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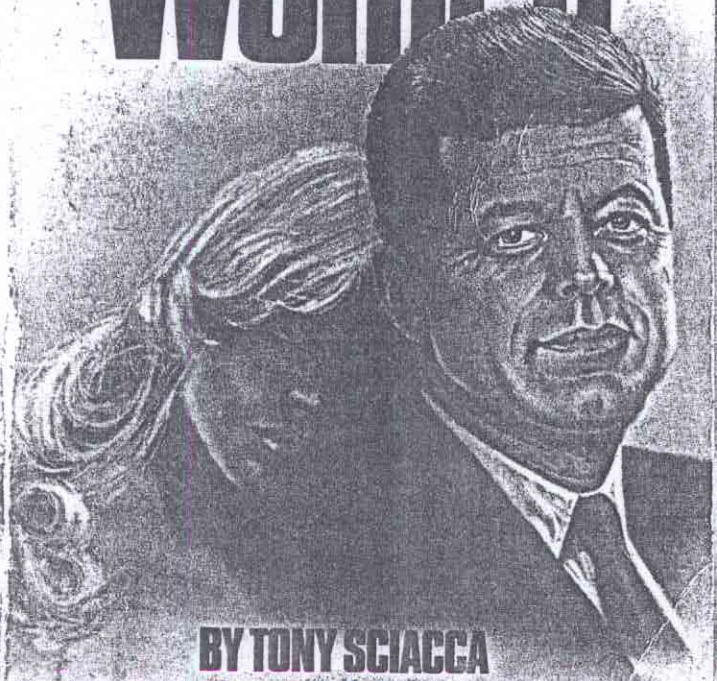
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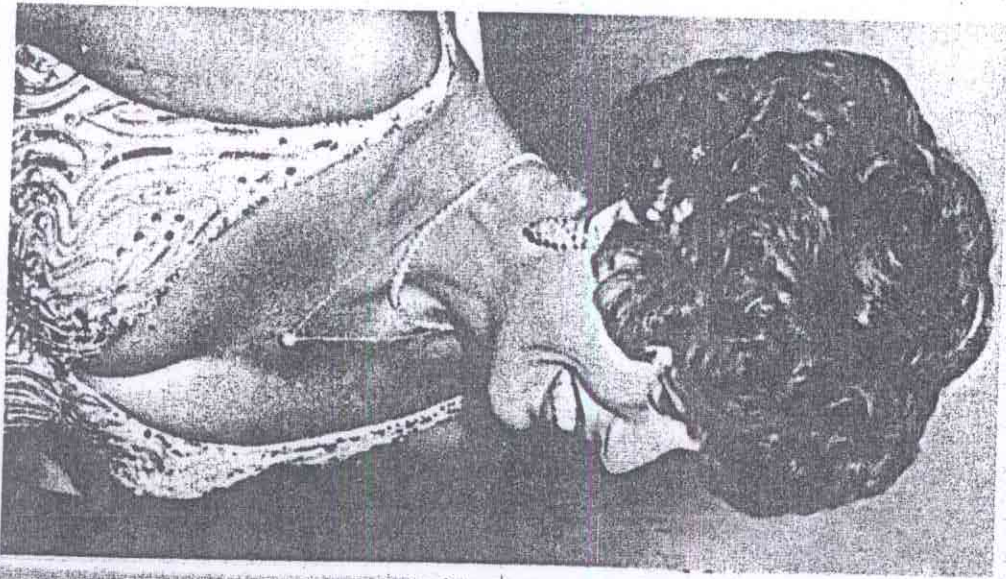
# Kennedy

and his

# Women



**BY TONY SCIACCA**



Mrs. Joan Hitchcock Lundberg, San Francisco, Oct., 1967  
(UPI)

However, I thought it wise to end it, so I never tried to contact him again. And I repeat, I'm so sorry I didn't."

There are two other women who claim they had had affairs with Jack Kennedy before he became President. Both women, after revealing a few details about their "love affairs" with Jack, began shopping around for publishers who might be willing to pay a great deal of money for all the intimate details.

The first of them—and there will probably be more—was Joan Lundberg Hitchcock. After reading about the revelations of the affair between Kennedy and Judith Campbell Exner, the girlfriend of a couple of high Mafia men (all of whom will be discussed later), Mrs. Hitchcock went to her hometown newspaper, the *San Francisco Examiner*, and told all. Or at least just enough to whet the publishing world's appetite for more.

Now 43, Mrs. Hitchcock was a milkman's daughter who had slid into a bad marriage when she was rather young and was penniless and living in a trailer when she met Kennedy in 1956. She claims she had a three-year affair with him. Later she was married three more times and had four children. One of her marriages was to a West Coast construction executive, Fremont Hitchcock, who later died and left her with so much money that she is called in some newspapers a "top socialite."



Mrs. Hitchcock says she first met Jack Kennedy shortly after he had luckily failed to win the vice-presidential nomination in 1956. She and a couple of friends stopped off in a Santa Monica "saloon" (her word) for a drink when she spotted Jack sitting at a table with his sister Pat and her husband, Peter Lawford, who owned a swank beach house in the area.

"When I saw him sitting there I just about died," she later said. "My God, I thought, this is my big chance, probably the only chance in my life to meet this man. If I don't do it now it will just never happen."

She walked straight to the jukebox and pretended she was trying to select a record, she says. And Jack Kennedy began making a play for her. He asked what record she was going to select and she said probably something by Elvis Presley, "but what would you like to hear?" And the Senator said:

"Something soft so I can concentrate on you."

They "laughed and bantered" for a while, and then Kennedy left with the Lawfords. A short time later the bartender called her over and said her brother was on the phone. It was Jack Kennedy, of course. He told her he'd be returning to Santa Monica shortly for a party at the Lawfords and asked her to be his guest. Of course she accepted. And the expected happened:

"After the party we drove down to Malibu where we checked into a small motel for the night,

using his best friend's name. I was to get very used to that name in the next few years," she said.

From that point on she and Jack came together as often as they could, she says. Always, he or one of his aides would send her plane fare and she would fly to be with him in New York, Washington, Chicago, all over the country. And she displayed to reporters evidence to back up her story—receipts from hotels where she and Jack stayed together. The dates on at least one of them, at a hotel in Tucson, Arizona, in February 1958, coincide with the known date that Jack gave a speech at the University of Arizona. Mrs. Hitchcock also displayed a two-hundred-dollar Western Union money order sent to her in Venice, California, from Washington in the name of T. J. Reardon, the name of the aide she says Jack often used to conceal his own identity. (Timothy J. Reardon, known as Ted, had worked for Jack Kennedy on his first Congressional campaign and was still working for him on the day of the assassination in Dallas.)

During their affair, Mrs. Hitchcock says, Jack Kennedy supported her, sending her money from time to time. If true, she is the first of his women who was purely a mistress. But she had two children at the time and Jack was concerned that they would have enough money to get by on. Once, she says, she became pregnant and Kennedy sent her money for an abortion.

They traveled around the country a great deal,

Mrs. Hitchcock on the road with him when he began campaigning for the Presidency. But when he won the nomination, it was over. And she understood it had to be that way. He called her after making his acceptance speech, she says, and told her: "Joan, if it hadn't been for you I wouldn't be here. Thank you."

She never saw him again.

None of the old Kennedy aides who would discuss his private life with me would admit ever meeting or hearing of Joan Lundberg, as she was known back then. Perhaps it's because they feel she is being much too blatant—and terribly gushy—by speaking so freely about the affair. Perhaps it is because the whole thing has been fabricated.

Peter Lawford says it's all a lie, but then Peter Lawford is barely worthy of belief because he is so protective of the Kennedy name that he has, in the past, distorted known fact. For example, in the case of Marilyn Monroe's affair with Jack Kennedy and her strange death that is officially called suicide but is more likely murder. But Marilyn comes later. For now, Lawford's version of Mrs. Hitchcock's meeting with Kennedy and their affair.

In an interview in one of those weekly sensational newspapers, Lawford says that he first saw Jack Kennedy at a party at Gary Cooper's house in 1945, right after the war. Jack was in uniform and the "women were crazy about him."

Through the years, after marrying his sister, Pat, Lawford spent a lot of time with Jack. Lawford says "had a great eye for beauty," and adds:

"I can remember him saying on countless occasions: 'My God, Peter, what a beautiful woman she is, what an exquisite lady.'"

But, Lawford insists, Jack "would say these things with such class . . . like he was admiring fine china."

Okay. Maybe Jack hid his sexual needs from his brother-in-law. Although why he should have done so is hard to explain, since he didn't try to hide it from Prime Ministers, Senators and his own aides.

It seems likely that Lawford is indeed fuzzying truth simply to protect Jack's memory. And perhaps he is clouding truth in his own recollections of Joan Lundberg Hitchcock. Lawford's version goes like this:

"She certainly did meet the President in a bar in 1959"—she says it was 1956—"I was there with Teddy Sorenson when it happened. But I can assure you nothing happened that night. I know where the President slept. He slept in my bed as a guest in my Santa Monica home." (Mrs. Hitchcock never said they went to bed together that first night.)

"Perhaps I can refresh Mrs. Lundberg-Hitchcock's memory. It was about eight P.M. in a little bar down the road from my house on Santa Monica Boulevard . . . There was no missing



Mrs. Lundberg-Hitchcock. She was a stunner. A really good-looking lady, a head-turner.

"The President with his very healthy eye for ladies actually commented on it. 'Nice looking girl,' he said, or words to that effect. Then *boom*. She came on like gangbusters. She charged in like a Sherman tank. That made it all a bit sticky because we were waiting for my wife Pat.

"The President was quite embarrassed. He really didn't like the types that came on strong . . . I remember him saying to me, 'She isn't very cool is she?'"

Mrs. Hitchcock was escorted by a very husky lifeguard who Lawford knew, a man who had a local reputation of hitting first and discussing it afterward. So, Jack, Lawford and Ted finished their meal and hurriedly left. And that was the end of it. So far as Jack Kennedy romancing the lady, it never happened, Lawford claimed.

Weighing the two versions leads me to believe the truth falls somewhere in the middle. Jack probably did surreptitiously telephone her at the bar from Lawford's house and set up a date to meet her in the near future. They probably did become lovers. Whether Mrs. Hitchcock saw him as frequently as she says and over so long a period as three years, is open to doubt. But her version of the events is much more believable than is the one told by Pat Kennedy's former husband.

The other women who came forward with a few details about her love affair with Jack Kennedy

and then set about flogging the "complete" story to magazines is named Mariella Novotny. She, too, is called a "socialite" in some of the weekly newspapers that have published her tale. Mariella, however, was a teenage call girl in New York back in the late 1950s and through to 1961 and was arrested as part of a prostitution ring operating among United Nations diplomats in New York and run by a man who the FBI believed was using his girls to pick up diplomatic and military information for the Communist bloc. As for being a socialite, the closest Mariella came was through her cousin, Antonin Novotny, former president of Czechoslovakia.

Mariella, who now lives in London and writes tawdry novels and breathless magazine articles based mostly on her affairs with the famous and the infamous—now a sort of literary call girl—claims she first met Jack Kennedy in 1960. The scene was a party in the Hampshire House, an elegant hostelry overlooking Central Park. Mariella does not say whether she was there as a guest or in her professional capacity. She was only nineteen at the time but her elegant clothing and her sultry beauty made her look much older. And Jack Kennedy made the play for her.

"I got on very well with Jack right from the beginning," Mariella has said. "He was the most attractive and popular man at the party. He could be very amusing and it was easy to be swept off your feet by his charm."