

There was the sound ... Eulogy delivered at the bier of John Fitzgerald Kennedy in rotunda of the Capitol by the Honorable Mike Mansfield, Senator from Montana, November 24, 1963. McKeesport, Pa., Wivagg Printing Company [1963].

THERE WAS THE SOUND of laughter..... and, in a moment, it was no more. And so, she took a ring from her finger, and placed it in his hands.

There was a wit in a man neither young nor old; but a wit full of an old man's wisdom and of a child's wisdom and, in a moment, it was no more. And so, she took a ring from her finger, and placed it in his hands.

There was a man marked with the scars of his love of country, a body active with the surge of a life far, far from spent and, in a moment, it was no more. And so, she took a ring from her finger, and placed it in his hands.

There was a father with a little boy and a little girl, and the joy of each in the other.....and, in a moment, it was no more. And so, she took a ring from her finger, and placed it in his hands.

There was a husband who asked much and gave much and, out of the giving and the asking, wove with a woman what could not be broken in life.....and, in a moment, it was no more. And so, she took a ring from her finger and placed it in his hands, and kissed him, and closed the lid of a coffin.

A piece of each of us died at that moment. Yet, in death he gave of himself to us. He gave us of a good heart from which the laughter came. He gave us of a profound wit, from which a great leadership emerged. He gave us of a kindness and a strength fused into the human courage to seek peace without fear.

He gave us of his love that we, too, in turn, might give. He gave that we [??] might give of ourselves, that we might give to one another until there would be no room, no room at all, for the bigotry, the hatred, prejudice and the arrogance which converged in that moment of horror to strike him down.

In leaving us, these gifts John Fitzgerald Kennedy, President of the United States, leaves with us. Will we take them, Mr. President? Will we have, now, the sense, and the responsibility, and the courage to take them?

I pray to God that we will.



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