

- A young and attractive former first lady and her personal problem.

## WILL JACKIE MARRY AGAIN?

Jackie Kennedy will be married within a year and in new-found happiness with a man whom she will love just as much as she loved Jack Kennedy, the hideous months that succeeded the assassination of her husband will gradually fade from her memory.

I have known Jackie Kennedy for more than sixteen years, long enough to know the mind and the heart, the desires and the emotions of this lovely woman who was so suddenly and tragically catapulted into the hearts of men and women the world over when her husband was wantonly and callously shot down in Dallas.

The Jacqueline Bouvier whom I knew, the woman who became Mrs. John F. Kennedy, was a woman born to love and be loved. She is not a woman who can live alone or be alone. She is too warm and vibrant,

she has too much love to give to a man. She is too human to be alone long.

I know of five men eager to marry the widow of the White House. I know that each of them in his turn within the past six months has proposed marriage to Mrs. Kennedy and I know what she said to each. It was the same reply.

"Give me a little time to reorientate myself. I have not fully recovered from the shock. I cannot give you an answer now. My heart tells me that I will marry again, and soon, because my children need a father to love just as they loved their own father, but I want to marry a man I will love just as much as I loved Jack."

This is not fiction, but fact, for this is what Jackie said to a friend of mine, Paul Thomson Pritchett, who has been a friend of Jackie Kennedy for twelve

years and who was a close friend of Jack Kennedy.

Perhaps one of the hardest facts for Jackie to accept is that the children have stopped asking her when Daddy is coming home and why they do not see Daddy anymore. It was difficult for Jackie to convey to the children that Daddy was not coming home anymore. How do you tell the children that their father, vibrantly alive, smiling and playing with them yesterday, is dead today and will never return?

The children have somehow accepted the fact that Daddy is not coming back. They are reconciled to this although they do not understand why. They have seen their mother in black, weeping, yet aloof and proud and in public drawing a veil over her sorrow, and this has hurt Jackie more than anything else.

"I have often wished since the day when Jack died that the children were a little older," Jackie said to me in her New York apartment last year. "It would have been easier for me if they were older and knew what happened. But they

are too small to grasp what has happened and I have somehow had to bring home to them that the Daddy they loved so much is not coming back. It was heartbreaking, but only a mother with small children who loses her husband will understand my true feelings in his hour of grief."

The men who have asked Jackie for her hand in marriage are all old friends of hers, men who knew her when she was a lanky, attractive schoolgirl. They saw her marry Jack Kennedy and had to give up hoping that one of them may have been the lucky man. No one foresaw the coming of the great American tragedy.

None of the men I have in mind married. Some men fall in love with a woman and know in their hearts it would be wrong to marry another woman because they would always be in love with someone else.

Perhaps this is why these men did not marry. I know that this is why Paul Pritchett did not marry.

"I loved Jackie very much," Paul told me, "and when she married to Jack

Kennedy I was one of a few who mourned her going, but I did not stop loving her, I reckoned that she loved Jack more than me, that is why she married him, but I did not find anyone in the years that passed to measure up to the woman I loved so I did not marry. I guess I was unwilling to settle for second best."

What hurts Jackie more than anything else today is to see the eyes of her son and daughter, Caroline and John, light up with childish pleasure when they come into the company of a man their mother likes. I have seen it many times now since the lamentable death of Jack Kennedy. I was in Jackie's Washington home before she moved to New York when Jimmy Harrison Hill arrived from Seattle to see her.

Jimmy, who is exactly Jackie's age, was another of the men who adored her and who sighed miserably when she chose Jack Kennedy as her husband. I saw how the children went for the tall, dark Jimmy Harrison Hill, how they took to him like ducks to water, grasping his hands and walking

with him in the garden, clambering over him and kissing him and even falling asleep in his arms when he sat with us in the living-room, and I felt something in my heart I find it hard to describe, a kind of twisting pain knowing how much those little children must have wished that Jimmy was their Daddy, come to stay with them for ever.

I also saw that look in Jackie's eyes as she watched them surreptitiously, the joy her children showed because there was a nice and kind man with them, a man who loved them.

I knew then that Jackie had to marry again, that she owed it not only to herself but even more so to the children. When we were alone later, walking in the garden while Jimmy was reading a goodnight story to the children, I said, "Jackie, you can do nothing about the past. The wounds must heal. Your children need a father. Look how they took to Jimmy."

She was silent for a long time, then she said, "I know, Sue. For the happiness of my children and the fuller

life they have to lead, and for my own happiness I will marry again, but I want a little time. It is so soon. So soon. I have seen how my children react to a man in the house. I know how much they need a father. Some very fine men whom I have known a long time have asked me to consider them for marriage. They did not propose because it is so soon, but they asked me if when I find that I want a father for my children and someone to take my hand and let me put my head in his shoulder, I would remember that they have loved me a long time."

When Jackie marries again—and I am quite sure it will not be long now because she is the kind of woman who needs a man's love—it will be a very simple and private ceremony and probably only a handful of people will know about it. The world will probably know

nothing until it is all over and she has gone on her honeymoon to some secluded, private place.

All the men in Jackie's life are rich men, so that even if she had no money of her own she could never want for anything. All are good men and all have two things in common: they love Jackie, even worship her, and they love her children not out of sympathy because the children lost their father, but because they are Jackie's children.

Jimmy Harrison Hill told me — and his words were echoed by others — "I love those kids, Sue. I wish they were mine. If Jackie marries me those kids will be mine just as if they were really my own kids. They will never look on me as a stepfather. I love them just as much as I love Jackie. I need her as much as she needs me."

## MINK COAT

There's only one thing that makes a man give a mink coat to a woman. A woman. — *Earl Wilson.*