

This Is the Woman Called

(C) 1969 by Mary Barell Gallagher and Frances Spatz Leighton from "My Life with Jacqueline Kennedy," published by David McKay Co., Inc.

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Some women are born to be queen—or its equivalent. Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis is such a woman. Born to cause excitement wherever she goes, to attract all eyes. Always at the very center and yet aloof from it.

Born to exact homage, to be a law unto herself, to be obeyed, sought after.

Born to have power, to be envied, followed, copied, watched—and to be worshipped.

That is the woman called Jacqueline—the woman who has become a living legend.

Once in a generation does a woman possess such magnetism that the world is spellbound by her, seeing only what she wants it to see. And even when the spell is broken, people still wonder; they still ask what actually happened, what is Jackie Kennedy really like? What was real, and what was the dream?

I can tell you that not everything was as it seemed. I know, because for eight incredible years I lived in

Jacqueline

Jackie's world as her personal secretary, before, during, and after John F. Kennedy entered the White House.

To me, Mrs. Kennedy was always "Jackie" when we were speaking in private. I never called her "Mrs. Kennedy," except when speaking of her to others. And Jackie would call me "Mary," or "Sweet Mary" if she were especially pleased with me or in a very light-hearted mood.

First Families are a part of history. I have been a part of history in my relationship with this First Family. Long after I am gone, historians will be using my recollections to understand more fully the man who was the 35th President and his life and times. I think he would want it that way.

As for my own presence in the White House, there was a curtain of silence.

Jackie did not wish it known that she had a personal secretary, and I went right along with it so as not to distress her. It seemed that she wanted the public to feel that it was having direct contact with her—the wife of the President.

As I recall, the first time I saw Jacqueline Bouvier, she came into the (senator's) office, looking very young, with tousled, dark short hair. She appeared poised and walked past the girls with friendly greetings.

(In 1952, Mrs. Gallagher was one of four secretaries in Sen. John F. Kennedy's office in the Old Senate Office building, Room 362.)

In the days before her marriage to the senator, Jackie appeared to be carefree and gay, with a ready smile. I would have guessed she was an extrovert. But, as I got to know her in her Georgetown, home, I discovered that her manner was really rather reserved and introverted—she lived more within herself rather than enjoying having people around her.

By the time she got to the White House, it was as

though she had developed an "aloof" air, with everyone having to come to her.

I do believe that it was Jacqueline's wit, as much as anything, that set her apart from the crowd of girls who would gladly have married Jack Kennedy. Jacqueline has a freshness of expression and a sort of let-the-chips-fall-where-they-may attitude that can be devastating or funny, depending on which side of the joke you are on.

In September (of 1953), the senator's spectacular wedding took place at Newport, R.I. I was there, caught in the crush of guests and cameras and reporters and spectators. I was afraid the bridal car would be overturned. Poor Jacqueline, I thought, that's what comes of capturing the most sought-after bachelor.

(In 1955, Mary Barelli married Ray Gallagher, and the following year when she had her first son, Christopher, she quit her job with Sen. Kennedy. At first she took on a one-day-a-week job as personal secretary to Mrs. Kennedy's mother, Mrs. Hugh D. Auchincloss. Early in 1957, Mrs. Gallagher began her job as Mrs. Kennedy's personal secretary, at first working just one or two days a week.)

I will never forget the 1960 campaign. It was like living in a hurricane to be around 3307 N Street after the senator announced his presidential candidacy in January. People coming and going. Phones ringing.

See JACKIE, F4, Col. 1

JACKIE, From F1

The private numbers had to be changed several times. Only around Jacqueline was there serenity and a sense of regal aloofness from the grubby details of politics.

Since JFK did want Jackie to help as much as possible, she held several press teas, as she called them, in the living room of the N Street house. It did appear to me that Jackie prepared for these brief political soirees with the attitude of being inconvenienced, rather than wholeheartedly, considering the ultimate goal that she could help reach. I looked at Jackie and thought how thrilled I would be if it were my husband who was running for the Presidency.

Concerning the campaign stories about the lunch baskets that Jackie was supposed to have prepared and delivered daily to her husband in his Senate office, actually except for a few rare occasions when she did deliver them herself, it was Muggsy (O'Leary) who delivered the lunch. And it was always the cook who prepared the food and packed the basket.

Jackie was happiest when her sister was around because Lee was the one person with whom she could relax and pour out her feelings. They were like school-girls together, sharing confidences and telling how some frustrating or dense person "drove me up the wall—screaming and knocking everything over."

During the campaign, Jackie's clothes drew the attention of busybodies who chose to be concerned with what she spent on her wardrobe. I remember when the story broke that Jackie was spending \$30,000 a year for her clothes, she retorted, "I would have to wear sable underwear to spend that much."

At that time, it was not my responsibility to keep strict accounts. However, at the end of 1961, her first year in the White House, I was amazed to see how close those estimates had been. Actually, Jackie's clothing expenditures for 1961 amounted to just over \$40,000.

In the final weeks of the '60 campaign, the pressure of work kept me too busy to shop for a winter coat, which I needed desperately. I remembered that Jackie had a blue, double-breasted mohair coat that she no longer wanted. In fact, I had already sent it out to Encore, a New York clothing resale house where, in accordance with Jackie's instructions, I usually shipped her clothing—to be resold under my name and home address.

As the various items were sold, Encore's check would



Mrs. Onassis and husband.

come to me, and I would deposit it in my personal bank account. At the same time, I would write out a check for the same amount to be deposited in Jackie's account.

The blue coat was perfect for me, and since we wore the same size and were the same height, I asked Jackie if she would mind if I asked Encore to return that particular garment—listed at \$65. I said I'd be happy to pay her for it. Jackie agreed, and when the coat was returned, I handed her the check. She told me to deposit it in her bank account.

This was so typical of Jackie—sometimes bequeathing heaps of garments with a wave of her hand, but at other times being very businesslike.

On Tuesday, Nov. 8, 1960, the voters acclaimed their choice for President, John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

These were the happy days. The President-elect was forever popping in to tell Jackie that he would like her to see this group or that, or asking her to go downstairs with him to meet some visitor. Jackie hardly ever hurried her preparations, whether it was for a simple greeting downstairs or an evening out.

She often kept JFK waiting for her. As he paced impatiently, she would simply continue with her last-minute touch-ups. No matter how impatient JFK became, the strongest thing he would say was, "For God's sake, Jackie." I was to become familiar with the phrase.

The pre-inauguration project that amazed me most was Jackie's negotiations through her social secretary, Tish Baldrige, to borrow from Tiffany, the famous New York jewelry store, the diamond pin and pendant earrings that she wore at the Inaugural Ball. (Tish had



Wearing a mini-skirt that raised eyebrows and probably raised skirt-lengths throughout the nation, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis was photographed in 1968 as she left a New York restaurant with her sister-in-law, Mrs. Stephen Smith. In 1961, as first lady, Jackie's clothes bill was \$40,000, according to Mary Barelli Gallagher.