

From Tragedy to Joy: Marina Oswald's Story

Faith in America Justified by Second
Marriage for Wife of Kennedy's Assassin

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DALLAS— The Russian girl's introduction to America appeared bleak and friendless. Her husband had no money, mistreated her, was a misfit in the country of his birth.

Then came two epic tragedies for Marina Nicholaevna Oswald.

Lee Harvey Oswald, the man she loved, assassinated President John F. Kennedy, a man she admired, on Friday.

On the following Sunday, a night club operator killed her husband.

But Marina never lost faith in America, her adopted country.

And this week she may have found happiness.

Marina was married Tuesday to Kenneth J. Porter, an electronics technician, after a whirlwind courtship.

Well-Liked

Porter is a drag racer and a fishing and boating enthusiast for whom his neighbors and fellow workers have high praise.

Marina Oswald Porter, now 23, is not the same woman she was Nov. 22, 1963, when her husband assassinated Kennedy with a telescope-equipped rifle during a Dallas parade and then murdered Policeman J. D. Tippit.

She borrowed clothes to attend her husband's funeral. Persons who knew her then tell of the blank stare in her eyes, the stringy hair, her inability to speak English.

Today her hair is expertly done. She speaks English well, although with an accent. She dresses smartly, and has been seen at night



Marina Oswald Porter
UPI Telephoto

clubs and concerts. She is a moderately well-to-do woman.

Outlook Bleak

How did this come about? The outlook for happiness and security at the time of President Kennedy's assassination was slim.

She and Oswald married in the summer of 1961 in Russia, where he hoped to find Utopia and where he renounced the United States.

But he was no happier there, and he returned in June, 1962, bringing Marina with him.

Back in the states, Oswald could not keep a job and those he got paid little.

It was Marina who made friends. People found Lee distant and difficult, too proud to accept help but unable to make a home for his family. People liked Marina.

Live With Friend

Mrs. Michael R. Paine of

Irving, a Dallas suburb, took Marina and June Lee, a toddler, into her home. Oswald lived in Dallas and visited his wife and child once a week. Marina bore a second child, Rachel, shortly before Kennedy and Oswald died.

Oswald objected violently to attempts he made to learn English. Marina told the Warren Commission investigating the assassination that her husband beat her. He objected to the baptism of their

elder child and a private ceremony was held without his knowledge.

Then in the two days of killings, Marina seemingly lost even her little chance for happiness.

But the nation thought differently.

It sympathized with the young foreigner, penniless and with two small children to support.

Churches Aid

The President of the Southern Baptist Convention, largest non-Catholic denomination in the nation, asked for contributions.

Other church groups and individuals sent money until at one time she had more than \$70,000 from contributions and sale of a photograph.

These were some of her actions that America appeared to approve:

A certain loyalty to her dead husband although convinced of his guilt. "Yes, I love Lee and I (am) sorry (for) him . . . I don't want to believe . . . but I have too much facts, and facts tell me Lee shot Kennedy." She said he changed after their marriage, became moody and unhappy.

Her repeatedly expressed love for America and Americans. "American

people have very big hearts
... I want to live in Texas
... I don't want to go back
to Russia and I want to be an
American citizen."

She cried when contributions of \$7,700 were given her shortly after the assassination. "I didn't believe the people in America, the people anywhere, could be this nice."

She co-operated with authorities. It was she who told officers that Oswald came home the night of April 10, 1963, white and shaken, and related to her that he attempted to assassinate Edwin A. Walker, former Army major general of Dallas. She told them about a rug in Mrs. Paine's garage with which Oswald apparently covered the assassination rifle. She did these things in a manner that did not seem disloyal to her dead husband but only seemed an effort to set the record straight for

history.

She seemed composed at all public appearances, perhaps at first from the shock and later because it is her nature.

Remains Quiet

She appeared to be in seclusion shortly after the slayings but granted a few interviews. Lately, on the evidence of a publishing representative who is helping her write a book, she has said very little.

Porter, 27, earns \$600 a month at Texas Instruments, Inc., where he has worked for five or six years. It is his third marriage. One was a brief teen-age romance. He has two children by his second wife. The second marriage ended in divorce in January 1964.

He was residing in a room at the home of Mrs. Bill Clark, who lives two doors from Marina. Porter and Mrs. Clark's son, Joe, are friends and both work at Texas Instruments.

Marina was drinking coffee in the Clark patio when Porter rode up on a horse for their first meeting.

Porter introduced Marina to fishing and boating and much of their courting was on such outings.

Gay After Wedding

Marina was gay Tuesday night when she and the bridegroom returned briefly to her home in Richardson, a Dallas suburb, after a race with reporters in two states to get their blood tests, the license and to be married by a justice of the peace.

"I feel wonderful," she told reporters.

"I met him right back there," she said, pointing to the patio two doors away. But she would say little more.

Porter said he proposed two weeks before their marriage.

"I didn't think there would be this much attention," said the bridegroom.

The measure of acceptance of Marina was shown by her neighbors the night they were married when reporters and photographers crowded around her home. Some neighbors were so protective that they would not allow reporters to use their telephones.

"Why don't you let the poor girl alone" asked one.