

MEMORANDUM

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Luci's wedding day began clear and bright and beautiful -- all we could wish. What I remember of the morning was a montage.

I put on my white hostess robe that Lyndon had bought me in Paris ten years ago, went into see Luci. She was eating her breakfast while Jean Louis was doing her hair.

A vintage screen rescued from some musty storehouse -- last used in FDR's day I think -- decorated with scenes of Vesuvius erupting and streets of Roman cities stretched across the East Hall, hiding what had become a beauty parlor for the day. There were tables and mirrors and chairs and dryers and chattering bridesmaids in robes or already in their pink dresses with their hair being teased into high hair-do's by Mr. George and one of Jean Louis' girls, and he himself running in and out -- an hilarious scene.

I had asked Helen to be the guardian of the 58-year old rose-point lace ~~handkerchief~~ ^{Ament} handkerchief made by Luci's great grandmother, Ruth ~~Amette~~ Huffman Baines for the wedding of her daughter, Aunt Josepha Baines Saunders. It had stayed in Bess' safe until this morning. And it was her treasured "something old" to carry, a link with her grandmother's family. For "something new" it was her wedding dress of course. Will it be the "something old" for a bride in the future? I hope so. And the rosary, given by Pope John to Lynda Bird, will be her "something borrowed." Her "something blue" was a gold locket tied with a blue satin ribbon that belonged to Mrs. Nugent and contained baby pictures of Pat and Gerard, Jr.

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And then this is where the public gets in. She actually was going to wear ^asixpence in her shoe -- the first of many she received. It was from Adele Rosokey, and it had come back in March.

Lynda Bird was running around singing "Get Me to the Church on Time". The gayest, most helpful, most efficient -- no surprise -- of any of the bridesmaids.

- I dressed early. The day is to be flawless. We must all be on time.

I went upstairs to see Mrs. Nugent. She was lovely in a blue-lace dress made by a Waukegan designer.

Downstairs in the State Dining Room, into which the press and cameras were moved as soon we departed for the church, I saw the great exquisite clumps of chandelier intertwined with/delicate white flowers -- freesias I believe -- in a trace of greenery. I just wish that every guest would pause and look upward above the crowd. It was a dream.

In the Lincoln Room, Priscilla was putting the last touches on the bridesmaids dresses and arranging their veils. And then into Luci's room. Never did a bride dress with more care and more delight. She was really radiant.

Lynda and the bridesmaids left on time. And Lyndon and Luci -- he looked so handsome. I was so proud of him. A cutaway was meant for a tall man -- a commanding man.

And then Mrs. Nugent and I were in the car following them. At the bottom of the long steps, Mrs. Nugent disappeared quietly on the arm of an

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aide to go to the elevator. She lives with this problem with complete lack of self-consciousness and great dignity. We tried to remember all those who would need the elevator -- Ruth, Sam Houston. We had asked those accompanying them to locate it ahead of time to avoid confusion.

But, alas, we had forgotten Senator Dirksen who had arrived on crutches.

Then I was going up the stairs with an aide, and we paused on the first landing and the second landing, and there were pictures of the three of us -- Lyndon, Luci, and I.

Inside the church, we went to the bridesmaids rooms to wait. There was Corky, starched and solemn in his white suit. But some grown person was holding the precious white satin pillow, lace edged, on which the rings reposed -- Luci's twin small bands, and Pat's simple larger band -- securely tied with ribbons until the fateful moment. And ~~Bader~~ in her long white dress with the tiny pink design at the ^{Waist}~~waste~~, her flowers clutched in a simple straw basket.

Mrs. Nugent and I were the first down the line -- she, at her request, between two Marines -- a small salute to ^{Jerry}~~Gerry~~ who is on Hill "something or other" in Viet-Nam. We couldn't cable, there was none close by. But later we got a message, "Mr. and Mrs. Pat Nugent: Congratulations ^{Paddy}~~Patty~~ and Luci. Sorry I cannot be there but you know how it is. See you in September. Best wishes. ^{Jerry}~~Gerry~~." And he had toasted them in C rations.

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One walks up the aisle as though in a play, thinking not the deep thoughts that this is the last moment she belongs to us alone. I had read all that in the Bible up in the West Hall one night earlier in the week. But looking at the great pageantry of the altar and the mosaic of Christ up above it, swept along in the tide of music from that magnificent organ, caressing with my eyes the little white bouquets of flowers that mark the ends of pews -- the artistic work of Mr. Nelson and Mr. Young, to what hour I wonder -- and the topiary trees with white roses and white carnations.

One of the minor crises was to discover that Luci was allergic to carnations. So we had to switch to roses close to the altar.

Then as we approached our seat, glancing to see if the instructions for Section C had been carried out. Yes. There was Nellie and John III and Sharon with a good view. The Wests and the Moursunds. But I was afraid the last row in Section C had too many people for a good view. And as I sat down, I reached quietly behind me to put my hand on Elaine's and on Aunt Ellen's, and to throw a ~~smile~~ smile at Tony and Martiana. She was lovely in a large apricot organza hat. A credit to the family and a joy to Tony she is.

I felt a warm tide of love as I walked down the aisle. There were so many who had meant so much in Luci's life from the moment she entered the world.

Our missal had been marked stand, sit, kneel -- one of the thousand and one logistical triumphs for Bess, who knowing that we sitting on the

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front row would have difficulty following the ritual.

Down the ^{aisle} they came. Phyllis Nugent first I believe. And then all the bridesmaids -- each one lovely. Betty Beale and Sharon Chapman, absolutely enchanting. And Helene Lindow, to whom I have come to feel so close. And then there was the moment for Luci and her father. She was flawless in her dignity and gentleness. And when she reached the foot of the steps leading to the altar, she turned to her father, patted him on the shoulder. He gave her to Pat, and took his seat by me. Bess said to his eternal credit, that "I do not remember him looking at his watch one time in the service that lasted longer than an hour."

The missal was worth all the artistic effort that went into it -- the elegant binding, the gold drawing of the Shrine on the outside, the words on the first page, "Bound by the strength of their love, their hope, their joy, in their life together, marriage becomes a golden chalice, capable of containing all their trials and happiness when taken as one in the name of Jesus Christ." Very fitting for these two young people. But I think all the credit once more must go to Bess, her research, her organization, and to Sandy Fox, his artistic hand.

Never once as far as I could see did Pat and Luci fail in the complete dignity and grace of their deportment in this interminable ceremony.

At one point I saw Helen Lindow rise from her kneeler and disappear ~~at~~ very quietly into the wings. I knew she must be faint. Why should they not?

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The bright lights, the emotional strain, the forever kneeling. But it was like Helene to do it with this minimum of notice.

Hale Boggs read the epistle in a clear, commanding voice. I was glad that so good a friend, so strong a Catholic had been chosen by Luci to do it.

I strained -- we all strained -- to hear the answers to the questions put to the bride and the groom. We could not. They were not equipped with the mikes as were the Priests who participated in the ceremony.

And then there came a fateful moment when I saw Lynda at her kneeler put her head completely down. From then on I watched only her. I turned the pages of the missal to see how much longer. We were, as I remember, about on page 19 -- the Lords Prayer. I prayed for it to be over soon. The Priest went across and spoke to her. She shook her head. I was tensely hoping ^{for} Dr. Young and smelling salts. I knew there were smelling salts close by for just such emergencies -- where, I didn't know. Any movement on my part would be too conspicuous. And then suddenly, she slumped to an almost sitting position at her kneeler. But even this was graceful. Another Priest approached -- she shook her head. He brought a chair. She did sit in it, and gradually her head went up. Later, Jesse told me (Jesse Kellam) that instead of praying for it to be over, he was praying for every moment longer that it lasted because he knew her strength would be returning. His background as an athlete, as a coach -- I know he was wiser than me. But I could see her daddy straining, wanting to go to her,

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knowing that he couldn't. And then they were offering the Holy Communion using the Texas chalice.

And then very soon it was all over. At the last moment Archbishop O'Boyle read a telegram of congratulations to the young couple from the Pope, sent, I believe, in the name of the Secretary of State at the Vatican. This a surprise, to me at least.

And then Luci and Pat -- arm in arm -- her little face with a look of transport -- Pat dignified and steady -- walked toward us. And Lynda rose with her head high in command of the situation and joined the best man. What a young 50 years old Mr. Nugent is.

And then my heart stopped. When Luci and Pat reached the steps, they did not come down. They turned to the right, walked solemnly into a little chapel and were gone for a moment. I remembered -- St. Agatha, the patron saint of nurses. Luci was going to give her bouquet to her. My thoughts went out on Saint Agatha that on the profession she was the patron saint of nursing. ?

My eyes were fixed on Lynda, and she stood with Mr. Nugent quite steadily, quite gracefully, to what seemed an interminable time until Luci returned to lead her attendants down the isle. But no. Once more she turned to the left. She stopped and kissed me and gave me a rose from her bouquet and kissed her daddy. And then she crossed to the other side of the isle and kissed Mrs. Nugent and gave her a rose. And then she and Pat were walking, radiantly, joyously down the isle. And I am sure that church full of people

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breathed a sigh of relief.

The bridesmaids and the ushers went down two-by-two. As Susan Ray passed I thought she looked as though she would faint any moment. She made it almost to the door and then was gently carried to one side for smelling salts and rest.

Lyndon and I paused on the way out so that when we emerged we were one of the crowd. And we made our way down the steps. Luci in a billow of white in the bubble-top with Pat by her side, was waving to the people who had gathered to see her. I myself did not see the pickets. I understand there were some somewhere. And this time, Lyndon joined me and Mrs. Nugent for the drive to the White House, down Rhode Island Avenue, along which way I carefully counted all the cherry trees that the Society for a More Beautiful Capital had put out this Spring -- to see how many are dying or dead. It was crushing. I counted 61. It has been about the worst drought of any summer that we can remember. They are guaranteed for one year, so it will be the nursery's loss. Where can they find other trees as handsome for replacement? And it will mean an aesthetic psychological blow.

So now it is time to put aside wedding veils and missals and take up blue bonnet seeds and cherry trees -- or it will be when the day is over.

We had a few minutes on the second floor to recoup before we all grouped in the Green Room -- Luci and Pat, the two sets of parents, all the bridesmaids and ushers. And then out onto the Portico.

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The first picture was Pat and Luci and the Nugents and Lyndon and me, standing at the railing facing the battery of all the nation's press and TV rather pleasantly concealed behind blooming crepe myrtles in pots, taller trees (willows I believe) and petunias -- all of which will belong later to some Park in the town. And behind them the calm promise of the Jefferson Memorial and the Washington Monument.

And then we were joined by Lynda. She was fine. One of the bravest things I had seen was her at the top of the steps leaning to arrange her sister's train as her sister started to descend from the Shrine.

And then for a moment came the Matron of Honor -- Susan Ray -- quite recovered. And then all the bridesmaids and groomsmen who descended the winding stairs (their names had been pasted on the steps in the dry run the day before) and Lynda Bird moved to the head of the stairs after the bride and groom were in their position. She was joined by Mr. Nugent. And it was time for Lyndon and ^{me} I and Mrs. Nugent to re-enter the White House through the Green Room. Over my shoulder I cast one last look, and there were the cute, young members of the wedding party -- ~~Bader~~ and Corky -- down front.

I fled upstairs to take off my hat and put myself in the hands of Mr. Jean Louis. He and Helen by magic had arrived in good time for their necessary jobs. I knew that downstairs on the steps Luci and Pat and Lynda and Mr. Nugent had paused mid-way up the stairs for more pictures. And then the bride and groom alone. Later I heard that when Luci saw the dogs held by Mr. Bryant

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out on the lawn a few feet away, she added her own bit to the carefully thought out agenda, went down and kneeled and told the dogs goodbye, much to the delight of the cameramen.

When my hair was done, I took my little rose that Luci had given me from her bouquet and went into the Yellow Room with the family Bible. I sat down at the desk and wrote in the Bible that Mrs. Johnson had given us for the first Christmas in our forever home, the Ranch. Very carefully I wrote the time and place and date of Luci's wedding. And I pressed the rose in that page.

It was a little after 2:30 when we all gathered in the Blue Room for the receiving line. Lyndon, with Luci and Pat next to him, and then Mrs. Nugent and I, and Mr. Nugent at the end of the line. This so I could explain to the both of them and they to me that this is Ann Pitman, one of Luci's fifth grade friends, and this is "Agnes" ^{neff} who owned ~~the~~ beloved Camp Mystic, and this is Dr. John Washington who had taken care of Luci from the day she was born ^{until} ~~she~~ ^{she} was quite a grown young lady. And they could tell me who all the Waukegan cousins and Aunts were and the great flock of Clergy. Never was there such a hugging and kissing receiving line. And I would have had it no other way. Long and tiring, true. But dear and forever to be remembered by ~~me~~ me -- I think by many.

The first 10 minutes were televised with great glaring lights -- particularly pointed of course at Lyndon and Luci and Pat. And I was happy that some of those near and dear came down through that time. I believe the Secretary of

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State and Virginia. And my brother Tony and Maftiana, and Doris and Hugh Powell whom I introduced to the Nugents as Luci's Aunt Dee Dee ^{with} whom she had spent so many summers. And I think Senator Dirksen on crutches was in those first 10 minutes. It too is all a montage to me now. But he was greeted with a great kiss. And when the 10 minutes were over, there was a pause and the doors were shut and the receiving line stopped while all the machinery of television was rolled away except for what lights were left for our own Lt. Adkins and Bob Knudsen and Okamoto, and a moment for us to have a bit of a drink.

And then the receiving line continued. I was deeply proud. Our official family, the Vice President and all the eleven members of the Cabinet were there. And this was no breaking of the feeling that this was a personal family wedding. Lyndon and I and Luci have come to feel very close to these fellow workers of ours. As I looked at Hubert and Muriel, and Margy and Bob, and Jane and Bill, I knew that very soon, they too would be going through this. In a ~~an~~ venerable old Christ Church not long ago we had watched the wedding of Trudy and Joe's daughter.

And then from the Court there was the Chief Justice and Mrs. Warren. Our two specially dear friends, the Hugo Blacks. And Bill Douglas whose 23-year old wife was very necessarily of very much interest to the photographers. Our friends for longer than Luci has lived -- the Tom Clarks. And Abe and Carol -- he has held my hand in so many major decisions through all of this, through all ways before.

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And from the Senate, not nearly enough. But Birch and ^{Marvella}~~Martha~~ Bayh with whom Luci had campaigned. And Gretchen Byrd without Harry who is at the bedside of his dying father. Luci had lived at their home when she was Apple Blossom Princess. And besides Senator Dirksen, Paul Douglas and Emily from Pat's State of Illinois, and Warren and Jermaine Magnuson who had gotten Pat a job on the Hill. Our dear friend whom Luci has called all her life, "Uncle Dick" Russell. Stu and Evy Symington who picked her as his favorite in our family when she was about 2 years old. And the Herman Talmadges ^{at} whose house Luci used to stop on her way home from school and raided the ice box. And the Ralph Yarboroughs from Texas.

And old friends who used to watch her grow up. The Clinton Andersons and the Mike Monroneys and the George Smathers. Only a sprinkling I believe -- there were others -- that I figure I've spent 30-odd years of my life filling my public role with great pleasure and as much thoughtfulness and wisdom as I have, ^a And this is our private day.

And from the House there was Leader Carl Albert and his daughter, Mary Frances, one of Luci's friends from NSC. And her great campaigning friends ^{the Lake Boys} who practically turned their homes into a boarding house for some of the Waukegan kinfolks and friends and their daughter Coki and their son Tommy and his wife with whom Luci has campaigned. And the Jack Brooks who have listened to all of Luci's romances these last five years or so. And Speaker and Mrs. McCormack who were present at Luci's confirmation when not even I was there, and for whom she has a most tender and deep bond. Jake Pickle,

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our own Congressman and his pretty daughter Peggy. And old-timers who came with us -- the George Mahons and the Bob Poages and Lera Thomas who used to give Lyndon advice on how to doctor the children when I was away from home. And the Wright Patmans, and the Graham Purcells for whom Luci used to baby-sit. And a sprinkling more.

I was honored that the Arthur Goldbergs were there, and the Averell Harrimans with whom I have become increasingly close. And the George McGhees, Lynda's dear favorites. And the Bill Deasons sitting close to us, with Sam Houston who looked strained and emotional. A special bond that Luci has with Bill Deason is that he is the God-father of all the dogs. It was a long kiss for Nellie Connally when she came down the line in blue lace.

But
~~So~~ I missed the tall, handsome presence of John. And the two youngsters who used to play in the backyard at 1901 Dillman -- Johnny and Sharon.

My one regret of the day is that I couldn't talk -- really talk -- to each of those I loved.

The staff was there in good number, though I would have loved to have everybody. It was a long hug and a tear I think for Zephyr and for Helen and for Willie Day. It was a deep moment for me when Jim and Ida Mae Cain came down the line with Kitty Mae Wirtz, and memories of that man that does not die in our hearts -- Senator Wirtz -- who had been Luci's godfather in the Episcopal Church. And how glad I was to see Willis Hurst and his wife. These two doctors have taken such a personal, loving interest in those

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girls as they have grown up. And of course for Dr. Turchen and Dr. Kraskin, they felt she was in part their production.

The Catholic clergy was there in great number -- many of them among the Nugent's closest friends. I was so happily impressed with Father John Kazinskus -- a strong, very masculine 40-year old or so man who radiated confidence in those two young folks. But I was glad to see my own Bill Baxter and his wife, and Dr. John ^{Barkley} ~~Darkey~~ from Austin who had participated in both Inaugurals with his sweet wife, Bea, and his daughter Bitsy. And Lyndon's Dr. George Davis.

But there was a ~~s~~ sadness that there were not more kinfolk there. I missed the Alexanders and their newly married little Becky. And I was sorry the Bobbitts could not be there. And the T. J. Taylors III, but they had had a good week with us earlier in the summer. And Winston.

But I rejoiced in the presence of Tony and Ma^artiana who enjoyed it to the fullest. They had a good visit with the Laur^arence Rockefellers and the Udalls. And of course there was Patsy and her fiancée. And ^{Ava} ~~Aber~~ who taught Lynda Bird for two years and Luci for one, and to whom this will be a real and lasting and dear memory. And there was Lyndon's neice, Roxanne. And mine, Diana and Donald. The young Griffin Tatums -- my cousins. And from the older Alabama generation, Aunt Ellen Taylor Cooper, and the never old and always vibrant, Elaine Fischesser. And among those to whom it meant most, Ruth Taylor, who was being escorted around by the Donald Thomas^s.

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There could have been a reunion of Camp Mystic! Beside "Ag", there was Inez Harrison and Theta Bain and Carol Henry -- a counselor -- and Jean Romul and Ken Sue Cher and Terry Taylor, and members of the wedding party -- ^KGathleen Carter and Patty ^{McQuinn}McWert and of course Sharon Connally. And there could have been a little reunion of the 5th Grade at [?]Casis with the vast time marage besides Betty Beal and Ann Pitman.

One of the stars of the show was certainly Alice Roosevelt Longworth. I wish I could hear her impressions -- or do I? She was most ably escorted by Dick Dickerson. And Liz, with her quick thinking, stopped the line as she came down and said, "It's not often that you get a chance to see two brides in the White House side by side." So I hope they got a good picture -- separated by their span of 60 years, but joined in this very unique sharing of their wedding days in the White House.

^{Be}And Jane Englehard came down the line ³and murmured how I adored the "Apple Pickers". And ^{Rebecca Harkness}Rebecca Harkness -- she was beautiful in a printed flowing chiffon, blue and green, like a Monet landscape. We exchanged a conspiratorial glance. ^{And}no woman was handsomer than Oveta Culp Hobby who defeats the years. And Mary Griffith and Dorothy Parker and Miss Trez and I all had a special hug for each other because of the years we've tried to dress that child.

And there was our old friend Clark Clifford who has held my hand just as Abe has and whose daughters' weddings I have watched ^{Lovingly.}

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And there could really have been an NCS reunion lead by Miss Katherine Lee whom I had placed with the family group. And there was Mrs. ^{Warren?} ~~Warr~~ ^{Wherry?} and Gray Baxter and Nancy Hechinger and Marleen Johnson and Missy Grant and ~~Minnie~~ ^{Minnie}, whom I did not recognize.

For Luci, it would not have been complete without her Secret Service and their wives. I think she could "carry that precinct" -- they love her.

And there were old staff members. The McGeorge Bundys. "Why Mother, he remembered Pat's name before you did!" And the Horace Busbys and the George Reedys and the Jack Heights. And Margery ^{Joie} Jenkins. I am so happy she came. And Dorothy and Phil Nichols. And of course the Jack Valentis.

And among our special friends -- the Warren Woodwards of the "Woodward Date Bureau", and the Will Edward Odams, and the Frank Stantons. And our long-time neighbors ^{at} ~~and~~ whose home the children were as much at home as in our own, Homer and Eloise Thornberry, with Mollie. And the Ed Weisls and the Bill Whites and the Arthur Krims who have taken them both in when they needed to visit New York and I wanted ^a ~~to~~ chaperon. And I am still not quite sure whether all of Peter, Paul and Mary were there. But at least two of them were.

I had both a sob and a smile when Paul and ^{Della} ~~Dotie~~ Bolton came bravely down the line. And Jesse Kellam -- both of us thinking how much Louise would have enjoyed this -- how much she would have helped. And Jessie Hunter.

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And from the Ranch, the Dale Malecheks. Some of Luci's close friends from Georgetown -- both faculty and students. And George Hamilton, who did his courtly best to remain in the background. And old beaus -- Tommy [?] ~~Foot~~ and Paul Betts and Terry O'Rourke and Sidney Caplan and David Corcoran. As one reporter aptly put it, "It was shoulder to shoulder with the notables, with lesser known figures, neighbors of the Nugents, former neighbors of the Johnsons, Doctors, dentists, lawyers, preachers, camp counselors, ranch workers, college classmates, relatives." And that is what I loved about it. And each with a bond to Luci.

The line did go slow. Twice we halted it for a breather. At a little past 4:00 it was over. One part of my mind is always wondering -- what the guests were doing who were waiting? I found to my happiness that a great many of them had paused on their way in in the lovely pink tent in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden for drinks and plates from the ample buffet for a breather after the long service and before the long line. And once more I was grateful for Bess's planning.

In the East Room the cake rose like a great glistening Taj mahal -- its 7 tiers decorated with swans and white roses and lacy arches like cathedral windows -- I suppose they were a sugary confection -- between the tiers. The hole topped with a bouquet of lilys of the valley.

Luci and Pat and Lyndon and I stepped up on a small raised platform behind the cake table and all the vast array of the press -- cameras, lights ^{shone} ~~shown~~ on us -- and Luci picked up the cake knife that Birch and Marvella Bayh

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gave her to match her silver, and began to cut into the 3rd or 4th layer of Ferdinand's work of art. It was hard. She tried another layer. Pat put his hand to it. Lyndon added his to the knife. Off came a lovely piece. The bridesmaids were grouped around us, guests clustered beyond them. She gave me the first piece, a bite for Pat. Another piece -- I don't know who that went to. And then she turned it over to a professional and went on the dance floor. And now it is all ^amedley ^{and} confusion to me. Next to Peter Duchin's orchestra were swirls of pink bridesmaids and dark-suited groomsmen and some of the livelier young guests and Luci and Pat. And I was circulating to a few old friends saying let's go to the State Dining Room or rest ourselves in the Red Room or see what the tent looks like and give these young folks a chance to dance. I had a goodbye kiss for Doris^r who will return at 7:00 and introduced her to Perle Mesta. I knew that would thrill her, and to a couple of the Cabinet Members. I told Ag and Inez that they should have a reunion of Camp Mystic girls with a picture ^{all} together. I looked in vain for dear Dr. and Mrs. Reed. I sat down briefly in the pink tent ^{with} George and Alice Brown and Oveta and Nancy and Nellie Connally.

By now it was nearly empty -- everyone upstairs. And then at a little past 5:00 I went upstairs to see about "operation departure". There, for the first time in this day of wonderful precision -- logistics that worked -- I came face to face with the crisis of planning. Luci's going-away costume had "gone away." We had carefully planned for certain suitcases to go with the first Secret Service man to their destination honeymoon. And those that would

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be needed for the night, to be taken earlier to the get-away car. Her going-away costume itself -- a beautiful deep pink, very like her bridesmaids in fact -- with a pink floral turban, was to have remained behind in the closet. It had not. Luci was adamant. She would not throw her bouquet in her bridal costume and then slip quietly away in the most inconspicuous old school outfit in the closet. ~~After~~ After great struggle we sent for the dress and hat. It was fully an hour later, while guests milled around downstairs, dancing, eating, having champagne, waiting impatiently on the lawn. And Liz came in with a harried look, wanting to know what she could tell them. She needed to "put the lid on" if Luci had departed. And then a little past 6:00 Luci, glowing in her lovely going-away costume, and Pat and Lyndon and I went to the first floor balcony where down below her on the ground were ranged all the bridesmaids and those remaining guests -- each with a bag of ~~xx~~ rice tied in pink net. Luci carefully threw her bouquet. It fell closest to Lynda. She retrieved it. Little bags of rice filled the air. And with a wave and a hug and "Mother, you've given us the most beautiful wedding" breathed in my ear, and reaching up once more like a little girl instead of a bride to be tall enough to kiss her daddy, a last look at the crowd -- Luci and Pat were gone. But not quite gone. "Operation departure" was from then on nobody's business but Bob Kohler's and Luci's and Pat's and mine -- or so I believe.

It was only a few minutes later that I went to Luci's room to find her not there. That child that it takes forever to dress had in 5 minutes ~~a~~ time, Helen said, put on her most inconspicuous little dark dress and Jean Louis' wedding

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gift -- a half hairpiece -- that looks like casual ~~shoulder~~^{shoulder}-length curls. She hadn't left the house. She was somewhere waiting for Bob Kohler's word that all was in readiness. I went upstairs where Mrs. Nugent had long ago gone to rest. Mrs. Nugent was curled up on the sofa. She never mentions her leg. But it had been one grueling day for her I know. And there was Luci -- sweetly beside her, looking like the Luci that ought to pick up an algebra book and a Latin book and get off to school. We were tensely waiting for the phone. In a minute the call came. Luci kissed us both and was off down the hall rushing. I followed her to the elevator. I watched it go down. I knew that it was supposed to go to "B" -- or so I thought -- and that they would go out through the tunnel into the Treasury and into the garage and from there into the car. And on the floor of the car -- an inconspicuous black sedan to New York to spend the night at Mary Lasker's town house.

Down went the elevator -- from 3 to 2 to 1, back to 1 mezzanine. My heart almost stopped. It did not go on to "B". I do not know what happened. I shall have to wait til she returns, if ever, to find out. I waited a few minutes. By now it was 6:30. I had only a breather before the guests that I had invited to come and watch the TV shows with me would arrive.

They started in at 6:45 and found the wedding reception still going on. It was 7:10 before the music died away and the last of the wedding guests drifted out.

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I had gathered in the Yellow Oval Room Tony and Maftiana and Diana and Donald, dear Elaine and the Griffin Tatum's, and Doris and Hogh and Diana Dudley, the Philip Baldwins and Aunt Ellen. Lyndon came in to be with us. And the Gonellas stopped by and he made them stay. We had three television sets in the Yellow Room, and we all grouped around it, resting our feet, having a drink, and watching the day we had lived through. Nancy Dickerson's program about the wedding was magnificent.

Lyndon and I called her and thanked her. Part of it was her superb professional sense, and part her insight and her real closeness to Luci and Pat and to us. She made me feel remiss in not having helped to see that there was some commentator on the other two who knew us better. Goodness knows there had been efforts. They had tried to hide Coki Boggs -- some network had. And very earnestly they had tried to hide June White. It smacked a bit of a guest ^{trying to get} ~~was~~ an invitation in a rather commercial way ^{to us}. But it would have been, probably, a more ^{or} perceptive show.

I brought out the bouquet of lilys of the valley that had been on top of the wedding cake and gave each of the ladies present one to press for their memory books or whatever they wanted.

Lyndon went off and took the Gonellas with him to the Deasons who were going to gather all of the Austin people at their house for drinks and buffet supper and reminiscences. And then the rest of us settled down -- the plates which we ~~helped~~ ^{helped} ourselves from the Daniel Webster buffet in the family dining room -- the very first buffet of that sort I remember here

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in this house. And back we went to the Truman Balcony to exchange our own vignettes of the day.

And Doris^{IV} told me about plans in Karnack by the Improvement Association to try to buy the old store from Daddy's estate for a community center. That they had planted the little circle where the highway approached his store with shrubs and flowers and were keeping it up rather well. And about hopes for improving the ^{Caddo}~~Caddo~~ State park. One of the State garden clubs was going to make a project to plant wild flowers in it. And if there are enough hours in the day and energy in me, I want to be a part of ~~it~~ it all.

Tony had had a great good time -- seeing old friends, meeting new ones. He has been such a part of our life up here. And Ava said that nothing you could ever have done for her would have equalled this invitation.

The Truman balcony was flooded with memories and love as we all said goodbye, very weary at an early hour -- before 10:00. And I with one ear cocked for any news over the TV or radio about the childrens' whereabouts was relieved that no word had come.

By 11:00 I was in bed, and Lyndon was home from the Deasons. And the great, great day was over -- happily, beautifully, to our heart's delight -- a part of the memories of this great White House.