

# Author Follows the Battle From His Hospital Room

By **ARTHUR GREENSPAN**

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Middletown, Conn., Dec. 28—The patient in Room 517 at Middlesex Memorial Hospital here has been avidly following news reports about the progress of negotiations concerning his book, "The Death of a President," his physician said today.

William Manchester "is very interested to know what is being said about Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy's settling" the law suit she brought against him, said Dr. F. Irwin Tracey.

The physician had just ended a midnight visit with his famous patient and brought encouraging news concerning the author of the controversial account of the assassination of President Kennedy.

"He is doing very well, doing excellently, in fact," said Tracey when asked about Manchester's condition, physical and mental.

"He wanted to know what—if any—terms were reached" in the legal wranglings which may delay publication by Harper & Row.

"He said there were false impressions that total agreement had been reached," the doctor said. "But he isn't concerned. What they've done thus far—it doesn't mean anything yet."

Tracey said the 44-year-old Manchester "has complete faith in his attorneys. Everything was turned over to them when he went to the hospital."

## Suffers Two Ailments

Manchester is recovering from two separate ailments—a seige of viral pneumonia which hit him Christmas night, and an eye injury suffered Friday when the cornea of his right eye was scratched by a pine needle as he was helping trim the family tree.

On Tracey's orders, Manchester is in virtual isolation. No telephone calls, except from his wife, Julia. No visitors; special duty nurses see to this around the clock. No distractions, and Tracey enforces this.

But he does have a TV set, and it was on this that Manchester last night heard reports about the legal arguments over

his book.

His attorneys have been in touch with Mrs. Manchester by phone, and she has been in touch with her husband. But there is no direct communication between author and lawyers.

But when a reporter told Mrs. Manchester that Mrs. Kennedy was no longer pressing for an injunction against the book, the author's wife responded jubilantly: "That's great, marvelous!"

Tracey said the author is well along to recovery.

Tracey is one of three medical men treating Manchester. An internist, Tracey has been dealing with the pneumonia. Dr. Mark Thumim, an eye specialist, has had charge of treating the corneal injury.

Dr. Asher L. Baker, a psychiatrist, has also been to see Manchester in the hospital. Baker said he has been treating the author for a "reactive depression" which set in following outbreak of the pneumonia-like upper respiratory infection which first felled Manchester in London earlier this month.

Manchester was treated in his hotel there for the infection, and when he returned to the U. S. on Dec. 13, he was experiencing the depression which doctors say quite often follows a viral infection. The current pneumonia was a more severe case of the earlier ailment.

Baker said he treated Manchester for similar depression before he left for England. And earlier this year he said he placed the author in Elmcrest

Manor, a rest home in Portland, Conn., for treatment of "mental fatigue."

Baker is prescribing anti-depressants and tranquilizers, he said.

All the physicians agree that Manchester's disturbed state is easing, he has full control of his faculties and full emotional recovery can be expected—probably when the book controversy is resolved.