

Jackie

ON THE COUCH

Inside the ideas and life of
Jackie Kennedy Onassis

by Dr. Alma H. Bond, Ph.D.,
author of the *On the Couch* Series



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Although factual information forms the core of *Jackie O: On the Couch*, the book is a work of fiction, and is not necessarily a complete or historically accurate rendering of the life of the former first lady. The work draws upon some of the well-known details of Mrs. Onassis's history (*see Bibliography at the end of this book*), as well as speculations about her that have appeared in print. It is also based upon the author's impressions and analysis of Mrs. Onassis, whom Dr. Bond has admired from afar for half of her life. It is this great admiration that led to the writing of this book. It is emphasized that the author did not serve as Mrs. Onassis's psychoanalyst at any time.

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*To my son Zane,
the sweetest man who ever lived*
(Zane Phillip Bond, 1951-2007)

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P R O L O G U E



You may wonder why I have shied away from writing my autobiography, a memoir, or a set of memoirs. It's pretty simple. Living my life has always been more important to me than writing about it. And, as you know, I have always valued my privacy. Now that I am terminally ill, I want to set the record straight—though only for my family. People have viewed me alternately as an icon, a role model to women all over the world who helped a grieving nation to heal, or a fool for putting up with Jack's outrageous philandering. Perhaps all of them are right.

Shakespeare asks, "What seest thou else / In the dark backward and abysm of time?" As I approach that "dark backward and abysm," I need to record my story as truthfully and honestly as I can. Most important, I wish to dispel the lies that have been published about me. Shakespeare also wrote, "Speak me fair in death." So before I die, I "speak me fair." Please listen . . . and believe.

Looking back, I see that everything I endured taught me a lesson about the kind of person I wanted to be—and actually became. I want the world to know how I overcame my bad luck—a cold, distant mother, a womanizing father, their painful divorce—and poor choices—at least one womanizing husband—to arrive at a place of contentment and fulfillment.

Now that I approach my mid-sixties, I see things from a different angle, and want to point out how and where my points of view differ from those I had as a less mature woman. When I was young, I was angry. I felt the people close to me had cheated me of the love I deserved. Now, I have a greater understanding of why they were the way they were, and realize they probably could not have been different. I hope my story will guide my family in finding their own inner peace. Writing this has certainly helped me.

I feel compelled to tell the truth, yet I do not wish to hurt my children. They are everything to me. I am taking a leap of faith that they will accept me, thorns and all. I am no saint, nor have I ever been. I am a flawed woman who, in some ways, perhaps, has given more to the world than it has given me. Ari seemed to grasp this, when he said in the midst of rage, "Whatever we think about her, we all know that Jackie is a good woman." I thank him for that gift. I would like this memoir to give Caroline and John permission to own their failings along with their virtues, as I have learned to do.

Chapter 1

M Y E A R L Y L I F E

I came into the world on July 28, 1929, six weeks late. I haven't been on time since. Weighing in at eight pounds, I was a healthy baby with dark, fluffy hair that curled slightly, a turned-up nose, rather thick lips, a rosy complexion, and the large, luminous eyes for which I was later known.

I was a precocious child. At four months, I already had four teeth. I spoke in sentences before I was a year old. My mother, Janet Lee Bouvier, said I was born talking. She used to joke that when my head emerged from her birth canal, I looked up at her and said, "My God, are *you* my mother?" All who knew me said I was a remarkable and beautiful child. One classmate described me as a little girl who looked like Bambi.

My mother was pretty and slim, and had a pleasant manner to those who didn't know her well. She was also a daredevil horseback rider. I began following in her footsteps starting at the age of five, when I won my first ribbon. Confident, aggressive, and independent, my mother was not a warm or emotional person. She sounded better than she was. In truth, she was a difficult woman to understand and even harder to please.

From observing her, I learned my famous “shit detector” skills which proved so helpful to Jack in the White House. From the time I was a child, I would look down my nose at poseurs and pretenders and they would simply wither away.

Early on, I became aware that my mother’s love of status and money virtually ruled her life. She related the story so often I think she actually came to believe it, telling everybody she was “one of the famous Lees of Maryland.” Baloney! Her parents were lace-curtain Irish who left their homeland during the potato famine to seek their fortune in America. Much as she lorded her “superior social status” over the Kennedys, her background was no better than theirs.

Janet’s behavior, however, was not all social hypocrisy. At her dinner table, manners were everything, one thought before one spoke, and no interruptions or raised voices were permitted. My mother believed that good manners were respectful of human dignity. I agreed with her then and I agree with her now.

For her, not surprisingly, the name “Jackie” wasn’t dignified enough. She wanted to pronounce my name “Jack-leen,” but nobody listened to her. “Jackie” I was called and “Jackie” I remained all my life.

Much as I disliked my mother, and even hated her at times, she was the only person of importance who remained with me for decades. Her impact lasted a full sixty years, from the time of my birth until her death, and I believe she influenced the formation of my character far more than anyone else.

Janet Lee Bouvier Auchincloss—“Auchincloss” from her second husband, Hugh D. Auchincloss II—had a profound effect on every aspect of my life. She helped instill many of the qualities that would make me famous later on: her iron will and self-discipline in diet and grooming, her charisma and restraint, her love and knowledge of art, her talent for running an elaborate and complex household, and, perhaps most important of all, her incomparable taste. I would never have become a famous first lady if it hadn’t been for Mummy. Janet was terribly strict, and highly critical of me. People considered

me reasonably well groomed whenever I left home, as did I, until my mother informed me, even as first lady, that my dress was too short, a seam was split, or the top button of my coat was hanging by a thread. Nobody could change my mood as easily as my mother. Her carping criticism probably did more to mold my perfectionist personality than anything else in my upbringing or my genes.

For my first dinner at the White House, I invited senators and their wives, Jack's brother Bobby and sister-in-law Ethel, and, fool that I was, my own mother. I was not sure yet that I had it all together as a hostess, but I had no doubt that if I slipped up, my mother would point out my error. To my delight, the dinner was impeccable, as was the service and even the music. I was bombarded with compliments from our guests. I grinned, thinking that even the genteel Janet Bouvier Auchincloss would have to admire my skills as a hostess.

"Isn't the record player broken?" she asked reproachfully in the middle of dinner.

"Goodness no, Mummy," I answered with as much sweetness as I could muster. "It's just Fred Astaire tap-dancing away!"

Mummy was difficult to understand. Although she constantly compared my sister Lee to me, and vice-versa, it was not always to my detriment. For instance, the same woman who was always judging my hems, buttons, etc., once said, "Jackie was always beautifully put together, but Lee regularly looked like she'd been deposited by a tornado." Then, smack in the middle of Jack's presidential campaign, forgetting her former assessment of my sense of style, she said, "Why can't you dress more like Pat Nixon or Muriel Humphrey?" *Pat Nixon and Muriel Humphrey?* Two greater frumps never graced the White House or Washington.

Nor did her criticism stop with my way of dressing. It extended into the most personal aspects of my life. She was furious with me when I began my affair with Aristotle Onassis. She didn't like him, and found him vulgar in manner and appearance. She said he lacked the elegance I deserved, and called him "a moral leper."

Janet would think nothing of swatting me across the face, even

as an adult. When I was twenty-two years old, my mother was still arguing with me about which men I should date. Daring to stand up to her for the first time, I replied, "Mummy, I'm grown up. You can't tell me who I can see and who I can't." Would you believe that Janet reacted to my self-assertion by slapping me on both cheeks? I stood there, too stunned to respond. A friend who witnessed the fiasco said Janet treated me like someone whipping a horse.

To my utter despair, I couldn't help acting like her sometimes. Once, years later, in almost a scene of *déjà vu*, little Caroline was playing with some friends in the White House. Somehow, they had gotten hold of my lipstick. When I came into the room and saw Caroline's smeared face, I slapped her over and over again, first on one cheek and then on the other, pushing her through the room until we reached the wall. Caroline sobbed, but the other children stood there as stupefied as I had been years before. I can never forgive myself for behaving like Janet at her worst. I hope Caroline has forgiven me, just as I, an older, wiser person, try to excuse my own mother, who, after all, was shaped by her own parents and her life, much as I was.

My similarity to Janet didn't stop with our methods of discipline. I was practically her mirror image in many ways, such as my proficiency at and love of horseback riding, my athletic ability and healthy way of life, my social skills, my reserve, and, of course, my temper. Much of what people admired about me in the role of first lady simply duplicated Janet's behavior. Even my restoration of the White House into a work of comfort and beauty was modeled on Janet's renovation of the Auchincloss homes.

She also shaped my thinking about the role of women in society. Typical of the times, both my mother and I believed that making a good marriage was the only way for a woman to secure her future. Fortunately, she approved of Jack and even grew to love him (especially after he became president), and played a crucial part in arranging our wedding. I went right along with her philosophy that women could secure their future only through marrying well. I saw

how wrong she was only after Ari Onassis died. I had always lived through men. I didn't realize until I lost him that I couldn't do that anymore and survive. For the first time in my life, I established an identity of my own, as an editor.

I can't blame Mummy for the fact that that I waited so long to grow up. Nobody says a mature woman has to keep on believing what her mother told her.

She and I both had terrible tempers. Once, Lee and I were fighting so ferociously that, in my rage, I actually kicked down her door. Janet's temper was even worse. When her stepdaughter, Nini, deigned to tell my mother that a fact she said she had quoted from the newspaper was incorrect, Janet, with elongated fingernails extended, ripped her face wide open until blood was running down her cheeks. In retaliation, Nini seized Janet's wrists and flung her to the floor. Hugh D. Auchincloss, standing up for his wife and not his daughter, threw Nini out of the house, informing her that she was now unwelcome at Hammersmith Farm. It is a moot question which lady should have been banished.

Despite her abusive behavior with her children, Janet could be extremely generous, especially after Jack was elected president. She was obliging about standing in for me at the scores of parties, teas, and ceremonies that bored me as first lady. My mother served as an important and face-saving substitute for me all during the White House years. I am an apolitical woman, and much about my husband's work didn't interest me. Although I loved Jack dearly, I cared little about the details of his administration. Before I met him, I had not even bothered to vote. By standing in for me at these official and semi-official functions, Janet helped to soothe the feelings of ruffled guests and smooth over all the fuss the newspapers made of my numerous absences. She helped me to remain myself during those hectic years. I will be forever grateful.

I had to attend the Inaugural Ball, even though I didn't want to. I foresaw people milling around like mesmerized cattle, staring at me and watching my every move, but I was totally exhausted. As it

turned out, I stayed long enough for everyone to admire my stunning Cassini-designed white gown and emerald necklace, and left as soon as I could. When I got home, I just crumpled. Jack, I am told, managed nicely without me.

Even Janet couldn't always help with my lack of availability. A post-inaugural party was held at the White House for the Kennedys, but I was still tired and refused to attend. Jack was upset about my absence, and apparently there were lots of disapproving looks and comments from the family. When asked "Where's Jackie?," Joe Kennedy growled, "She's upstairs resting, goddamn it!" Guests couldn't believe it when I announced a tea to honor my mother and didn't show up for it. (I guess I got back at her for those slaps after all.) When asked where I was, Janet said, "She's out walking her dog."

"Out walking her dog? When she's giving a party for you?" the amazed guest asked.

"Yes," Janet said. "She always walks her dog at this hour."

It is hard to say which aspect of Janet's mothering was stronger—her constant criticizing or her amazing helpfulness. One of the most important things she did for me as first lady was to stand in for me as area chairman for what later became the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Janet worked long and hard to make the Kennedy Center a success, and the fact that it is famous the world over now is due largely to her efforts.

From her, I guess I also inherited my ability to ignore what people think of me. One day, Janet, the journalist Tom Braden, Jack, and I were sitting in the Deck Room in Hammersmith Farm. She suddenly slid to the floor and started doing sit-ups. Neither Jack nor I paid her any attention until we noticed Tom becoming distracted by her movements. I laughed and said, "Oh, Mummy, stop it, will you?" Of course, she went right on with her sit-ups.

We had a complex relationship, one that Mary Barelli Gallagher, my secretary, labeled "push-pull." Sometimes I sought out Janet, and other times I was cool and unapproachable, depending on my mood and how she had behaved to me most recently. Furious that she

had permitted a journalist to publish some of my personal papers, I got back at her where it hurt the most. I seated her and Hugh D. Auchincloss, who we called Hughdie, so far back on the reviewing stand during Jack's delivery of the inaugural address that they could only see the back of his head. To add insult to injury, I gave the front-row seats that had been reserved for them to their children, my half-siblings Janet, Junior, and Jamie. The children were thrilled, of course, and couldn't understand their good luck. Their mother never forgave me. Although I was happy about getting even with her then, now that Mummy is dead, I agree with her and think it was a mean thing to do.

My mother definitely had no respect for the privacy of others. My half-brother Jamie once said, "Mummy is the kind of person who opens your mail and bursts right into your room even though the door is closed. I told her once, 'Mummy, if you open another letter of mine, I'm going to take you to court. There are laws against doing such things.'"

I asked Jamie, "Did that stop her?"

"Of course not!" he answered. "She opened my mail the very next day."

"So, did you take her to court?"

"Nah. Hughdie would have thrown me out of Merrywood."

I laughed, but understood Jamie's feeling quite well. Mummy was always barging into *my* room without an invitation. I objected strenuously, but it did no good. She kept right on coming in whenever she felt like it, even when I lived in the White House. I had to get the chief usher to keep her away. No wonder I'm such a private person! I feel good when I remember that, at the end of her life, I was a loving daughter to Janet. I took care of her when she was dying of Alzheimer's and supported her financially. I set up a million-dollar trust fund for her when the Auchincloss funds ran out and took great pains to hire a devoted staff that escorted her to the activities she once liked, such as movies, plays, and concerts, even if she could no longer appreciate them. It was I, not Lee, who visited Mummy frequently during her long illness, and during her final days, I devoted

a generous amount of time away from my work as an editor to spend with her. I loved my father more than my mother, but Janet was the one I tried all my life to please. So now that she's gone, I guess I can admit that my love for her was deeper than I knew. I can say in good faith that little Jackie Bouvier became America's queen in good part because of the efforts of Janet Bouvier Auchincloss, whom I loved after all.



My father's name was John Vernou Bouvier III, and he called himself Jack. I looked just like him, with my widely spaced eyes, snub nose, and dark skin, and had many of his traits, both good and bad. My father was a thirty-eight-year-old stockbroker when I was born. Until his marriage, he had been considered one of New York society's most eligible bachelors. He was tall, with dark, wavy hair, an Adolphe Menjou mustache, and dark blue eyes. He resembled Rudolph Valentino, which gave him the nickname "the Sheik." He kept a becoming year-round tan, maintained mostly by the use of a sun lamp.

Most of all, he was known as "Black Jack," not so much for his swarthy color but for his reputation as a seducer of beautiful young women. When he walked into a room, most of the women all but threw themselves at him. But he was an eccentric man. No sooner had he won over a woman than he lost all interest in her. He would take a girl up to his bedroom, use her, and then toss her away like a discarded tissue. The next night, he would repeat the process with a different woman. Sometimes, he would have three or four in the same night. He was a man who measured his manhood by the sheer number of amorous conquests.

My analyst of later years said, "What you grow up with is normal to you." I guess the comportment of both Jacks in my life seemed to me the way all men behave, which is why I put up with my husband's philandering.

Black Jack went to Yale, and not surprisingly, considering his

extracurricular proclivities, he graduated near the bottom of his class. My father squandered his money on gambling, drink, and nightly parties at his chic Park Avenue address. As his friend Louis Ehret said of my father and his money, he “pissed it away on women.”

Black Jack had Dorothy Parker’s philosophy: “Take care of the luxuries and the necessities will take care of themselves.” The philosophy must have rubbed off on me. When a check came in, he used it to pay off his latest debt. Strangely enough, because of his uncanny charm, no one pressured him to pay his bills. He was a great teacher for someone like me who, I must admit, more than appreciates money. At one point, when he was on the verge of bankruptcy, he owned four cars, one of which was driven by a chauffeur dressed in a maroon uniform. He was warned by his father-in-law, who was subsidizing him, that he had to drastically cut down on his expenses if he wished the hand-outs to continue.

Infuriated at being told what to do, Black Jack defied his father-in-law and rented an elegant eleven-room Park Avenue duplex, where he remodeled the kitchen, added several bathrooms with gold-plated fixtures, built a new nursery, and equipped a gymnasium with the latest equipment. He also employed a trainer and a masseuse. He hired a cook, two maids, two grooms for his stable, and an English nanny for me. Then he took Janet on a second European honeymoon.

I never heard what reaction my grandfather had to his son-in-law’s defiance, but from what I saw, it in no way put a damper on my father’s spending habits. My own spendthrift ways, which I inherited *par excellence* from Black Jack, drove my mother, my husband Jack, and even the world’s richest man, Aristotle Onassis, wild. I was just as defiant as my father, and all the tiresome lambasting from the threesome had the same effect on me as my grandfather’s threats had on Black Jack. I even topped him—I spent millions, while he spent only thousands.

My father was a vain man, and had no less than six photographs of himself hanging on the walls of his Park Avenue apartment. He spent a great deal of time and money maintaining his looks in his

private gym and working out at the Yale Club. Besides keeping his tan year-round, he made a practice of sunbathing nude by the window of his apartment. If he saw anyone looking at him there, he didn't give a fig, as if to say, "God and the gym have given me a beautiful physique. If anyone enjoys looking at it, more power to them!" He wore perfectly tailored clothes, including gabardine suits and shirts bought at Brooks Brothers, even while summering in East Hampton.

He was also a head-over-heels gambler, both at the races and on the stock exchange. Unfortunately, his addiction started quite early. He was expelled for gambling from Phillips Exeter Academy, his prep school.

Freud was right about the Oedipus complex. During my teens, I expected Black Jack to pick me up for a "date" every Sunday. I would stand at the door all afternoon, waiting for the sound of his arrival—the horn of his Mercury. I enjoyed his hugs and kisses as much as those of any man in my adulthood, and I got a thrill just holding his hand. The kind of intense love he had for me was more common in Europe than in the United States, and reflected the Latin quality in his personality. (No wonder I always felt at home in Europe.)

When he had to drop me off at Mummy's, I felt bereft. When I was with him, I tried to stay up at night until my eyelids drooped and he had to carry me off to bed. When Juliet said to Romeo, "Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow / That I shall say good night till it be morrow," I knew just how she felt.

When Daddy knew I was coming to visit, he would cancel all his previous engagements. Our love affair went on all during my childhood, and only began to yield in my late adolescence. I suppose I unconsciously knew that our reciprocal passion would interfere with ever having a man of my own, so I gradually lessened my involvement with him. I don't believe he ever forgave me for doing so. Yet I always remained first in his affections, and was the only female he remained faithful to all his life.

The Bouviers had quite the lineage. My grandfather, John Vernou Bouvier, Jr., distinguished attorney and graduate of Columbia

University Law School, was so highly regarded by Supreme Court Justice Benjamin Cardozo that he was commissioned major judge advocate for the Army during World War I. He insisted on being called "Major" ever after, and would answer to no other name.

But even this great honor was not enough, for he sought ever greater social status, peppering his conversations among *la crème de la crème* of society with clichéd French phrases whenever he found the opportunity (and sometimes when he did not). His major aim in life was to entrench the Bouvier family firmly into New York society. He did this by joining every prestigious club in the area, dressing meticulously, and changing his address every time his fortunes increased. He moved from Nutley, New Jersey, to 247 Fifth Avenue, to 521 Park Avenue, and to 765 Park Avenue, a most elegant address right off 72nd Street. In the early 1920s, he also established himself as a summer resident of fashionable East Hampton, in Wildmoor on Apaquoque Road, and in a few years moved to an even more elegant home, Lasata, on Further Lane. He was, of course, a member of the swank Maidstone Club, as were all the Bouviers.

When he was sixty years old (he never gave up, did he?), the Major wrote and self-published a little book called *Our Forebears*, in which he traced the Bouvier heritage to illustrious French patriots and royal aristocrats. One Bouvier was described as a celebrated member of Parliament in 1553, while another was touted as an important Parliament lawyer in 1609.

The book, however, was a total fabrication, down to the invented coat of arms and adopted titled family. The Major traced his ancestral roots to a Francois Bouvier, who was born in 1553 of the noble house of Fontaine, but unfortunately, that gentleman had nothing to do with the Major's true ancestor, an ironmonger of the same name, whose wife was a simple domestic. My grandfather's imagination waxed even more eloquently in describing the Vernou family, which, according to him, was one of the most illustrious and ancient families in the province of Poitou, which has been in existence since 1086. Lamentably, no one in present-day Poitou has ever heard of the

Vernous of New York. I blush to admit that instead of titled forbears, my ancestors really were members of the bourgeoisie—tailors, shopkeepers, and farmers. The name “Bouvier” means “ox-herder” in French.

In me, the Major found an enthusiastic audience. He would sit me down with his book and explain every fine point in it over and over again. Eventually, even he grew tired of the story and fell asleep. But when he stopped, I would scream, “Wake up, Grandfather! Please don’t stop. Read more!” In my mind, my true history was a noble one, and my real self belonged to the stuff fairy tales were made of, not the boring life I lived with my stern mother and frequently absent father. I grew up infused with visions of valor. Far back in the mists of time, at the juncture between history and myth, there came a man to lead his people to glory—a man named Arthur. I believed my ancestors were such men, and I daydreamed of finding a man like them for myself when I grew up.

The Major’s imaginative revision of our ancestry had other ramifications for me as well. Until I was an adult, I didn’t find out what a liar my grandfather was. I was told I was an aristocrat, believed I was an aristocrat, and behaved like an aristocrat. Perhaps that is why I was not surprised when I was treated like American royalty. It seemed my rightful place in the world. When I traveled to Versailles as first lady, or when thousands of women in Argentina shouted, “Ja-qui! Ja-qui! Queen of America!,” I felt at home. All of my kin felt the same way. We had been told we came from nobility, we believed it, and we adopted the loftiest of principles. My father encouraged this fantasy. He told me once, “Jackie, don’t ever worry about keeping up with the Joneses. We are the Joneses. Everyone else has to keep up with us.”

The veracity of the book was first questioned by Francis J. Dallett, former director of the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, when I was already in the White House. I dare say it was one of the great shocks of my life, and I have rarely been so embarrassed. For weeks, I was so humiliated that I ducked around corners to avoid him at museum events, and I wouldn’t go to art openings I thought he might

attend. Fortunately, the good Mr. Dallett was kind to me and merely announced in *Antiques Magazine* that the book's many errors should be checked against other sources.

As for Black Jack, in my opinion, he was never in love with Janet, nor she with him. They were like oil and water, and they remained that way to the end of their lives. Everything in his life revolved around the bedroom (not hers) and spending money (not his), while Janet's life was wrapped around society, horses, and doing the proper thing.

In her growing-up years, Janet had played go-between for her constantly fighting mother and father. It was partly to remove herself from this unbearable situation that she married Jack Bouvier. She was to regret her solution for the rest of her days. After an East Hampton wedding touted as "the social event of the season," the new couple boarded the R.M.S. *Aquitania* for a five-week European honeymoon. Their difficulties started as soon as they walked up the gangplank. Jack began a flirtation with Doris Duke, the sixteen-year-old tobacco heiress known as "the world's richest teenager." He insisted it was entirely innocent. Janet apparently disagreed, and retaliated by smashing a large, expensive mirror on their stateroom door. Janet continued raging at him until they reached Paris—if she ever stopped.

People should have known they were a mismatch from the beginning. I would have, if I had met such a couple. Black Jack used to say he was "not cut out for marriage." Nobody disagreed.

Nor did he grow old gracefully. Though not yet fifty, he was already losing his good looks. He developed a paunch, and the ever-present sunlamp could not disguise the beginning of jowls. His slick, dark Rudolph Valentino hair was already graying at the temples.

Janet was completely different. On the surface, she was full of smiles and social charm, but underneath she had a core of steel. She had seen her own father's circumstances change dramatically, going from not far above poverty to great wealth. She was not an extravagant woman, but liked nice things: plenty of servants, beautiful gardens, and linen sheets with deep embroidered hems. She didn't want to return to the days of penny-pinching. As she said, "I've been poor and

I've been rich. Rich is better." Black Jack was a dreamer and Janet was a realist, and never the twain did meet.

I grew up rarely seeing signs of affection between them. My mother was not a demonstrative woman. I received few hugs or kisses from her. If I needed a sign that I was loved, I was much more likely to get it from my horse Danseuse, who taught me as much as my parents did. From her, I learned how to maintain my composure under the most difficult of circumstances, to maneuver carefully and not take unnecessary risks, to blend gentleness and strength, and when it was safe to ask for favors and when it was wiser to desist. But more about that later.

I grew up in a household in which I was surrounded by constant discord. My father often lay drunk on the living room couch, dressed only in shorts, socks, and garters. The drunker he got, the more he ranted and raved against a world which did not appreciate him, in particular the "kikes," "wops," and "micks."

Not only did my father hurl abusive words at my mother, but he was physically violent toward her as well, and when drunk, bruised and battered her to the point of black eyes and bleeding wounds. I had to help drag him into the bedroom and undress him, and clean up the mess left by his vomit, urine, and semen. The next morning, I watched in humiliation as he begged Janet to forgive him and said he would never behave that way again. I feel rather bad now that I blamed Janet for my father's alcoholism, thinking that if she had made him happier, he wouldn't have had to drink. If I were his wife, I thought, I would know how to make him happy.

It's funny, isn't it, how I worshiped Black Jack? I never criticized him, no matter how revolting his behavior, and yet rarely gave my mother the admiration and respect she deserved. I was a child, and didn't know any better. Freud (and Jack) would say it was because of my Oedipus complex.

But I was no happier than they. I had few friends, and spent my time reading or taking solitary walks along the beach. Inside, I guess I haven't changed that much.

I loved my father dearly, but he and my mother separated when I was nine years old, and they fought a tug-of-war over me the rest of their lives. I was distraught at their separation and divorce, and until my father died, I tried to get them back together again.

People think that different things are important to me than to the average person. That's not true. In my heart, I feel the same emotions as everyone else, especially in the passages of birth, marriage, and death. Like every other child, the most important thing in the world to me was to be surrounded by loving parents. That was not to be, and their hostility ruined my growing-up years.

Nevertheless, I adored my father with a passion that was not equaled until I married Jack Kennedy. Daddy was kind and loving to me, and bought me whatever I wanted whenever I wanted it, whatever the price. My few friends all loved him, too. He encouraged us to climb trees rather than be the little ladies our mothers demanded, and to ride without hands on our bikes, and to eat all the sweets we wanted, no matter how close it was to the dinner hour. He would take us out to lunch and let us order steaks and two desserts. I remember one friend saying, "I'm going to eat as much as he'll let me." He never complained, though we must have eaten him blind. He took us to Central Park in our play clothes, and even let us lick ice cream cones while sauntering down Park Avenue.

Sometimes, he would invite a number of my little classmates to lunch at Schrafft's, followed by a movie and a round of sundaes at Rumplemeyer's. He was extremely creative in his ideas of how to entertain little girls. For instance, on cold winter days, when Baker Field at Columbia University was deserted, he would take us to play on the outdoor rowing seats set up for the varsity team's sculling practice. Sometimes we went to the Fulton Fish Market, where my wide eyes opened even wider watching the fishes' heads chopped off with a huge carving knife. One day, he took me to the New York Stock Exchange gallery, where I was thrilled to experience the excitement of the shouting stockbrokers and to feel a part of my father's manly world. Lee and I were watching the brokers from the balcony when,

suddenly, they all looked up at us and began to clap. It felt good.

Mummy, on the other hand, was stern, punitive, and harsh, and spent her life disciplining us. Suitable behavior and proper attire were *de rigueur* at all times. She enforced a code of ladylike reserve and aloofness in which public displays of emotion were taboo. There was one correct way to speak, to act, and to move—her way, and that alone was permissible. She wouldn't even let me grieve for my father after his passing. It was nothing for her to spank me if I cried for him. I would have been happy living with him, but she wouldn't even consider it. Criticized and punished by my mother, praised and pampered by my father, is it any wonder I adored him and couldn't have cared less about her? And is it any wonder I prefer men to women any day of the year?

I had my ways of getting back at Mummy's code of ladylike restraint and coolness. Like many children with strict parents they don't dare rebel against, I acted up in school. I became a mischievous and argumentative pupil, who had the distinction of being the naughtiest girl in the class. I could feel free to defy the teachers without worrying that Mummy would break out the hairbrush, and soon became a regular visitor to the principal's office. Of course, they eventually notified Janet, who said to me, "I hear you are often sent to the principal's office. Is that true?" I nodded. A look of horror and self-hypnotic eye-glazing came over her face. "What happens when you get there?"

Knowing I couldn't get away with it anymore, I thought I'd shock Mummy further by telling her the truth. "Well, here's the story," I said. "I play a trick on the teacher, like putting chocolate pie on her seat. The teacher sends me to Miss Stringfellow's office. She glowers at me and says, 'Jacqueline, I've heard some bad things about you!'"

Mummy's eyes opened even wider. "Oh?" she said icily, her voice turning up as she spoke. "And what happens next?"

"I don't know," I said. "I stop listening." Down came my pants and out came the hairbrush.

Miss Stringfellow, the principal, finally managed to get through

to me by comparing me to a horse. She said, "I know you are a horse lover, and a thoroughbred yourself. You are intelligent, strong, and full of unlimited energy. But if a horse is the fastest racer in the world, yet won't stay on the track or stand still at the starting gate, what good is he? He is useless to his owner, who has no choice but to get rid of him. *You* are like that horse, Jacqueline. You have to harness your high spirits, or you, too, will be good for nothing." I had to admit that she made sense. After that, I began making fewer visits to her office, and eventually they came to an end altogether.

I grew up expecting to go to Vassar, which I did, but school wasn't my forte. Though my grades were excellent, I hated the safe, isolated little world of the small upstate college, and wished I had gone to Radcliffe, where at least I would have had access to the cultural treasures of Boston. Although I received an A+ in some of Vassar's most difficult courses, such as the History of Religion and a Shakespeare class (in which I recited the whole play *Antony and Cleopatra* by heart) I left the school after two years to go abroad and never returned. I finished my degree at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., which was more to my liking.

One of the most beautiful memories of my early life traces back to the summer I was seven years old. After their first separation, my parents had a brief reconciliation. I was so happy, I smiled all day long. The first night of their reconciliation, I lay awake in bed, too excited to sleep. My parents, about to go out on the town to celebrate their reunion, swept into my bedroom to say goodnight. How stunning they looked, the pair of them—like two movie stars! Mummy bent over me to kiss me, and I was enchanted by the smell of her perfume. When Daddy did the same, I almost swooned with delight. I grabbed onto him, and had to be pried loose by Mummy, who said, "Sweetheart, let go of your father. We're going out dancing tonight." They were going to the Central Park Casino to hear the great Eddy Duchin, she added. I reluctantly let go of Daddy.

If I had known how short-lived their reconciliation would be, I would have held on to him even longer. I soon learned the terrible

truth—they were never going to reconcile, and I would never again have a full-time father. In 1940, when I was eleven years old, Janet sued Black Jack for divorce on the grounds of adultery.

Sometimes I think it's a miracle that I've fared as well as I have. Of all the divorces I've ever seen—and I've seen many in my lifetime—theirs was the worst, because there was lengthy, relentless bitterness on both sides. From the time I was ten until I was twenty, I never heard a word from either parent except how awful the other was.

When my father left home, I felt he had forsaken me. I was eleven, and just about to enter puberty. It was a time when a young girl needs a father the most. Somewhere deep inside me, I will always feel like the girl whom men abandon. That is still how I see myself, and to some degree, that is what happened. Jack left me every day for any woman around, and even Ari had filed for divorce before he died.

When I became debutante of the year, my many beaux only momentarily changed how I felt. Until the next beau came along, I was still the girl no man could permanently love. My father broke my heart when he deserted me, and I don't believe I ever recovered. Every loss brings the pain back to me. The sudden absence of my father felt much the same to me as when Jack was killed, only when I was little, I believed that Mummy was the murderer.

My father was given visitation rights of alternate weekends, one day each week, and six weeks every summer, when he took us to a house he rented in East Hampton. I recovered each time I was with him and felt adrift again when I had to go back to Mummy.

It wasn't only my father that I lost with the divorce. Photos about the divorcing Bouviers and their children appeared in papers all over the country, with headlines that shrieked, "Society Broker Sued for Divorce." In those days, divorce was more than frowned upon, and children of divorce were pitied and taunted. Kids would follow us in the streets, yelling, "Your father left you! You ain't got no father!" The girls at Chapin giggled in my presence and laughed at me behind my back. At the sound of their laughter, or even the idea that they might

be laughing at me, I blushed with shame. It got so I wouldn't leave the house alone, and became even more withdrawn and isolated. I've felt like an outsider ever since, infinitely preferring books to people. It was then I began to bite my nails, a habit I have never succeeded in overcoming. Later, I added continuous smoking to my list of nervous tendencies. The press was very much my enemy at the age of eleven. Is it surprising that I hated them the rest of my life?

In the battle for my affections, and those of Lee, my mother tried to outdo my father, which was difficult because of her strict personality and frugal ways. Our father had us on the weekends, which were reserved for gala events like the circus and the zoo, ice skating, pony rides in the park, the theater, movies, and expensive lunches where we could order anything we wanted. At Mummy's, we ate only healthy meals of steamed vegetables, which she made us finish to the last bite. Daddy lavished expensive gifts and clothes on us and instructed us what to wear, in contrast to Mummy, who would buy us just two or three respectable dresses at Best and Company every year. He hated the way she dressed us, saying, "We will buy you something very pretty to wear!"

I have to feel a bit sorry for Mummy now, because my father's generosity would be hard for anyone to match, let alone beat. When it came time to return home, we screamed and hollered that we didn't want to leave Daddy for a boring week of school and Mummy's harsh discipline. She often had to drag us away, shrieking all the way out to the limo. It didn't help. She never allowed us to stay with him a moment longer than the divorce papers specified.

Lee and I learned to manipulate them both to get what we wanted. Often, all we had to say was "Daddy lets us do such-and-such" for Mummy to cave in. When we complained about Mummy's strictness, Daddy would do something especially nice to prove to us how much better he was. We complained often. I would scream, "I hate my mother! I hate her, I hate her, I hate her!" Nothing made him happier than to hear that, and like as not, all I had to do was say it to have him buy me a beautiful new dress.

Daddy also taught us what a man finds attractive in a woman. He said a woman should cultivate an air of aloofness or inaccessibility. The more unreachable and unavailable a woman is, he said, the more attractive a man finds her. By being too eager, a woman scares a man off. A woman should offer a man only a little, then withdraw it, then offer something else. This drives a man wild. He taught us to tease a bit, to be mysterious, and never to let anyone know what we were thinking. Daddy must have written the course for Psychology 101—his advice had the boys lined up wall to wall, to say nothing of the entire country, men, women, and some in-between, after I became first lady.

People sometimes said I had a split personality. On the one hand, I could be painfully shy and uncomfortable among strangers. On the other hand, when I entered a party exquisitely dressed in an outfit my father had bought for me, I moved about like some exotic princess. That's not so strange, when you think about it. In the former state, I was, in effect, Mummy's girl. In the latter situation, my heart belonged to Daddy. People often wondered which one was the real Jackie.

One of the great sorrows of my life was the fact that, as my father aged, he became a different man from the one I had idolized all my life. He was bitter and angry and felt life had treated him unfairly. He believed that Mummy had gotten the best of everything, including his daughters, whom he felt had deserted him. He was most unpleasant to be with, and perhaps I didn't visit him as often in his later years as I should have. At the age of sixty-six, he was stricken with cancer of the liver. Neither he nor I was told of the diagnosis.

On July 27, 1957, he experienced severe pain and was admitted to Lenox Hill Hospital for testing. Not knowing he was terribly ill and thinking he would be all right, I decided to spend my birthday with my mother in Newport. On the morning of August 3, I received an urgent phone call saying that he was in a coma. I rushed to be at his side. To my everlasting regret, I arrived an hour too late. His nurse told me that his last word was "Jackie."

I was terribly distressed and full of guilt that I had not been there to comfort him in his last hours, and had not been as attentive to him in his final years as I should have been. Despite my terrible grief, I took care of all the details, including the funeral service at St. Patrick's Cathedral and his burial. Before they closed the coffin, I closed his fingers around a link bracelet he had given me as a graduation present. At the service were seven or eight of his former girlfriends. They were all dressed in black and sat together at the back of the church, like the Black Widows Society. It seemed that once a woman loved Jack Bouvier, she loved him all her life.

He is buried in the Bouvier family plot at Most Holy Trinity Catholic Cemetery in East Hampton. It was my first experience burying a man I loved.