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Saturday, March 13th

My dear friends Jim Cain and Willis Hurst are house guests, and this morning they completed the purpose of their visit -- an examination of Lyndon. Essentially everything is fine. All the basic organs and the functioning thereof, but there is this heavy load of tension and this fog of depression. If you're enjoying what you do you don't get tired, no matter how hard you work, and if it's frustrating and full of uncertainties you use up energies struggling against what you have to do. In a nutshell, their prescription is exercise, diet, and a break -- that is, get off to sunshine and rest for a couple of days every two weeks or, at the very outside, once a month.

I adore Camp David. I would simply love to go out on the boat. I would like to go to Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands, but Lyndon feels chained right here, and it's having an erosive effect on his personality.

When I walked out of the room, about ten o'clock this morning, gloom was thick enough to cut with a knife. The major decision that must be faced is having a press conference, and where should it be and should it be televised, and what CAN he say that will pull together these broiling masses of humanity, the Negroes in Selma and the white folks in Selma and the preachers and students and folks from all over the United States who have come down there to add their say to the situation. Amazingly enough, when I went back in the room Lyndon must have touched some

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inner spring, some untapped resource, because he sounded ready to go out and face the world, to take it on. He was in a completely different humor and that, facing the prospect of meeting Governor Wallace at noon.

Lynda and Dave and I went bowling after one o'clock, and I did the best I've ever done -- more than 120, all the time wondering what was going on with Lyndon and Governor Wallace. It turns out they had about a two-hour session.

I had a nice little farewell visit with the two doctors and was touched that they considered me also and urged me to get at least a one-day respite in the middle of the week by going to Camp David or Huntlands.

And then at three-thirty I went down in the Rose Garden with Lynda and Dave to watch the press conference. There must have been 300 newspaper people there -- a beautiful sunny day, thank Heavens, cool but not cold -- and Lyndon composed, in charge, in command of the situation. I thought it was a great performance. I would as soon be thrown to the wolves, but he could put his tongue to the right expression.

The pickets are still with us. A thousand of them are here. Their noise has almost ceased to bother me.

Tonight is our party for the Dukes. I had planned it as the gayest thing we do, for people that we loved especially. And the guest

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list was gilded with the young and lovely -- good dancers, good talkers. Nevertheless I had awaited it with dread that the country would be in such a black mood, that Lyndon would be under such a pall, that it would be impossible to have fun.

Unexplainably, did some delicious little thing happen this morning or was it just a sheer effort of will, the pall lifted and tonight is going to be fun! I was ready early and went downstairs with Robin and Angie. It was delightful to stand in the line and greet practically every person as somebody I wanted especially to see. From the Cabinet there were the Dillons and the McNamaras and the Udalls and the Freemans, the Connors, the Wirtzes. And Whizzer White from the Supreme Court, because he is such a good dancer. From the Senate, the John Sherman Coopers, Mike Monroney, Gale and Lorraine McGee, the Claiborne Pells, he with a black patch over one of his eyes so that you practically wanted to ask him where his cape was, and the young Birch Bayhs -- I always want to hand her two milkshakes, but so full of life and so nice to our two girls. And, delightfully, at the party there was a Rockefeller, a Vanderbilt, and an Astor! The Laure^ance Rockefellers. I feel I have come to know them quite well over the beautifucation. And a lovely

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divorcee, Mrs. Jeanne Murray Vanderbilt, Lyndon's special friend, exquisite in a gold brocade, and Mrs. Vincent Astor, whom I had met through her Harlem project -- an outdoor living room, she calls it -- it's a park-playground project.

I was especially delighted to see the family of Angie and Robin. Robin's Mother, remarkably beautiful for a lady of her years. Angie's Mother, who is no years at all -- she's completely fey, out of this world and lives by her own rules. You have the feeling ^{her} ~~the~~ only criterion is, "Is it amusing?" Robin's sister, Mrs. Riddley of Atlanta and her husband, and Angie's brother, Anthony Drexel Duke. What a collection of illustrious names. I couldn't help but remember their wedding party at which I had met a very attractive lady who said something unbelievable like this, "I used to be So-and-So's sister-in-law and now I am again!"

Mary Lasker was there, and the William Randolph Hearsts, and Jane and Charles Engelhard, she in an absolutely fabulous dress that she should have had her portrait painted in, by Van Dyke, if he was still living.

And from the communications media, ^{the} the David Brinkleys, the John Chancellors, the Wyatt Dickersons -- Nancy was full of news

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about the lovely house they had bought. It had belonged to Mrs. Kennedy's Mother, Mrs. Auchincloss, where Senator and Mrs. Kennedy used to live after they were first married. The Leonard Goldensons, the Bob Kintners, Bill Lawrence, and handsome Eric Sevareid, with his statuesque, lovely wife.

And the cute young Jimmy Symingtons, who always remind me how long I've been around this town.

Bess had done delightful things, handing the gentlemen a facsimile of an Ambassadorial appointment saying, "You have just been appointed Ambassador to," and then hilarious names of countries, such as Rumorania, Nixonagua, Inland, each table being identified with an amusing drawing and the title of such a Graustark country.

I still was jittery about the toast, but I needn't have been. Lyndon was never in better form. The toast was good itself, and then he launched into some great stories about Senator Greene -- that was after Angie's deft and charming toast in which Senator Green had figured -- and Lyndon had the whole State Dining Room roaring. Not to be outdone, at some point I lifted my glass to Angie and Robin with about three sentences of very deeply felt gratitude for their efficiency and industry all wrapped up in such a gay and charming

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cloak. People clapped for me, and for once I felt that what I had said had been well said -- a good ^{antidote} ~~anecdote~~ to these last few months of a steady diet of not being pleased with myself.

Then we danced, I constantly, into far into the night. It was after one-thirty when we went upstairs, taking with us Bill Walton, Jeanne Vanderbilt who was his date, the Dickersons and the Abells. The latter beat as quick a retreat as courtesy permitted.

Lynda had been one of the stars of the evening. She had looked lovely in her yellow Inaugural dress. Guest after guest commented to me about how attractive and dear she was. I value McGeorge Bundy's opinion almost most of all, because he had worked with her last summer. Actually when I am looking for a husband for one of the girls I am looking for a young McGeorge Bundy -- unfortunately in scarce supply.

There were so many beautiful women there, and I was very proud of the women who work in Lyndon's vicinity, the wives of his staff members. Judith Moyers, Ann Hand (not staff, but close), Mary Margaret, and Marian Watson. And I was proud of many of those that we had added to the government, or at least advanced to more important posts. Tom Mann, Sheldon Cohen, Lloyd Hand.

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It was a good day. I felt like we were back in mid-stream
again.