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MAUREEN TELLS

While John Dean works on his fiction book and outlines his Watergate opus in jail, his wife has teamed with Time magazine Washington correspondent Hays Gorey on a book that could offer a spicy and distinctively Watergate-wife's view of the ugly episode.

Early drafts of chapters shown to Bantam (who paid a six-figure advance for her memoirs) went into excruciating detail on chic Maureen's experiences with roving-eyed men of power, including former ambassador to Britain, Walter Annenberg, who, Maureen said, likes to dance unusually close to his partners. In another chapter she recounted in fairy tale fashion a secluded weekend at Camp David with JWD, as she refers to her husband throughout her manuscript. She marveled at the first-run movies that awaited her whim. She also marveled at the unlimited supply of food and, especially, liquor.

Despite the alcohol, privacy and a roaring fire, JWD was not in a particularly romantic mood. Though Maureen did not know it at the time, he was in luxurious exile to write a whitewash report on the White House's role in the Watergate affair. One chapter ends with Maureen confessing that while JWD worried about his loyalty to Richard Nixon, Maureen's only worry was leaving the sheets in disarray.