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group came, in 1965, after the sixty four election when I had supported the candidacy of Barry Goldwater, I had always thought that my contribution could be that, being a performer and thus well known and maybe able to attract an audience, I could support people and causes I believed in. Never did I ever think that I would want to hold public office. And this group came after the party had been so torn apart in the dissension of that campaign. California was so split and they said that maybe we could have a hand in bringing them together. They kept emphasizing that I could win.

Our first reaction was, you know, "Don't talk foolishness. Go find a candidate and I'll be very happy to do everything I can to help him. But, no, that's not for us. That's not our way of life."

Well, they kept on and they kept on until we couldn't sleep. It seemed to be such a total change of our entire life that finally I said, "What if they're right?" and "What if this is something and we wouldn't be able to live with ourselves if we keep on saying no?"

So the deal I made then, with perfect confidence that it would not result in my running for office, was, "All right, if you'll

set it up so that I can accept all the speaking engagements here in California, not just political, chambers of commerce, things of that kind, but let me do it for the next six months. I'll come back and tell you before the six months is over, whether you're right, that I should be the candidate or whether there's ^Msomebody else. And I'll continue doing what I've been doing in the past."

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And they did that and I did my best out there. When people would come up after a speech and say, "You ought to do this," and I'd say, "no," and I'd start talking to someone else. I finally came home one night and said, "They're right. I think I do have the best chance of winning."

We almost decided between ourselves that, when I finally gave in and said, "Yes," I did it with the idea in mind that it was only for the election, that when the election was over I could go back to doing what I was doing.

Sometime after I'd become governor, and we were sitting in the living room, all of a sudden it came to both of us that what we were doing made everything else we'd ever done seem dull as dishwater--that was the expression she

used. And it was true. I had never anticipated sacrificing something I loved doing for something that was really going to be a chore, But instead of just talking about the problems from the outside, to actually deal with them and to have a hand in solving them--well, one man who was a governor back when I was a performer had said to me about his job, sometimes he went home feeling ten feet tall. We both felt that way about it.

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~~(END CHAPTER TEN, END "Nancy and Politics")~~

CHAPTER ^{Nine}~~ELEVEN~~: The Assassination Attempt

Nancy Reagan:

I remember everything about it,
everything ~~about it~~. I'd gone out to lunch and
for some reason, which I still don't
understand--we'd almost finished lunch--I
said, "I think I'd better get back to the
White House," and I got up and left.

I came home and I was upstairs and the
Secret Service man came up and said, "I'd like
to see you." I went down and he said, "There's
been a shooting but your husband's all right."
Well, I was halfway down the elevator and I
said, "I want to . . . " and he said, "No,
it's all right. He's all right. They'll be
bringing him back here. He's all right." I
said, "I want to go," and we started out. We
got there and they were waiting for me in the
hospital to tell me that he had been hit.

I can remember the sound in the
hospital. I can remember the confusion, the
voices, the people running back and forth, the
police telling people to get away.

I can remember being put into a little
room--I think maybe three people could've

gotten into it--where I still would have been if Paul Laxault hadn't come along and said, "Don't you think we could put Mrs. Reagan in another room?" I remember wanting to see my husband and being told I couldn't, and then finally seeing him and the wonderful humor and strength that came through when he lifted up that thing and said, "Honey, I forgot to duck." I remember everything, going into the operating room, the smells, everything.

I don't think that's something that goes away. I think you both have your own separate traumas. I'm sure he has his, but I have mine.

You learn to live with that. You have to. You know that everything's being done that can possibly be done, but, you know, everything's gotten so much worse all over the world.

I was pretty beaten down. Then, my father was ill. I lost weight. I knew all the rumors going around that I was ill, and I couldn't tell them really why I was losing weight.

As I look back on it, I think I was in a state of shock much longer than I realized I was. My husband, I think, realized it more than I did. He was the one who suggested that

I go to England for the Prince of Wales' wedding because he felt that if I got away and went to a royal wedding--and when am I going to get to a royal wedding again?--that it would be good for me. But it was his idea.

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It's something that you don't forget. I thought, maybe, it would fade a little, but it doesn't. Every time he leaves the house, particularly to go on a trip, I think my heart stops till he gets back.

I really didn't worry before. I really didn't. You know that that's a possibility and so on but you never think it's going to happen to you, and when it does, it's a shock that stays with you.

If the president worries about it, he doesn't tell me. Some things are just too painful to talk about, aren't they? Life is always peaks and valleys and that was certainly a valley.

Did it give me more a sense of mortality? Oh yes. You rearrange your priorities very quickly.

When anyone asks me about the security and Secret Service and doesn't it bother me and so on, I say not at all. I'm very happy to have them. If it weren't for them, I wouldn't have a husband.

President Reagan:

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I think that it took her longer to heal than it did me, and I can understand that. I was confident that I was going to be all right and all, but I'm sure it would be harder for me to have to stand by and see someone else and have the worry that goes with it.

Just picture the difference. All right, it's happened to me and I'm there and I know and I'm going to the hospital and so forth, but the difference of someone at home on what's a normal, routine day, and someone walks in and says what has happened--that's got to be a lot worse than it is to the person that it happened to.

William F. Buckley:

The assassination attempt was so tough on her that I think she sincerely regretted that he'd run for president. And it was during that period when at least I had the impression that she was very cool at the

prospect of his running again. Gradually, that fear was overcome. And then, of course, ~~when~~ ^{when} she decided, ~~that~~ he decided that he wanted to run again, that became dominant in her own thinking. It was that evolution in her thinking.

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She didn't want to risk her husband's life unnecessarily. And she thought that perhaps that was being done. That was during the height of her apprehension that, well, he came very close to dying as we all know. She knew it all along. Her reaction to it was totally protective. Why should he run that risk?

Michael Deaver:

It was a tough time. We had a lot of conversation both in person and on the phone trying to keep her up. But she's a strong willed lady and I think that whole experience, as it did all of us, strengthened her.

It was tough. Her life is Ronald Reagan. And she came very close to losing him. And then she had her father's death a little bit later. But this could have been the big loss of her life. I can remember myself--and her

feelings would have been a hundred fold what mine were--going home and saying to my wife after ten days, after seeing the president ten days after he was shot, I said, "Carolyn, I'll never be the same." If I felt that way, my God, what did Nancy Reagan feel? I knew she couldn't sleep. I knew she wasn't eating. I talked to the doctors about it and I said, "You really have got to get in there because she doesn't look well." And her friends were all coming around, bringing her candy and cookies and trying to give her encouragement and get her to fatten up a little bit.

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Maureen Reagan:

We had lived for years with the knowledge that something like that could happen, but you're never prepared for it. She was not prepared for it. She was not prepared for the fact that--despite his humor and his climbing out of it--he was very seriously injured, much more seriously than anybody knew at that time. I was there a week after the assassination attempt, and I can tell you it was pretty bad. She sat there, in that

hospital, all day long. Every two hours, they would go in and they would physically pound on his back to try to get the lungs to release this fluid that was building up. You could hear this. It was like somebody slapping a side of beef. She just sat there and she said, "That's your father they're doing that to." She sat there all day long with that, day after day after day. That has to take a toll on anybody, much more than I think any of us realized, much less anybody in the public.

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~~(END CHAPTER ELEVEN, END "The Assassination Attempt")~~

Title: Family and Friends
Subhead ~~subhead~~ NANCY AND Her Children 195-212

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TEJ Family, Friends
CHAPTER TWELVE: Nancy and Her Children
combine w/ 13 + 14

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Nancy Reagan:

I think I've been a good mother. Many times discipline is left to the mother because fathers are busy. Certainly, we had a father who was busy. So mother ended up being the disciplinarian, which is not always a happy role. Our children were growing up in the sixties, which was a terrible time to try to raise children for children and for parents both.

I believed in discipline. I did not believe in being permissive or that, if they wanted to color the walls with crayons, it was okay. I didn't believe in that. But I hope they always knew that I was there if there was a serious problem.

Ron didn't plan on getting married the way he did it. He and Doria got to the marriage bureau and there was all this press there. They didn't expect that. So they thought, rather than having to go through this twice, we'll do it. And as soon as they did it, they called us to tell us and explain to us. It's a little misleading, the way it's

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been reported.

Patti was in Paris and they got the engagement ring. As soon as they got back here, they called and we had a very nice wedding and they're very happy.

As far as Michael is concerned, every family has periods of misunderstandings or difficulties or whatever you want to call them. They solve them. The main thing is that you try to solve them and hopefully you do. But you're lucky if you have a private life and you can do it privately rather than in the papers.

I don't believe in talking about family in public.

All I said about Michael was the one sentence about trying to settle a problem and I never said anything more. Again, that was blown up into such a big thing. Every family has their problems at one time or another. And you try to settle them. And that's what you hope for. No family can go through life without problems from time to time. We're all human beings.

I certainly would have tried to stop it if one of my children had gotten involved in drugs. I certainly would have tried. I ~~certainly~~ wouldn't have sat back and said,

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"Well, this is just a phase they're going through and they'll come out of it and somebody else will take care of it." I ~~certainly~~ never would have done that. I ~~may~~ ^{might} have failed, but at least I would have tried. I don't think ^{some} parents try enough.

I think they ^(the children) probably smoked marijuana at one time or another but they didn't smoke it and smoke it and smoke it. I understand it. It's like having the first cigarette. But it's a good deal more harmful, very harmful.

Do I worry about what the loss of privacy will do to my children? Yes. Although they're older now and it should be a little bit better for them. I think it's very difficult for the children of people in public life. Certainly this kind of public life. It's very hard.

Dr. Barbara Kellerman:

I think one of the interesting things to look at when you're looking at a First Lady is the really enormous increase in importance of the president's family since about 1960. There are very powerful, systemic reasons for that, why the president's family, not just the First

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Lady but parents of the president, children of the president, siblings of the president, all of them, can play very powerful political roles. It's really interesting to look at the entire family dynamic.

It's also very interesting to come to understand the reasons for this increased role of the presidential family, and those reasons are really very simple and very obvious: For example, the age of television. Suddenly, families are known quantities in a way they could never been before. The decline of the political party, the decline^s of the importance of the party in the presidential process means that presidents don't have a whole cadre of party cronies to rely on any longer. So who^m do they rely on? ~~They rely on friends, and they rely on family, in a way they did not.~~

The increased importance and frequency of the primary^{ies}, the demands of the primary system, mean that the president has to blanket this country with his presence. He draws on his family members very often to do some of the campaigning for him. Their wives, to be sure, but also children and siblings and parents.

You only have to look at the Carter campaign in seventy six and seventy five ~~even~~ to understand how Carter depended on his family to become known in this country. Carter was an unknown quantity in seventy-five. By seventy-six, he was well known, and a good part, the lion's share, of the credit for that goes to the various members of his family.

Finally, there's the changing culture. When Harry Truman was president, which is not all that long ago, he considered it unseemly for women to participate in political life, and told his wife and daughter so. The changes in culture, not only political culture but social culture, make it positively appropriate and desirable that women of all ages should play political roles.

The Reagan family, despite their early efforts to give a contrary impression, is in fact a very atypical family, and the main way in which they're atypical is the lack of closeness, or the apparent lack of closeness by conventional standards, between the parents and the children.

Some of the reasons for this are obvious. Two of the four children are from another marriage. But it's interesting to note that even the two children that Nancy and

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Ronald Reagan share, that they've had together, are relatively distant from the White House. I don't mean to suggest ^{they're} estranged from the White House. But I think families in general tend to stay in closer touch than the Reagans do with their own children.

Certainly the past White House patterns have had grown children far more active in and supportive of their parents' political lives than the two offspring of Nancy and Ronald Reagan.

Doug Wick:

I think she is a very good mother. She's in a ^Nvery intolerable situation of having every yawn or wink examined under a microscope. I've certainly had my ups and downs with my family, but if I had to read about them every other day, I think it would be pretty disconcerting.

It has to be very painful to have people criticize you as a mother. I think her kids are crazy about her, ^{though} and they've had their ups and downs, like any American family.

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C.Z. Wick:

I think what you have is a very caring, supportive individual. When Ron decided to go into dance, the tabloids were reporting "parents upset over irresponsible decision," or something. In fact, what happened was they were real supportive, very interested in his career desire and, basically, they only said, "Well, we hope you love this and we know you'll be as good at it as you can be."

That's pretty much continued to be the case. ~~I think~~^A all the kids call when they need some solid advice, and I think that family holidays are ~~real~~^A important to the family, too. ~~I think~~^A the sense of humor is another one of the characteristics of her relationship with all of her kids.

I think that all the kids in the Reagan family are very independent. They're individuals and anytime you have a room full of adults, all strong individuals, like any family there are going to be differences of opinion.

Ron and his mother are good friends. They enjoy each other's company. The friendship has gone way beyond mother and son and the attendant duties of being a son or

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being a mom. They're both well read, bright individuals who have a terrific sense of humor and enjoy being with each other. I would say that pretty well gives you a flavor. They have fun together.

She is a very private person. An average family who's not in the public eye, a family which has strong individuals all with different opinions, if that family has differences or frictions, they're able to work those things out in the privacy of their home. Nancy Reagan is somebody who would like to be able to work out any family problem or enjoy a family triumph or pleasure in the privacy of home.

I think her unwillingness to share every detail of any family disagreement is probably what got the stories started. ~~I think~~ if she and the kids and the president had been able to work out the normal family disagreements without cameras stuck in the window and microphones in their faces, it would have been a lot easier.

Michael Reagan:

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In Hollywood she was probably the best of mothers because she literally gave up her career when she married dad and had children. Most actors and actresses in Hollywood, because of their egos or whatever reason, maintain that life in the studio acting. She gave it up. She said, "I'm not acting anymore. I'm giving it up. I'm staying home with the kids." And so she gave up a career to be with Ronald Reagan.

We all live in a fishbowl. The bottom line is everybody loves each other, but you still are going to have family squabbles. I'm sure everybody does. First Family family squabbles are like having arguments in a base drum. It just reverberates out. You can't have it behind a closed door.

Thanksgiving dinner. The press is always asking those questions, "Where is he?," because so much of the public out there expect you to always be at your dad's or your mom's for dinner. The only question for them is, "Do you always eat at home?" People always ask, "Why don't I live at the White House?" I'm forty years old. I like to live at my own house. I think people misinterpret things in their own mind, "If my dad were president, I'd be there every night." Well, dad's president.

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Dad's dad to me. He's not just president of the United States.

Everybody in this family, Maureen, myself, Patti, Ronnie, will walk a plank for Ronald Reagan and Nancy. We'll walk off a bridge if that's what it takes, working to get him elected. Giving up time out of our lives, which we felt free to do.

But we're all individualistic enough to say, "But we've got our own lives." We've got to do that, too. Sometimes we're questioned about what we're doing--and people really hate to be questioned all the time. "Why are you doing this?" "Why are you doing that?" When dad became president, none of us lived at home. And I think this is the first president with none of the kids having lived at home at the beginning. So everybody searched this out, trying to find out what we're doing, why we're in business. People say, "Gee whiz, Ronald Reagan must have a lot of money, why do you work?" So if you work, they say, "Gee whiz, don't they like you?" If you don't work, you're a bum. So what do you do?

Dad and I have talked about not seeing my daughter until she was nineteen months old. Ever since dad was shot, he has such a feeling

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of his presence endangering other people. We were talking about it the other day. He asked me if I went to church. He said, "Gee, I wish I could go to church every Sunday." Because he worries about being in the presence of people. He comes and he visits Ashley and visits Cameron and spends the time with them he would like to. Then their faces get all over television and everybody knows what they look like. And he wants to keep them in the background as much as possible. He doesn't want to really endanger them. And they have Secret Service, too.

He calls them on the phone. He talks to Cameron on the phone. Ashley's now starting to talk a little bit on the phone. From one side, you really understand it, and from the other side, being a father, being a parent, you say, "Gee whiz, I wish he could spend time." Once we're able to sit down and take that three thousand mile gap and close it down to two chairs, talking to each other, we're able to solve that.

But basically he just feels he doesn't want to put them in a ^{risky} bad situation of everybody seeing what they look like. It's pretty hard for the president of the United States to have a quiet time with his

grandkids.

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He'll be able to spend that time really when he gets out of office. When he comes out here, he's got Patti, he's got Ron to see, he's got Maureen to see. There are a lot of people for him to see whenever he can get to California. So the times that he does see them he wants to make really quality time. He asked one time, "Should I come over to your house?" I said, "By the time your motorcade pulled up, they wouldn't want me to live there anymore." ~~It's very hard to get them together when he comes out to the ranch.~~

Is everything solved between Nancy and me? We all loved each other before we even walked into the meeting we had and I think it's easy to solve any problems you might have if you walk into a meeting knowing that you love each other, and we all do. We had some misunderstandings, we closed the gap of distance and, once we did that, everything was really solved.

I lived with them for a couple years and we were close. We used to go out to the ranch and things of that nature. She and dad used to come up and visit me when I was a boy in school. For a time there, there wasn't Patti

or Ronnie. There was just Maureen and I.
There's a real closeness there. Then Patti
and Ronnie were kids. She had to give her time
there, which is the thing she should be doing.
There was a closeness. When I was a kid I
loved to have my back rubbed. I used to sit on
her lap and would have her scratch my back.

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I don't know any women or men who have
been through a divorce that like to have their
first spouses thrown up at them on a constant
basis. People Magazine showed how much money
everybody made. They had dad in one corner and
Jane Wyman in the other corner. My mom doesn't
like that any more than Nancy likes it or dad
likes it. And it gets thrown up because, gee
whiz, it'll sell an article or sell a
newspaper or sell a magazine. And, jeez, that
happened thirty some odd years ago. People
don't like spouses thrown up over a thirty
year period. You get a little bit tired of it.
I don't think it's jealousy as much as you
just get tired of always hearing it. It's
ancient history. It's gone. It's goodbye. Mom
got married a couple of times after that
anyway.

Maureen Reagan:

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~~She is this person that just is there.~~

It's very comfortable that she's there. When I had the flu very badly, just before the inaugural, she kept calling the doctor three times a day to be sure that I was going to be all right for the festivities. I was invited to go to a party on Sunday afternoon and so, when they came back from Camp David, I said I was going out to this party. She said, "Well, you can't go to that party. You're sick." I said, "No, no, no. I'm much better, really I am." And there I am, forty-four years old, standing in the hall of the White House, hollering, "Mom, all my friends are going to be there, I have to go."

She called and told them I could only stay for an hour. I wanted to die, absolutely wanted to die. I said, "What are you, an Irish mother?" And she said, "Yeah, that's what I am, but you're going to be well."

I had two role models when I was growing up: Jane Wyman, who chose to be a motion picture film star; Nancy Reagan, who chose to be a professional homemaker. They both made their choices. So when I got to be nineteen

years old, I knew that I could be anything in the world I wanted to be, as long as I was willing to work at it, and I could make the choice of what I wanted to be because those women had done it.

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I went to boarding school at the age of seven. I went because, at that time, living in the town in which we lived, my parents felt that it was much healthier for us to be in a continuing stable environment than to be in the Hollywood scene.

I can't disagree with that looking back now, but as a child who's in boarding school, it's a little tough to understand because you think you're missing something and, of course, you are missing being at home. Okay. Because of that, all of my growing up years were spent in a different kind of environment than it would have been if I had lived at home. So it's all part of what I know and who I am and how I feel about things. If you ask me, did I miss something, I missed a lot of things. I missed watching television when it was a little tiny screen because we didn't have it where I went to school. There were a lot of things that I missed, but am I unhappy about them? No. Would I do it different? I don't know, ~~because I don't know anything different.~~

I only know what I had and what I did and I did the best I could.

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We're a family. I don't know how close other families are. I only know about us. For years, I lived in the East and I didn't see anybody. It wasn't because they didn't care about me or anything, but I wasn't here. If everybody got together here at Christmas and I wasn't there, it wasn't their fault. It wasn't my fault. It just was the way it was. I still felt like they were my family and I still felt like we were close.

Ron Reagan:

She's been a very concerned mother. She's always taken an interest in her children, what they're doing, how they're doing, and wants a close relationship with her ~~children~~ ^{them}. She seems to be understanding of me. You'll have to ask her other children how she's been with them.

I think she found it hard to understand rebellion in children. After all, she grew up in a broken home, and wanted so much for her mother to come back from the road and playing

the theaters and stuff, and wanted so much to have a father in the house. Well, we didn't come from a broken home. At least, I didn't, Patti didn't. So we didn't have that kind of burning desire for that sort of security and that kind of family life, like a lot of other kids. Most kids go through a phase where you say, "Chuck it, I'm going to go out and do whatever I want to do" and I think she found that hard to understand, a little hard to take. But I think she's gotten over it.

Was she mad at me about going off and getting married in New York? For a little while, I guess. She didn't have the wedding that she would have liked. She'd have loved to have flowers and white dresses and all that kind of stuff and we just went down to the courthouse.

What happened was that, we were going to go down there and we got our license at the courthouse and suddenly it occurred to us that in New York you have to wait between the license and the marriage in case you change your mind or something, get cold feet. We suddenly realized that if we waited the two days the press'd be all over us, so we convinced the judge to waive the waiting period and just marry us on the spot.

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If none of us had ever come along, I'm sure they'd have just been fine together. But now that we're here, she needs us, too. She needs that larger family. She needed her parents as well, and still needs her mother. Still does.

~~END CHAPTER TWELVE, END "Nancy and Her Children")~~

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~~subhead~~ Nancy and Her Parents 213-218
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CHAPTER THIRTEEN: [Nancy and Her Parents]

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Nancy Reagan:

My father was the first neuro-surgeon in Chicago. He hated his name Loyal, just hated it. Evidently his mother was reading a book or had seen the name Loyal, which she liked. She named him Loyal. But it was a name that was very fitting to him. It was just right for him.

He was, as a young boy, very bright. He got out of college early. He got into medical school early and became a doctor very young. He was brilliant and his contributions to medicine are historic, really.

I think he helped set everything in place for me. He was a man of tremendous principle. If you told him the truth, he would do anything for you, anything. He was professor of surgery at Northwestern and his students would say what a tough teacher he was. And he was, fortunately. If I had somebody operating on my brain, I'd want them to be taught by a tough teacher. I'd want them to know what they're doing. But he was only tough for their good, to make them really good.

He would leave little notes under my door. Sometimes he's leave me little poems and I remember one time we had some disagreement about something. I don't remember what it was about. He left me a darling little note under the door the next morning.

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He was a disciplinarian. He expected a lot of you and that was a wonderful thing. You'd find yourself wanting to do more to please him ~~and he would~~, and that was why he was a good teacher. He would make you rise to heights you didn't know you could. But he was very fair. Always fair. If he said no, then he would always explain why he said no. It would be hard for his students to understand, but underneath all of that strictness, he was a soft touch.

Was it hard for him to transmit emotions? Not with me. Not with my mother.

A lot of my values and a lot of my beliefs, ~~a lot~~ ^{much} of what I think is important in life I got from him. Integrity. The value of integrity. The value of doing the best job you can no matter what the situation is no matter what is presented to you, no matter where life takes you. The principle of always being fair, always being honest, always being truthful. He

was just a marvelous man and one of the
hardest times I had that first year, ^{in the White House} was his
being sick. 215

I miss him very much, very much. Even now. I remember a letter from a couple whose child was sick and he drove to take care of the little girl. She had a tumor. He saved her life and then, a little bit later, she became sick again. He went back and operated on her again. After the first time, and they sent me a photostat copy of this, he drew them a diagram of what was wrong and then he said to them, "I hope you'll understand that I have to send you a bill. I don't want to send you a bill." They didn't have much money. "But I have other people ^{to consider} here." And I think he sent them a bill for \$100--something like that. I think he operated on her three times eventually. He always kept in touch with them.

He was dying and the first year in Washington was not a great year and this was one of the ^{major} reasons why it wasn't a great year. He was dying and I would talk to him on the phone every night but then, when it got to the end, I went to Phoenix and took him to the hospital. And my mother, we told my mother he was going to have some tests. And I stayed there and he died around 9:00 p.m. I've never

seen anybody die before and ~~it~~ certainly never ~~seen~~ anybody I loved. And then, after that I was afraid that my mother would hear it on television or the radio. And I didn't want that to happen. So I had to leave the hospital and go to my mother and tell her that he was dead.

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I speak to her every night. From the White House or wherever.

The time passes so quickly and your time with your parents passes so quickly and when you get right down to it, they're the ones who are going to put their hands in the fire for you. They're the ones who are going to stand up for you, in back of you. ~~So it's hard for me to understand children who don't want to be close.~~

Nancy Reynolds:

I think the lowest I have ever seen Nancy Reagan was when the president was shot. That's in a class by itself. Nothing can describe that. But she was very strong during that period, too. And very upbeat trying to nurture others who were so upset.

It was when her father died that I saw her at the lowest period I've ever known. I think she felt the loss more keenly than she could ever believe even though he ^{had been} ~~was~~ quite ill. She spent those last days with him. She was off her feet. She was down in the dumps, as any of us would be. She certainly wasn't eating very well. I think the president was concerned about her. And then we all were when he was. But, of course, time does heal and her mother is still needing her care and love. The loss certainly affected her greatly. He was a tremendous influence in her life. A wonderful man.

217

Edie Davis is in a class by herself. What a privilege it's been for many of us to have known her. She is held in high regard and affection wherever we travel. It was astonishing how, wherever we would travel in the United States, some cab driver or some bell boy in a hotel or a manager in a motel would come up and say, "Mrs. Reagan, I knew your mother once. She was so kind to me." They always had a story about something Mrs. Davis had done for them. And we all knew that to be true but it was astonishing the influence she had on people of all kinds, all over the united States.

Mary Jane Wick:

218

It was very, very difficult. She was very close to her father. She loved him very much. It's very tough to say goodbye to somebody you love very much and has been a very important part of your life. It was truly difficult for her. She'll have beautiful memories, but it was difficult. Very.

~~(END CHAPTER THIRTEEN, END "Nancy and Her
Parents")~~

Chapter Ten/cont.

sub ~~head~~ - Nancy's friends 219-231

sub-head

0223

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: Nancy's friends

Michael Deaver:

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She calls me whenever she wants to. It depends on what's going on that day. You're talking about a relationship that's now nineteen years and Nancy Reagan's like a best friend to me. There isn't anything we haven't talked about over the years. I look at it as Nancy and I are a team. ^{we} ~~Nancy and I~~ are friends. I've never looked at it in terms of, when I speak, people listen because I'm Nancy's buddy. I've never thought about it that way. I think she's very supportive and very happy with the new team. She's very fond of Don Regan, and thinks he's doing a good job. They have a very good relationship, the Regans and the Reagans.

^{was at the White House}
~~I've been here~~ during the rocky start

and I was here during the good years, too. She doesn't know a lot of this new team, so I'm sure, being the worrier that she is, she probably thinks about that. But I don't intend just to walk away from the White House, either. I've got a lot invested here with these two people and I'm going to be helping

them.

Sheila Tate:

220

I liked working for her. She's the first woman I ever worked for, and I don't think that dawned on me until several years into it. She's very detail oriented, and, because I am also detail oriented, I found it easy and enjoyable to work for her because she knew what she wanted. You learn to anticipate her needs and what she would want. I found it a very productive place to work.

To some degree, she is a worrier. She admits that. But she doesn't worry unnecessarily. If she's been provided with all the information about an event, she's not going to worry about it. But if there are holes in it and she sees there are holes, then she'll worry. She'll call you and say, "What's going on at this event? Who's on the dais? Who will I be sitting with? Are their remarks available in advance? When does she get there? When does she leave?" She wants to know those types of things. I think that's smart. I found that that was a plus. Now, if you weren't used

to that, maybe it would be hard on you. But I think her staff enjoyed that about her.

I always enjoy being in her company. She had unique observations. She was funny. You felt a little protective of her. She has that vulnerable quality and yet you know she's a very secure, well defined person in her own mind with regard to what she does and how she does it. And yet you get the feeling that she's this tiny little person who needs to be protected. She is complicated, and that makes her very interesting.

221

Nancy Reynolds:

I think she expects the same of you that she expects of herself, her husband, and anyone who's around her. That's not an unreasonable demand, in my book. She always is willing to listen if you give her good reasons why a suggestion must be made. One of the joys of working for both the Reagans was that they never equated disagreement with disloyalty. So we often disagreed on many issues and I would have to back it up every time I would say, "Well, I think you should be doing this," or, "I think we ought to think about this." I

would have to back it up with some awfully good arguments. Usually, her common sense won.

222

C.Z. Wick:

I guess I've known her twenty five or twenty six years and I know her real well. As somebody of a different generation, I can provide, maybe, a look at her that the average person who reads or sees a report on the news doesn't get to know about.

We were family friends dating back to early elementary school days, and she's really been a person^{al} friend. You^{always} have a special relationship with a friend of the family. It's been a close, one-on-one contemporary relationship. It's been that way since I was a little kid. It wasn't so much adult-to-kid as it was friend-to-friend, and continues that way.

She's a terrific person to bounce things off of, someone who's going to put your best interests first and not try to steer you in a direction that doesn't feel right.

I remember when I decided not to practice law, after law school. I called up

and I said, "I want to sound you out on something because I'm feeling this." And when I told her my reasoning for getting into another business, she said, "I've been expecting this call," not, "boy, it'd be a lot safer if you'd join a firm and kept that suit on." She understood in knowing me that I was interested in other things. It's nice to have somebody that knows you well ^{who} ~~that~~ can give you a real objective response, a real helpful way of looking at things.

22³

My family has a tradition. Christmas Eve is a big deal for us, and there's been a Santa Claus ever since I was born. At first, to convince you that there was one, and later, because, when we ran out of young kids, it was still something we wanted to do, and the tradition involves having some close friend play Santa each time.

Well, when my family moved to Washington and I ended up commuting to Christmas, we'd have Christmas Eve at our house and then we'd go to the White House and have Christmas dinner with the Reagans. The president's been Santa, and Ron's been Santa. We've all had our turn. It was Mrs. R's turn this year. Ron was not with us. She was on the phone with him while we were putting the pillow on and the

crazy suit and all the rest and was great. She was one of the better Santas on record, I'd say.

Being Santa entails coming into the living room on the cue of "Jingle Bells"--very original piece of dramatic work--and sitting in a big high chair and having everyone in the room sit on your knee and tell you why they should get whatever they want for Christmas. Humorous rejoinders from Santa are part of the tradition, and she has a way of coming up with them. Everyone was very careful when sitting on her knee. After all, it's not like when I sat on her knee twenty years ago. ~~So we tried to be careful and~~ ^{we} had a great time.

224

As close a friend as she is, I wouldn't feel right calling her Nancy. You find a fond way of referring to someone without crossing that line, and it has nothing to do with something I've heard from her--just my own perception. Because she and my mother are so close, I could always rely, if I was out of town or not around or something, on calling her if my folks weren't home and find out what was going on because they're in close enough touch. If someone did well in school, or there

was some family business that I didn't know about, I could always trust her to do it. So "Secret Agent 007" was sort of an ongoing joke between all of us. And looking for that special kind of nickname that characterized a special relationship, "Double Oh Seven" sort of stuck, and pretty much that's what I call her.

22⁵

My folks were looking for a house-warming gift when the Reagans moved to the White House. There's plenty of silver there and plenty of the things you would get a newly wed couple and somehow the thought of Camp David and all those great trails they have up there came to mind, so my folks got them a bicycle built for two, figuring that a spin around the property up there would be great. They had it delivered to the White House and Ron and I decided when we were visiting to take her out and give her a spin. She put on her jeans and we went out on the driveway by the South Lawn and took a few turns.

One of the earliest memories I have of her as a friend was when I was seven years old and playing the genie in some school play and that's a big deal when you're seven. It's probably still a big deal if I were still doing that. She was the first person backstage

to say, "Boy was that great." You really knew she was listening and watching. She was always there. When we were living in Los Angeles and she was in Sacramento, there was always that call: "Heard about so and so and boy was that great." She's someone who's there for you.

226

The Reagans were in Sacramento and I was delivering something to the house. I didn't know if she was going to be there. I hadn't seen her in a while and, in those days, had hair down to my shoulders and a beard and walked in in a work shirt or something. Sure enough, she was there. I said, "Jeez, I wish I'd cleaned up a little bit," and it was like old times. I think there were a couple of aides around and it was as if I had seen her yesterday. There was no hesitation about my appearance. That's got to fly in the face of some of the stories you read about a very very conservative side of her, that I guess you don't read about as much anymore.

She's always asking me when I'm going to bring some nice girl over to meet her. I've told her I wasn't ready yet and that if it happens or when it happens my parents have a used brick patio that would need a little cleaning up before the wedding. She said,

"I'll scrub it for you, and I won't forget."
So the joke is that I have this old pair of
knee pants at home and she will say, when I
tell her about someone I've met, "Is it time
to take the knee pants out yet?"

227

Douglas Wick:

She's a very good friend. She's one of
those people who values her friends, and makes
an effort to keep and to build the
friendships. She's someone who, if you're
going through a trouble^{ing} period, you know
you're going to get a phone call from ^{her} and
she'll try and be constructive. And she's
consistent. No matter what's going on in
Washington, she's still making an effort to
stay in touch.

She's very good with advice. I was going
through a kind of romantic crisis and they
were over at my parents' house for Christmas.
I was getting a little obsessive about this
problem I had with my girlfriend and I spent
two or three hours talking to her in a corner.
You never would have known that I was slowing
things down. It turned out I'd kept dinner an
hour late, but she's someone who listens and

responds and then calls you two weeks later and tells you you'd better get off your duff.

~~I think~~ She's one of the great lunch dates in America, and I think if everyone in America got to have lunch with her, she'd be ~~one~~ of the most popular women in the country. She listens, she's smart, she's got a good sense of humor. I have a lot of show business friends who have gone to Washington and, no matter what their politics were, if they happened to spend time with her, they always came away with great reports because they found her engaging and smart, and whatever preconceptions they had were always changed.

228

I think she's certainly at her best one-on-one because she relates that way. She relates directly to you, person to person. ~~I think~~ In groups, she's not someone who thrives on being the center of attention.

Mary Jane Wick:

The first time we met each other, our children went to nursery school together. ~~It~~ was a small school and the parents would get involved in the school. As a matter of fact,

she and her cousin manned the hot dog booth during the school fairs.

We had our interests, children and families, friends, being involved in the community together. She has a really marvelous sense of humor. She's very funny.

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We were in the Colleagues together. The Colleagues started out as a home for unwed mothers. And then it later became a home for abused children and affiliated with the Children's Hospital in Los Angeles. We have a large sale each year in Santa Monica--used clothing, all kinds of used carpeting, furniture, antiques, furs. People come ^{from} all over the country to buy or sell.

Nancy has many friends all over the country. She's a wonderful friend. They were all involved in different activities in Los Angeles. Most of the people who are friends of both of ours are people in community activities.

Most of her friends were very supportive during her husband's campaigns.

She's a friend of mine. I see all the positive things she has done when she was the wife of the governor of California and when she was his wife before he was governor. She's still a very good person who's done so much

for ~~so~~ many people and ~~so~~ many things. She cares so much.

She's intelligent, very intelligent. She's very thoughtful. She has a great sense of humor. She's an outstanding friend. ~~And I'm sure there are more reasons why she is a very outstanding person.~~

230

Bonita Granville Wrather:

~~I first met Mrs. Reagan, with my husband~~
~~Jack Wrather with her husband~~ at a dinner party. ~~I don't even remember what dinner party. But it was at a dinner party about~~
 thirty years ago.

I first met Ronald Reagan when I walked on the set of a film at Warner Brothers called "Angels Wash Their Faces" and he was the male lead and Ann Sheridan was the female lead. I was one of the dead end kids.

Our circle of California friends formed over a period of years. I think we all came together in the early sixties when we felt California needed a leader. A lot of the gentlemen, Earl Jorgenson, Dale Wilson, William French Smith, Justin Dart, Holmes

CHAPTER NINE: The Ranch] - subhead
- subhead

President Reagan:

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The house was built in 1872. It was adobe, plaster covered, kind of a not too pretty brown. There was a screened porch, with green plastic sheets around the bottom and an aluminum corrugated ceiling that went across just above your head. We had a contractor come in. We wanted it enclosed and stuccoed so it would match the plaster. This is the only thing that we didn't do, that we had professional help for.

We'd get a fire going and we'd lean tiles against the screen to soften them up. They'd get very rubbery and we'd grab those and put them on the floor--fed them in while we put fresh ones up there to soften up. This was easier than the rest of the house because, built a hundred years ago, I guess they didn't have ^{good measures} squares and things. There wasn't a square corner in the rest of the house. So when it came to tiling, we had to figure out a way to lay the bulk of the tile and then, around the edge, cut the tile to fit the different widths that we left.

CHAPTER NINE: ~~The Ranch~~

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165

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This ranch really casts a spell. You set out there, looking at that view up there. With our first ranch, Mulholland Highway ran right through it about two hundred fifty feet from the house. Here, you turn in the gate, it's just a road for a few ranches that are off this road up here. And once you're inside, there's no sense of traffic or the outside world at all.

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Nancy said the proper line one day. I've used it, I've stolen it from her a million times since. Presidents don't get vacations. You just get a change of scenery. Now I spend much of the morning before we ride on the phone making calls and there is the usual paperwork that comes in several times a day. The job goes with you. You're not taking time off. You're not really escaping anything.

But the main thing is, we aren't here that often. Think back on other presidents, Ike and Augusta, President Nixon with the Western White House plus the place in Key Biscayne, Florida, John F. Kennedy with Hyannisport and the farm in Virginia.

The White House has magnificent quarters and we're very well treated there but you are kind of a bird in a gilded cage and they don't

open the door very often to let the bird out.

I think I'm very conscientious. We both ^{think} ~~are~~ about responsibilities and what must be done. But I also know what this ranch means. There is a line in the scriptures that describes it: Look to the hills from whence cometh my strength.

167

Nancy Reagan:

I think it's important for people to get away from Washington, for a president to get away from Washington. It can become very insular, and you think that Washington is everything--it's the be all and ^{end} all, ~~and~~ It's not. It's important to ^{be} ~~get~~ away and get a whole different feel and perspective and hear different voices.

When you think of other presidents, some of it is that they've gone for vacations to places ^{that} ~~tht~~ were very close. Half the time they didn't even know they were gone. But for us, our home is farther away.

Was I nervous about bringing the Queen of England here for lunch? I was, until she got here. That whole trip, nothing happened the way it was supposed to happen, starting

with the weather. There's something about things not going according to schedule that makes everybody kind of relaxed and makes it more spontaneous and you feel more cozy somehow. She was dying to get up here. She got in the truck and she crossed the streams and all of that.

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You can get outside here and walk, ride, you know, all those nice things. I've read those stories about my being bored here. Not true, not true. But how many times can you keep on saying, "It's not true"? Pretty soon you say, "Well, if they're going to say it, they're going to say it."

I know it's not true. I know I love to come here. I know it's very peaceful.

(END CHAPTER NINE, END "The Ranch")

^{ELEVEN}
CHAPTER ~~FIFTEEN~~: The Years to Come

Insert
The Ranch



The Judgement of History

James Rosebush:

~~I think~~ She's seen that she can have an impact. I think she hopes to be remembered as a First Lady who cared about people and was supportive of her husband.

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The only indication we have now is what the polls tell us at this time, but I think she'll rank very high, because of the substantive issue that she's gotten into. It's not an easy issue. It's a very emotional one.

That's just the beginning. ~~I think that~~
You'll see Nancy Reagan traveling more abroad, accepting invitations from those First Ladies she's already visited with here, and perhaps some other countries, too. You may see another conference, another summit. I think this is the beginning of her leadership on an international level.

I've observed her at very close hand.
I've seen those feelings, ^{and} commitments, deepen. ~~I've~~ seen the growth.

One of the first things I was impressed with about Nancy Reagan was when she said to me, "I'm not going to become something that

I'm not." Over and over again, she'd tell me that.

I think it's for history to tell, but my opinion would be that she has left an important mark on history.

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Michael Deaver:

I think she understands better now than she did at the beginning that she is in a position for the first time in her life to be more than just Mrs. Ronald Reagan, that she can do something with her life independently which can make a change for the good whether that's in the drug abuse program or whether that's in the way she deals with foreign visitors. I think Nancy Reagan understands that she herself can be a force for good.

I see that in her. I see that she understands that the first role in her life is always going to be Ronald Reagan's Nancy. She also sees that she can take some time and do something else where she can make a contribution, too.

William F. Buckley:

~~I think that~~ Eleanor Roosevelt wanted to be an activist. She wanted to be thought of almost as Mrs. Wilson was thought of. But I think the mark that Nancy Reagan wants to leave is that of having--and I pay her no dishonor by saying this--been an exemplary First Lady. Are you doing everything one expects of a First Lady? And if you say that's making a mark then I will say, well, anybody who wants to approach the paradigm, wants to make a mark.

234

Bill Blass:

It will be difficult to judge whether or not she will twenty years hence have the same impact as Mrs. Onassis. Perhaps it's because when Mrs. Onassis, as Mrs. Kennedy, arrived at the White House, she was still young. She was not a trend setter, either, for that matter, but she did have an impact simply because she was young and it was the first time in many generations, many decades, that a First Lady had style.

Richard Davis:

She has made in way
~~I think~~ her mark ~~has~~ several aspects. I
think the contemporary mark she'll leave could
be the drug abuse program. ~~I think~~ the lasting
mark would be how she is perceived in the
years to come as a wife, a dear friend,
advisor, confidante of her husband. I think
that's probably the most important thing to
her.

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Nancy Reagan:

I never really thought about how I'd
like to be remembered as First Lady until
somebody asked me the other day. I never have
thought about it but I guess, if I do think
about it, ~~I suppose that~~ the best answer I can
give is that I cared, that I tried to make
things better.

~~(CHAPTER FIFTEEN, END "The Years to Come")~~

END BOOK