

Jackie Shows Five Faces

By SUSAN SHEEHAN

Story 1: One day in January 1952, John Husted Jr. took his fiancée Jacqueline Bouvier to see his mother. Mrs. Husted offered her prospective daughter-in-law a childhood snapshot of her son. "No, thank you," Miss Bouvier said. "If I want any photos I can take my own."

Story 2: In early 1961, while President John F. Kennedy was working on his balance-of-payments message to congress, he explained to a friend that in 1960 American tourists had spent over a billion dollars more on their trips abroad than foreign tourists had spent in the United States and that this sum was the biggest single item in our deficit in international payments. The friend asked the President how he proposed to remedy the situation. "Well, I've considered asking Ameri-

cans to stay home next summer," Kennedy replied, "but how on earth can I do that when I can't even keep my own wife from going abroad?"

Story 3: In the spring of 1964, John F. Kennedy's widow was spending a quiet weekend at the country home of friends. On Saturday a game was devised: Each person present would answer the question,

One of a Series

"What's your secret Walter Mitty fantasy?" The first player, a patron of the arts, said he'd like to be a jazz pianist. The second player, an actress, said she'd like to be the Queen of England. When Jacqueline Kennedy's turn came, she said, "I'd like to be a bird."

Story 4: In 1966, a friend of Jacqueline Kennedy's was chatting with her about various mutual acquaintances. The friend asked Jackie if she'd recently seen — a tiny, thin, gay interior decorator who had been helping her embellish her New York apartment. "Oh yes," she answered, "I did see him the other day. I almost stepped on him in the elevator."

Story 5: A short while after his Chappaquiddick troubles last summer, Senator Edward Kennedy received a note from his former sister-in-law, Jacqueline Onassis. The note said that Caroline Kennedy had been without a godfather since her Uncle Bobby's death the previous year and that she would very much like to have her Uncle Teddy take his place as godfather.

ONE OF THE most agreeable aspects of writing about Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis is that when you set out on a morning to interview her acquaintances, you never know which Jackie is going to be described.

Sometimes it's the sassy, devil-may-care enfant terrible of Story 1, sometimes the willful European traveller of Story 2, sometimes the fey creature of Story 3. Other days it's Story 4's Jackie, who at some time or another has mimicked and made scornful remarks about every friend and relative she has ever had, or the sensitive Jackie of Story 5, whose note was among the kindest Teddy Kennedy found in his mail last summer.

When I was told the five above stories, only one—Story 5 — surprised me; it was somehow at odds with what I thought I already knew about Jackie. Since it seemed a little late to be startled by anything one heard about the world's most written-about



World's Most Written-About Woman

woman, I tried to analyze my surprise. Story 5's obvious point — that Jackie is capable of writing compassionate notes to people when the chips are down — Should not have surprised me because by the time I heard Story 5, I was already familiar with two quite similar instances of Jackie's letterwriting kindness.

When she was to be married to John F. Kennedy in September 1953 in Newport, R.I. (Jackie's engagement to John Husted, Jr., lasted only three months), her father, John V. ("Black Jack") Bouvier III, came up from New York to give her away. On the day of the wedding, he was "indisposed" and stayed in his hotel room; Jackie's stepfather, Hugh D. Auchincloss, escorted her down the aisle.

From her honeymoon in Acapulco, Jacqueline Kennedy wrote her beloved father a letter of forgiveness which Jack Bouvier showed to a friend, who said it was one of the most touching letters he had ever read, "one that only a rare and noble spirit could have written."

THE SECOND gracious note was the condolence note Jackie sent within two days of JFK's assassination to Mrs. Marie Tippit, the policeman's wife who also became a widow in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Jackie's love affair with the press and the public continued to flourish as she went from relatively unknown quantity to household word during her husband's presidency (in 1961, she was No. 2 on the Gallup Poll's list of the

ten women in the world the American people admired most, by 1962 she was No. 1) but we did discover that the fairy-princess, now referred to by some members of the press as a fairy queen, had had anything but a fairytale childhood (how many fairy queens have divorced parents and a father with a weakness for alcohol?).

And although her social secretary alluded to her as "the woman who has everything, including the President of the United States," we even learned—Washington is such a gossipy city—that she didn't quite have a storybook marriage either (the woman who has everything doesn't have a husband with an eye for other pretty women).

STILL, Jackie dazzled us as she put on the crown, decorated the castle, dressed and entertained with beguiling style, and lent her patronage to the best in American arts and letters, and we were transfixed by every fanciful word the court scribe set down about her reign.

In time—familiarity breeds contempt, perception is an acquirement of experience, and love affairs (alas) grow less ardent.

Jackie's critics were abruptly silenced by the tragedy of November 1963 when, as one of the spellbound, Gen. Charles De Gaulle, commented, "She gave an example to the whole world of how to behave."

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(Next: The end of the love affair with the press.)