drowning as the cause of death. They agreed that this could

only be established by analysis of other organs. One of the experts offered to conduct an extended test pro bono. The Swedish authorities not only refused to permit such a test, but declined to give any explanation for this decision.

Their counterparts in Scotland seem equally unwilling to contemplate any scrutiny of the autopsy findings.

On 15 December 2005, eight days after the post-mortem, toxicologists at Glasgow University received two samples of blood and one sample of urine labelled 'Annie Borjesson' from a consultant pathologist at Crosshouse Hospital, Kilmarnock, who was acting on the instructions of the procurator fiscal.

The toxicologists analysed the samples for alcohol and drugs. They found 19 milligrammes of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood, well under the drink driving limit; Annie, who seldom drank alcohol, had had a small quantity shortly before her death, perhaps the night before. There were no drugs in her body or, at any rate, no detectable ones.

Two years after her death, the principal procurator fiscal depute at Kilmarnock, Robert Bloomer, released the results of the toxicology report to the family at their request. The family had also asked for histological samples which would have enabled a deeper examination of the body tissues to be performed. Robert Bloomer felt unable to make a decision on this request and referred it to the Crown Office.

On 13 December 2007, the procurator fiscal wrote to the family informing them: '...Crown counsel have instructed that these [the samples] will be retained and not destroyed but that they will not be released other than to a skilled person for a specific purpose'.

Inescapably, then, the authorities have body tissues which could confirm whether or not Annie Borjesson died by drowning but, for unexplained reasons, will not readily part with them.

Part II

Four minutes 41 seconds

I

There were two attempts by Annie Borjesson to withdraw money from a cash machine in Glasgow Central station on Saturday 3 December 2005 – the last day of her life. First she requested £100, then £50. Both attempts failed because there was not enough money in her account.

For a while it seemed she had been in two places at once. At 3.15pm, when she was supposedly in Central station, she was also captured on CCTV 32 miles away, in the overhead walkway which connects the railway station at Prestwick Airport with the terminal building. The police in Annie's home country finally cleared up the confusion: the credit card company had recorded the transactions in Swedish time – an hour ahead.

In the first image from the airport, Annie is wearing the dark winter jacket which was found near her body on Prestwick beach the following morning, a red and white fleece, trousers and trainers; her long hair is tied in a ponytail; she has a bag over her shoulder.

In the second image, around 3.16, she is outside the terminal building, walking towards the car park. Annie, having entered from the walkway, used the escalator which takes passengers down into the concourse and then continued the full length of the concourse to the exit at the far end, where she left through the automatic doors into the car park.

According to the CCTV timings Annie accomplished this in 55 seconds. Yesterday, eight years later at exactly the same time, we reconstructed a walk in Annie's footsteps from CCTV position A in the walkway to CCTV position B outside the terminal building. It took a young woman of Annie's age and fitness, with a bag over her shoulder, standing on the escalator rather than walking down it, 1 minute 32 seconds to get from A to B unimpeded across a deserted concourse.

Walking down the escalator – which would not have been Annie's normal practice – cut the journey time to 1 minute 20 seconds. Either way she could not have done it in 55 seconds unless she was running. Or – the only alternative explanation – the CCTV records in an international airport were wrong.

Why was she in Prestwick? There was a flight to Gothenburg around 6.30 that evening, and another the following morning. The family assume that she was intending to fly home. It transpired that she had an appointment in Sweden with her hairdresser, Inger Nossborn, on Monday.

Yet it seems she had no pre-booked ticket for either flight. She might have been able to buy a stand-by ticket at the airport, for although her bank had rejected her requests for cash, she habitually kept money in her Filofax. But, according to the CCTV timings, it would have been impossible for her to inquire about a stand-by ticket: she was not in the terminal long enough.

II

No timeline has ever been established for Annie Borjesson's last day. The gaps are yawning; the contradictions mystifying. In the absence of any CCTV until she arrived at the airport, it is far from certain how she even got to Prestwick.

She lived in serviced accommodation, Linton Court Apartments, not far from Haymarket railway station in Edinburgh. She had her own room but shared a kitchen with a number of other tenants. One of the staff, a woman called Jane, remembered seeing Annie in Linton Court around 1.15pm on Saturday. An hour later Annie was somehow at a cash machine in Glasgow Central.

These timings are not credible. They leave Annie too little time to travel the two miles from Linton Court to Haymarket station, by train from Haymarket to Glasgow Queen Street, and walk across the city centre to Central. Likewise, a car journey between the two cities on a busy Saturday three weeks before Christmas would have taken much longer than an hour. Jane must have been mistaken in her recollection.

Here is a more logical timetable. Annie catches the 1.04 from Haymarket, which arrives in Queen Street around 1.50. She walks to Central and arrives at the cash machine at 2.15. She boards the 2.30 for Ayr, disembarks at Prestwick International around 3.15, and walks through the overhead walkway to the terminal building.

There is only one flaw in this scenario. There is no CCTV to show that Annie was among the passengers on the 2.30 train, which would have been packed with Christmas shoppers on their way to the Ayrshire coast. It would appear that, inexplicably, the police failed to scan the CCTV records from that train, the only one which fitted the most plausible chronology of her movements.

No-one knows why Annie visited the short-stay car park at Prestwick Airport. Annie's family say they were initially informed by the police that she may have gone out to withdraw money from a cash machine. But there was no cash machine in the car park – only ticket machines. Guje Borjesson, Annie's mother, discovered this for herself when she visited the airport after her daughter's death.

Had Annie left the terminal building for no more sinister motive than to have a breather? Or had she, as her family suspect, arranged a rendezvous in the car park with someone? Someone who had just come off a plane or was about to board one? Or someone who lived locally? Someone who failed to show up? Or someone with whom she had the briefest of encounters?

A CCTV image at around 3.19 shows Annie, grim-faced, re-emerging from the car park using a different entrance nearer the escalator. Maria Jansson, her friend in Sweden, says she recognises that look: Annie is annoyed or angry. She had been outside for three minutes.

In the final CCTV images of the sequence, she is seen back in the walkway on her way out of the airport. After a two and a quarter hour journey from Edinburgh, she had been in Prestwick Airport for all of four minutes 41 seconds. What she did next, according to the police's version of events, was stranger still. She started walking a mile towards Prestwick, a town with which she was unfamiliar, on a pavement by a dual carriageway, in the gathering dusk of a winter afternoon.

Part III

At the water's edge

I

The decisive witness in the police investigation was a local man who went for a walk along the promenade at Prestwick around 4.30 on the afternoon of Saturday 3 December in the company of a friend from England. They were distracted by the sight of a person on the shore at low tide.

The person was a long way out: about 150 yards, they reckoned. He or she was standing motionless at the edge of the water. The friends continued their walk to the end of the prom and then turned for home. Twenty minutes had elapsed since the first sighting, yet it seemed the lone figure on the shore hadn't budged – he or she was still there, looking out to sea. There was no one else on the beach apart from a dog which had broken loose from its owner.

It occurred to the local man that the person might be contemplating suicide. He mentioned this possibility to his friend. But they thought no more about it until the following morning, when they saw that the police had sealed off the area. The local man decided to tell the police what he and his friend had observed.

For the police, this was the clincher: the nearest thing to a positive ID of Annie Borjesson, who had left Prestwick Airport on foot an hour and a quarter earlier, more than enough time to walk into the town and down to the beach, there to prepare mentally for taking her own life.

The significance of the sighting on the shore was underlined in July 2007, when the solicitor-general Frank Mulholland, in his letter to Eva Seiser at the Swedish embassy, wrote that 'a witness statement indicated that someone fitting her description was seen standing at the water's edge looking out to sea at about 1630 hours'.

From the police's perspective, it was helpful that there had been a final sequence of CCTV pictures of Annie in Station Road, a short distance from the beach, at 4.05pm. The police now claimed to know how she had made her final journey, enabling the file to be closed.

Eight years on, however, two vital questions remain unresolved.

Was the figure in Station Road Annie Borjesson? Was the figure on the beach Annie Borjesson?

II

The CCTV images from Station Road are blurrier than those from the airport. The figure identified by the police as Annie is carrying a bag or rucksack, but there the resemblance ends: the figure looks more like a tall young man. A retired detective with Lothians and Borders Police who studied these images – from the airport as well as Station Road – gave as his professional judgement that they were all of poor quality but that the images from Station Road were particularly poor.

'I would question this identification,' he said. 'I have extensive experience of examining

CCTV footage and I must say honestly that the images from Station Road are rubbish. I may assume that it's Annie, what with time and travel direction, but detectives should never assume. They work with facts not assumptions.'

The same expert added: 'We know Annie ended up on the beach, but the whole story is not known. They simply don't have a full picture of what happened. They know the start, they know the end, but they don't know the middle. In my opinion they haven't achieved the mark in this case.'

If it was Annie in Station Road – and her family are extremely dubious that it was – it is surprising that she was not spotted by CCTV cameras at the entrance to Prestwick town centre a few minutes earlier. But there is a far greater puzzle. What happened to her between four o'clock on Saturday afternoon and the discovery of her body at 8.30 the following morning, more than 16 hours later?

The family insist that the police made no attempt to piece together these missing hours. The Borjessons heard nothing more about an apparently promising early lead that someone resembling Annie had been seen talking to two men in the area of the beach late on Saturday afternoon. Did the police simply operate on the assumption that, shortly after 4.30pm when the lone figure was spotted on the shore, Annie walked into the water and drowned herself?

It was not until 2008, three years after her death, that the family acquired first-hand knowledge which compromised this theory.

III

On one of their periodic visits to Scotland, Annie's friend Maria and her mother Guje received hospitality from a Prestwick family, members of a local Church of Scotland congregation. They had a meal together in a restaurant and then walked down to the shore, where they lit a candle at an informal shrine for Annie, re-arranged floral tributes, and put up a fresh notice appealing for witnesses.

'After that,' Guje recalls, 'we all walked back to their house and it was only when we sat down and spoke about the mysterious circumstances of Annie's death that we mentioned the witness statement from the man on the promenade who had been walking with his friend from England'.

It emerged from this clue that the family knew the witness. 'We were shocked but also excited,' says Guje, 'A family member went to see if he was at home. We were lucky. He agreed to meet us and tell us what he had seen, and allowed us to record his statement'.

The man told Guje and Maria that it was his friend who first drew attention to the person at the water's edge. They agreed that it was unusual and perhaps ominous: someone standing there on a bleak winter afternoon with darkness falling. The person was of medium height. He or she did not appear to be carrying a bag. The witness was unable to say if it was a man or a woman.

Some time later – five or six months after Annie's death – he was asked to go to the police station and repeat his description. He said that he couldn't tell them much because the person had been too far away. The police informed him that they did not believe there were any suspicious circumstances but that they were going over the case one more time to satisfy themselves. At no point was he asked if the person he had seen on the beach resembled Annie.

IV

On Tuesday 3 December 2013 at 4.30pm, eight years later to the minute, we re-enacted the scene on Prestwick beach. It was a cold, clear, dry afternoon, similar to the weather on the corresponding day in 2005. Eerily, there was even a loose dog heading for the shore. The tide was well out just as it was eight years ago.

A young woman walked 150 yards from the sea wall and could have walked the same distance again without hitting serious water. From the promenade, all that could be seen of her was a dark, nondescript shape.

A senior member of the Scottish Government gave an assurance to a foreign government that 'a witness statement indicated that someone fitting her [Annie's] description was seen standing at the water's edge looking out to sea at about 1630 hours'. There could have been no such identification; it would have been impossible to identify anyone.

Part IV

'I have to take care of myself'

I

If there was a serious misunderstanding at the Crown Office about the main witness statement, the reaction of the police to the discovery of Annie Borjesson's body was just as perplexing.

Did they ask the local lifeboat or coastguard to assist in the search for the dead woman's belongings? No – we have the word of the lifeboat and the coastguard for that. Was a specialist forensic team called to the scene? Were there house-to-house inquiries? The family say no to both these questions.

Nose rinsing might have helped to determine where Annie breathed her last. The family say this wasn't done.

Were fibres taken from her clothes for examination? Were water samples taken to support any future diatom test? Were swabs taken from the part of the sea wall closest to the body? Was expert scientific evidence obtained to establish that the movement of the tides made it possible for Annie's body to have been washed up in the position in which it was found? Again the family say no.

Annie was still wearing her sports top, trousers, trainers, socks and underwear when her body was discovered. Her jacket and bag were found nearby. But the red and white fleece which she was wearing under her jacket was missing and has not been recovered. The fleece, clearly visible on the CCTV footage, has become a source of contention between the family and the police. The family maintain that the police attempted to suggest that Annie had not been wearing a fleece.

But the disputed fleece was not the only personal item which was never traced. Something of greater significance was missing too. Wherever she went, Annie always carried her Filofax. 'It was a natural part of her,' her friend Maria Jansson recalls. 'She would put small folders in it, funny plastic cards, and she would note down quotes, new words and expressions, the names of birds, special days, all sorts of things that interested her.'

Annie's Filofax also contained the names and contact details of many Edinburgh acquaintances. It would have been useful in tracing these people after her death. But the Filofax was not recovered from the beach at Prestwick. Had it somehow escaped from her bag? Had it been removed? Or, most unusually, had she not brought it with her? When her apartment was searched, it was not there either.

In the absence of the Filofax, the family turned to telephone and email records to help them in their quest for the truth. But when Guje Borjesson opened her daughter's Hotmail account, she was shocked to discover that all her emails, in and out, had been wiped, leaving her to speculate whether Annie herself had erased them or whether it had been done by someone else.

Maria Jansson's experience was equally unnerving. When she asked her telephone

company in Sweden to send her a copy of all the phone calls she had made in the autumn of 2005, she expected to find that it contained the record of many calls to Scotland. It contained none. Hours of conversation with Annie had not been registered or charged. Maria attempted to contact the company's security department for an explanation. They refused to speak to her.

As the family's campaign for a fatal accident inquiry started to gather support in Scotland, there were unsettling incidents. Maria's phone rang repeatedly, but when she answered it there was silence at the other end. There were problems accessing email accounts. These escalated after Maria sent an email pointing out that her friend's full name – Annie Kristina Borjesson – was almost identical to that of a journalist in the United States who, it was thought, had been investigating rendition flights through Prestwick Airport.

The family were so intimidated by these incidents that, for a while, they stepped back from their campaign.

II

The story of the last weeks of Annie Borjesson's life is disturbing in its emotional complexity and profound sense of incompleteness.

On 27 November, Annie phoned Maria and they spoke for almost an hour. Maria assumed that Annie was calling from Linton Court Apartments. But there was no record of it on their call list.

At lunchtime on 1 December, Maria called Annie on her mobile but got no reply. Annie had said that she was going to the pool and to a work fair and later to the Murrayfield Warriors rugby club, where she often socialised. So Maria was not particularly concerned. But within the Borjesson family there were growing worries about Annie's demeanour during recent phone calls.

There seemed to be two Annies. The first was behaving normally. She was paying her December rent upfront, buying a leisure card for a local pool, and attending a rugby match at Murrayfield. But the other Annie was troubled. The same member of staff who assured the police that she had seen Annie in Linton Court Apartments at 1.15 on Saturday 3 December, when she must already have been on her way to Glasgow, also informed the police that Annie had been depressed about a relationship with a man but hadn't wanted to talk about it. Annie apparently told someone else at Linton Court that she 'had to take care of something' and 'had made a decision that might change her life'.

Around 5.30pm on Friday 2 December, the day before she left Edinburgh for the last time, she turned up unexpectedly at the Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre in the royal mile, where she had worked earlier in the year on a scholarship. The first person she saw there was her friend and former colleague Kat Dalmo. At first Kat thought Annie was her 'usual happy and talkative' self.

But at 6.15pm, Annie took a call from her mother in Sweden, and her mood changed dramatically.

This is Guje Borjesson's account of how the conversation went:

'Hello, Annie, this is mummy.'

'Hello, mummy.'

'How are you doing? Daddy and Charlie have been talking to you and they are worried.'

'I cannot talk right now. I am sitting here with Kat.'

'But Annie, tell me, what has happened? We are worrying about you.'

'You have to respect this, but I have to take care of myself.'

'Okay. But call me tonight...or tomorrow.'

'Well. We'll see about that.'

'Okay, bye then.'

'Bye.'

The Scottish police informed the family that this call was not registered as a received call on Annie's mobile. Nor was Maria's earlier call registered as a missed call. According to the police, there were no calls in or out of Annie's mobile in the last three days of her life.

There was a final conversation with a friend in Sweden (not Maria) between 6pm and 8pm that night. Annie told her that she was going to a party in Edinburgh and that it was due to start at 10 o'clock. Annie seemed positive about the party, but was reluctant to say any more about it.

Where was this party? Who was she with? What happened at it? No-one has ever come forward with answers to these questions.

Meanwhile, her family wondered anxiously what Annie could have meant by the remark, 'I have to take care of myself'.

Thirty-six hours later she was found dead in a small town 80 miles away.

Part V

In the Mood...with an imposter

I

Annie Borjesson had been living in Edinburgh on and off for more than a year. When she first arrived in the autumn of 2004, she studied English at a language school in the city. She was a gifted linguist, speaking Hungarian, Finnish, Spanish and some French as well as Swedish and English.

Annie was a member of a band which performed at gigs in various European countries. She sang and played bass guitar. And when she won a scholarship to the Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre in February 2005, she relished the opportunity to take part in informal street entertainments for the amusement of casual visitors to the centre. She was a strikingly classical Scandinavian figure with her thick, waist-length blonde hair.

Although Annie loved Scotland, she found it difficult to secure a permanent berth in this country. The scholarship ended in August 2005 and she went home. She could have resumed working for the family business, but she was restless and keen to return to Edinburgh. She did return in late October – six weeks before her death.

Annie renewed her tenancy at Linton Court Apartments and launched into her search for permanent work with typical determination. She fired off a string of job applications and seemed set on a job in the hotel industry, perhaps as a receptionist. She wasn't having much luck. She felt a little frustrated. But she kept hoping for the elusive breakthrough.

Meanwhile, she enjoyed walking and swimming, getting to know Edinburgh better, making new entries in her Filofax, and attending rugby games. She fancied rugby players as a breed.

Annie also enjoyed going alone to a night club called Mood. It was one night in Mood that she met the imposter – a man who claimed to be the rugby internationalist Martin Leslie. The real Martin Leslie wasn't in Scotland at the time, but it seems that Annie was instinctively attracted to the man who was pretending to be Martin Leslie. Although she declined his insistent offer of champagne, they talked animatedly for several hours.

A few days before her death, the man turned up without explanation in the swimming pool she frequented. Who was this character? Why, after such a promising first encounter, had Annie begun to feel uneasy about him? But it should be emphasised that there is nothing – absolutely nothing – which links this man to Annie Borjesson's death.

When the police visited Linton Court Apartments the following week, there was no presumption of crime. The few testimonies to Annie's state of mind merely confirmed what they felt they already knew.

II

There is a final mystery. Whatever happened to Annie's hair? It was her pride and joy, 'part of her personality' as her friend Maria puts it. The only person she would trust with it was

Inger Nossborn, her hairdresser back home, whom she was planning to see on Monday 5 December.

When the body arrived in Sweden on 16 December, the Borjesson family were overwhelmed by their first sight of it. The waist-length hair had gone; to Guje Borjesson it looked as if it had been hacked off, leaving bunches on the scalp of between 5cm and 16cm. The family were horrified. They had given no consent for this to be done.

The autopsy report described Annie's hair as 'long' – but there was no indication that it was exceptionally long and no measurement of it. 'Long' could have meant something far short of waist-length. Had some of it already been cut?

The funeral undertakers in London who were responsible for transporting the body back to Sweden (not the company which received the body at the other end) admitted that they had cut some of Annie's hair to make it look more presentable. They said they had disposed of the hair – thrown it away. The then minister for health and community care, Andy Kerr, in a letter to Catherine Stihler, MEP, said the undertakers had removed 'between 4 and 5 centimetres' of her hair.

We asked a leading funeral undertaker for an opinion. This was his reply: 'I have never known hair to be cut. When they do a PM, they do open up the skull, but there is no need to cut hair. For international transportation, a body must be embalmed, but again there is no need to cut hair. It seems to me very unlikely, as whoever deals with the body would think that the family might want to see it and so it should be kept as intact as possible.'

If the people who transported the body cut – without authorisation – between 4 and 5 centimetres, it follows that most of Annie's hair was removed before her body left Scotland. It wasn't done at the post-mortem. So when was it done? And by whom? No-one seems to know. No-one seems to care. Why does it not matter? It matters to the family.

III

What should happen now?

(1) The various witnesses to Annie's life in Edinburgh should be interviewed or re-interviewed – if they can be found. The names are known to the family.

(2) The Crown Office should accept that the statement of the witness on the Prestwick promenade was misinterpreted, that a misleading impression was given to the Swedish government, and that it would have been impossible to make any identification of the figure on the beach.

(3) Based on the tidal records for 3-4 December 2005, there should be an expert test to determine whether it was possible for Annie's body to have been washed up in the position close to the sea wall where it was found.

(4) The authorities should, without further delay, release body tissues for examination so that the cause of death can finally be confirmed to the Borjesson family's satisfaction.

(5) When all this has been done, there should be a fatal accident inquiry.

IV

Annie's family have long suspected that she did not drown in Prestwick bay; that she was murdered elsewhere and that her body was dumped on the beach. Even if this is proved to be a mistaken view – even if the strong swimmer did simply walk into the sea and drown herself – she might still have been a victim of crime.

Why did she feel the need to take care of herself? Of what was she afraid? Of whom was

she afraid?

And then there is the strangest question of all. Why would someone living in Edinburgh travel all the way to Ayrshire to kill herself? Eight years on, we are no nearer an answer to this question – or to many others.

We believe we have presented a compelling argument for a fresh look at this case. The Borjesson family deserve no less. The interests of Scottish justice demand no less.

Part VI

My friend Annie

Maria Jansson

Annie was sociable, verbal and fun. She was stubborn and seldom gave up when there was something she wanted to do. She had humour and a sparkle in her eyes. Annie always found positive things to enjoy. She was kind and helpful to all the people she met, and very fond of her family and friends whom she cared for in so many ways. Being unselfish, she was sometimes disappointed by people who let her down, but she always found something new and cheerful to focus on. Annie loved life.

Annie made new friends easily. Age, sex or skin colour didn't matter to her. As a child she even made friends with the neighbours who were her parents' age or older and some of them became like extra parents or grandparents to her. Annie was radiant. People noticed her and turned round to look at her when she was walking down a street – at her beautiful hair which covered her back.

She was intelligent but sometimes naive. She could trust people too much. She was very tough and always thought she was able to take care of herself in every situation she faced. If she wanted to go somewhere she loved to go in the company of friends, but if nobody had the time or the money to join her she would happily go on her own.

Annie was very much into law and order. As a child she wanted to become a police officer. Annie laughed out loud and spoke loud, and she also used her space when making gestures. But still she made a feminine impression. She was a natural, beautiful young woman who loved the adventure of travel, of meeting new people, of learning new things, as well as being home with her family while being in the kitchen with her mother, peeling apples for a delicious apple pie.

Annie was thorough with papers and documents, which she had learned from her mother. Annie also trusted her mother with her passwords. She told me that she wanted the very best for her wonderful mother and thought or spoke about her often. She was happy about their mother-daughter relationship.

Annie and I had been friends for almost five years. We were almost like sisters, and she was like an aunt to my children. She told me that she wanted to have me as godmother to her future children.

Annie could sometimes be old-fashioned. For example it was not allowed to invite a guy (or a girl) up to your room at Linton Court Apartments for any kind of 'making out' (so to speak). If this happened, and someone complained to the management, all those who lived in the same apartment (several rooms with shared toilet/shower and shared kitchen) could be asked to move immediately. Those were the house rules.

One of the new girls went out partying and brought different guys back to her room. Annie

pointed out the rules to this girl, but the girl didn't care and was disrespectful. The other girls who rented rooms there were afraid of confronting this girl, but also very afraid of being asked to move so Annie stayed up one night and waited for the girl. When she arrived after being out partying, she brought a new guy.

Annie kindly told the guy about the rules, that there were other girls depending on being able to live there renting their rooms, and asked him not to come inside and that they could go to his place instead. The guy went away after telling Annie that he understood and respected the house rules. But the girl was furious.

Annie always had some fruit juice or dark chocolate with her. She loved food and she ate proper food. She was strong and well-built and active in her lifestyle. She took great care of her body, went power walking and was a strong and great swimmer. She drank aloe vera juice which is very good for your hair and body in general, and always wanted to look proper and nice. She was careful about her health and always dressed properly.

One warm day in early May, when eight of us went down to the beach for a picnic, the only ones not wearing bikinis were Annie and me. Guess who didn't get a cold, when all the others did.

Annie always had her Filofax journal. We used to joke that it was like an extension of her. It didn't matter whether she was going to IKEA or a night club, she took her Filofax with her. There were always fun or important notes to add. Annie also loved books about real people writing about their lives; she loved to read or listen to other people's stories. She loved to look inside shops, but was careful about what she bought. It was not only an 'item' to her, it also had to be functional and useful.

Annie was careful with alcohol. She could drink, but always in a modest way. As she was the person she was, she never felt the need to get drunk in order to have fun or to be able to speak or dance with others. Annie told me many times that, when she was out in Edinburgh, at social events where rugby people gathered, her companions became almost annoyed because she would have soft drinks rather than alcohol. And Annie was never interested in drugs. She did not need anything to be able to be herself and enjoy life.

Annie went out walking most days – both power walking and looking around Edinburgh as a tourist. She wanted to discover historic buildings and attractions. She loved Scotland and the nice people she met. She went swimming a couple of times a week, visited internet cafes, wrote in her Filofax, was always looking for new fun words or expressions, and practised her English.

She spoke with Scottish friends, with her family very often and with me almost every day. She loved long discussions. She was interested in almost everything.

Maybe Annie over-estimated her abilities. She was not afraid of confronting people if necessary. Maybe she was too kind, putting her trust in people, helping to sort out their problems. She could have been used by people not so kind. She liked to meet all kinds of people, would not be afraid of odd people, and always treated everyone as being a 100% person. She thought that all people had the same value and was not the kind of person who thought that an advocate was a better person or had a bigger value than a homeless person on the street.

She treated all people with respect. It was admirable, but when being as beautiful and kind-hearted, it also made her vulnerable.

Maria Jansson was a close friend of Annie

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Scottish Review

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Charity Number SCO30680