

Suddenly, the TV screen went black. The dog leapt from her. He'd never done that and the jolt unsettled her. From the day she first brought him home, her lap was his favorite place. Now he couldn't leave fast enough. Contrary to all forces of reason, it rubbed off on her. She trembled as an unknown man's voice began: "This is a special bulletin from CBS News."

Walter Cronkite came on the screen. Something about his face suggested he had witnessed, or had been told of the preposterous. He looked weary, as if he'd been through life's ringer amidst moral collapse. He wiped glasses that weren't dirty. Could he have been crying?

Nightly, he reported on everything. He was the international face of accuracy. When he said it, it was the truth. Everybody believed him. Nothing phased him. Now he was out front, blinking hard to lessen watery swelling that consumed his uncommonly reddened face. After a short pause his reading glasses went back on.

"President Kennedy has been the victim of an assassin's bullet in Dallas, Texas. It is not known, as yet, whether the President survived the attack on him. The incident was this: The President, Mrs. Kennedy and Governor Connally of Texas, were riding in the President's famed bubble top car from Dallas Airport to

downtown Dallas where the President was scheduled to make a speech.”

12:45pm

Back in Dallas, there was pandemonium in Dealy Plaza. The motorcade was gone, having raced beneath the overpass never to be seen again. The air was saturated with an unending nightmare sequence: forever echoing emergency sirens, heart breaking sobbing and shrieking screams. Everything worsened by the moment. Time moved in confusing intervals. Given the possibility that human existence is predetermined, that day was cursed from the moment he was scheduled to be there.

People were resigned to the conclusion that it was the beginning of the end. Whatever romantic innocence that surrounded the Camelot Presidency had vanished, absorbed by the carnage. On the street, over by the grassy knoll, there was a tiny, mushy clump of brain matter. It was significant because it once belonged to one of the brightest political minds of his generation. An even larger tragedy was that it went overlooked.