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Johnson And Jackie At Dallas

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President Johnson suffered the almost irrational animosity of the late President Kennedy's staff on the flight to Washington after a swearing-in to which only Jacqueline Kennedy lent "some semblance of national majesty," Arthur William Manchester says.

While Johnson took the oath on No. 22, 1963, on the presidential jet at Dallas' Love Field, Mr. Kennedy's closest aide, Ken O'Donnell, was "pacing the corridor outside like a caged tiger, his hands clapped over his ears.

The pilot and co-pilot were on the verge of nervous collapse as they waited the take-off order, fearing the plane would be raked by machine-gun fire at any moment.

NIGHTMARE

The nightmare quality of the first hours of the Johnson Administration are depicted vividly in the third serial article of Manchester's "The Death of a President" published yesterday in Look.

It contains more previously unpublicized material than the preceding articles.

Manchester disclosed Mrs. Kennedy's grotesque hospital encounter with a distracted Catholic priest, Rev. Thomas Cain of the University of Dallas, who brandished a relic of the "true cross" over Mr. Kennedy's body. He put his

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arms around her and called her Jackie and "endearing" names until Mrs. Kennedy told him to leave her alone.

FEAR

The article pictures President Johnson crouching on the floor of the car that raced him from Parkland Hospital to the airport, shielded by five protectors stationed around him because of fears that he, too, might have been marked for death.

It describes the growing concern on the plane about the caked blood on Mrs. Kennedy's clothes and how the White House doctor, kneeling, appealed to her to change before reaching the Capitol.

"No," she whispered fiercely. "Let them see the horror."

Manchester relates how none of the Kennedy aides would stand with Mr. Johnson for the oath of office and, desperate, he was ready to fetch Mrs. Kennedy from her bedroom when she came out voluntarily.

"President Johnson did not deserve this. To a man of his hypersensitivity, such treatment was deeply wounding. More important, it was an affront to the presidency. The coexistence of the two administrations in an oppressive airplane and the fact that most of these same individuals had battled one another three years earlier in Los Angeles, made tempers inevitable here."

"It was her (Mrs. Kennedy's) presence that he man about to be sworn in coveted most . . . and he said so to everyone within earshot. In the end she appeared, but the decision was to be hers. She understood the symbols of authority, the need for some semblance of national majesty . . ." Manchester wrote.

IMPRESSION

But O'Donnell, who boycotted the ceremony, could only think, "She's being used," Manchester said. He did not know that Mr. Johnson had declined Secret Service insistence that he move to the White House immediately for security because he respected Mrs. Kennedy's grief.

The Kennedy party had not expected to find the Johnsons aboard the presidential plane, since the vice presidential plane was nearby.

Mrs. Kennedy was surprised to find Mr. Johnson reclining on her bed in the presidential bedroom, talking on the telephone. After take-off Mr. Johnson surrendered the room to her and came to comfort her.

Mrs. Johnson, usually the essence of tact, "slipped," Manchester reported.

"I don't know what to say," she sobbed, and then she said it: "What wounds me most of all is that this should happen in my beloved State of Texas, . . . 'immediately,' she said later, 'I regretted it.' This was no day for Texas chauvinism; Kennedy's death should be what wounded her most."

The Johnsons wanted Mrs. Kennedy to sit in the forecabin with them, but she excused herself and returned to the back where O'Donnell and other Kennedy aides were sitting around the coffin. She wept for the first time and they decided to have drinks to buoy them for the hideous ride. Mrs. Kennedy took the first scotch in her life, then another. But they all remained cold sober, Manchester said.

BOBBY

The harrowing flight to Washington ended with Robert F. Kennedy leaping aboard the plane, telling Mrs. Kennedy, "I'm here," and the removal of the coffin with everyone aboard, including stewards, getting off before Mr. Johnson who was left behind in the stateroom. Manchester says that according to notes made by acting press secretary Mac Kilduff, Mr. Johnson still was brooding about it the following day.

"Only then did he leave the plane without any attention directed or any courtesy toward him, then the President of the United States," the notes are quoted. "But he said he just turned the other cheek . . . he said, what can I do, I do not want to get into a fight with the (Kennedy) family and the aura of Kennedy is important to all of us."