



1

00:00:00,080 --> 00:00:06,890

from Dallas Texas the flash apparently\h
official President Kennedy died at 1:00\h\h

2

00:00:06,890 --> 00:00:12,590

p.m. Central Standard Time two\h
o'clock Eastern Standard Time

3

00:00:12,590 --> 00:00:20,390

it's now been half a century since the shots rang\h
out in Dealey Plaza to admit you live through\h\h

4

00:00:20,390 --> 00:00:24,980

their shock in fury is to be of a certain\h
age those of us who were children then at\h\h

5

00:00:24,980 --> 00:00:29,810

the end of America's great baby boom have forged\h
countless different paths but we share in common\h\h

6

00:00:29,810 --> 00:00:36,800

a question that over the years has haunted almost\h
all of us what if Kennedy lived almost since the\h\h

7

00:00:36,800 --> 00:00:41,360

assassination writers have speculated about the\h
great things President Kennedy would have done for\h\h

8

00:00:41,360 --> 00:00:47,030

the country and the world if his life had been\h
spared in Dallas it's commonly assumed that he\h\h

9

00:00:47,030 --> 00:00:52,130

would have rolled back our Vietnam involvement\h
enacted landmark civil rights policy made peace\h\h

10

00:00:52,130 --> 00:00:58,250

with the Soviets and possibly even finished the\h
attack on organized crime that upbeat scenario\h\h

11
00:00:58,250 --> 00:01:03,380
is probably wishful thinking Kennedy had a
definite to-do list for a second term but the

12
00:01:03,380 --> 00:01:10,010
forces in opposition to his presidency in 1963
were organized and powerful so let's shade the

13
00:01:10,010 --> 00:01:16,610
question just a bit differently what if Kennedy
survived Dallas this new question puts front

14
00:01:16,610 --> 00:01:22,040
and center the plain fact that Kennedy's survival
could not exist in a story vacuum as if November

15
00:01:22,040 --> 00:01:30,560
22nd 1963 were just another day after all whether
or not Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone the President

16
00:01:30,560 --> 00:01:36,380
of the United States still had been targeted for
execution in broad daylight on a public street

17
00:01:36,380 --> 00:01:42,290
before a global television audience life would
not have pinged back to normal if the assassins

18
00:01:42,290 --> 00:01:47,000
bullets had missed their target investigations
would have been launched to determine if what

19
00:01:47,000 --> 00:01:52,550
just happened was an attempted professional hit
a failed political assassination or the work of

20
00:01:52,550 --> 00:01:57,590
a crazed lone gunman in any case the world
would have been turned upside down during

21
00:01:57,590 --> 00:02:03,020
this period raising an avalanche of questions\h
and blowback on multiple fronts particularly\h\h

22
00:02:03,020 --> 00:02:07,730
since the president would have been alive and\h
asking those questions himself along with some\h\h

23
00:02:07,730 --> 00:02:12,050
of the world's most powerful allies including a\h
brother in charge of the US Justice Department\h\h

24
00:02:13,310 --> 00:02:17,990
if there were conspirators they and their target\h
would have regarded each other like scorpions in\h\h

25
00:02:17,990 --> 00:02:23,600
a bottle in a cascade of post ambush cause\h
and effect these traders who had plotted to\h\h

26
00:02:23,600 --> 00:02:28,220
achieve a coup d'etat by public murder would have\h
found President Kennedy now physically impossible\h\h

27
00:02:28,220 --> 00:02:34,460
to get at protected by enhanced security in\h
this telling the system comes unhinged and\h\h

28
00:02:34,460 --> 00:02:40,040
the conspirators go after Kennedy by other means\h
after their bullets fail there is no doubt that\h\h

29
00:02:40,040 --> 00:02:45,470
John Kennedy's presidency was a high point in\h
our nation's history what we did not know when\h\h

30
00:02:45,470 --> 00:02:49,760
we were living through it however was that\h
President Kennedy's reckless behavior behind\h\h

31
00:02:49,760 --> 00:02:55,250
the scenes kept him always just one headline\h
away from disaster surviving a well-planned\h\h

32
00:02:55,250 --> 00:03:01,400
assassination attempt could not have made JFK's\h
personal weaknesses any easier to disguise he\h\h

33
00:03:01,400 --> 00:03:06,830
also had enemies with the means to lay bare the\h
most intimate secrets of his private life had they\h\h

34
00:03:06,830 --> 00:03:12,290
done so the president's dark side clearly had the\h
potential to destroy any second term the voters\h\h

35
00:03:12,290 --> 00:03:17,810
might have granted him this alternative history\h
then is not a time travel story with a protagonist\h\h

36
00:03:17,810 --> 00:03:23,600
sent back to save JFK a continuing fascination\h
right up through last year's Stephen King book\h\h

37
00:03:23,600 --> 00:03:31,460
11/22/63 that kind of political science fiction\h
usually sees an idealized and heroic JFK through\h\h

38
00:03:31,460 --> 00:03:37,940
rose-colored glasses rather this narrative sheds\h
light on the shadowy events of late 1963 in the\h\h

39
00:03:37,940 --> 00:03:43,460
context of the constitutional crisis they easily\h
could have triggered to the best of my knowledge\h\h

40
00:03:43,460 --> 00:03:49,100
this is a new way to examine the what-if of JFK\h
and ends up illuminating what the stakes were\h\h

41
00:03:49,100 --> 00:03:54,500
in our own timeline because Kennedy was the
most mediagenic political figure of his time

42
00:03:54,500 --> 00:04:00,680
and possibly of all time I've created a media
vehicle uniquely suited to tell his story top

43
00:04:00,680 --> 00:04:06,470
story magazine was in this alternative historical
reality a struggling news weekly routinely getting

44
00:04:06,470 --> 00:04:11,000
its lunch eaten by the publishing powers that
used to be until it hitched its wagon to the

45
00:04:11,000 --> 00:04:17,030
charismatic young president star-crossed descent
into scandal a story as big as this demands all

46
00:04:17,030 --> 00:04:22,220
the resources a full-fledged news outlet like
top story would have had at its command teams

47
00:04:22,220 --> 00:04:29,250
of reporters exhaustive research capabilities a
defense Rolodex as it happens all these elements

48
00:04:29,250 --> 00:04:36,060
already existed in my own imagination so JFK's
epic tragedy is also the chronicle of how one

49
00:04:36,060 --> 00:04:41,160
media outlet at the break of obscurity clawed
its way to prominence on the Kennedy coattails

50
00:04:41,160 --> 00:04:46,770
it only makes sense then that I've chosen to
write surrounded by enemies as a book published

51
00:04:46,770 --> 00:04:54,030
by top story magazine on the anniversary of JFK's
survival of the shootout at Dealey Plaza here's a

52
00:04:54,030 --> 00:04:59,580
world where 50 years earlier history's tree
grew another branch where journalism in the

53
00:04:59,580 --> 00:05:04,980
counterculture ignited a political explosion
over Watergate in the 1970s and led to Nixon's

54
00:05:04,980 --> 00:05:10,380
impeachment in our world Kennedy's battle with
the treasonous forces of conspiracy in the

55
00:05:10,380 --> 00:05:16,650
1960s in the alternative scenario probably would
have triggered an implosion in JFK's reputation

56
00:05:16,650 --> 00:05:22,620
rather than the steady drip of scandal that we've
experienced over the past five decades the events

57
00:05:22,620 --> 00:05:29,730
surrounding a failed JFK assassination might have
gotten seriously out of hand and fast many people

58
00:05:29,730 --> 00:05:34,170
now see the Warren Commission report as the
greatest work of American fiction published

59
00:05:34,170 --> 00:05:39,450
in the 20th century still it's been impossible to
ignore the importance and validity of the oswald

60
00:05:39,450 --> 00:05:44,400
acted alone pushback we've seen recently from
Stephen King's book to Bill O'Reilly killing

61
00:05:44,400 --> 00:05:50,790
Kennedy to legendary prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi\h
'he's reclaiming history and it's nothing new even\h\h

62
00:05:50,790 --> 00:05:55,830
back in the immediate aftermath The Byrds rewrote\h
the popular folk song he was a friend of mine to\h\h

63
00:05:55,830 --> 00:06:03,510
say his killing had no purpose no reason no rhyme\h
in my opinion that is the wrong sentiment wrapped\h\h

64
00:06:03,510 --> 00:06:09,360
up in a classic melody after a lifetime of casual\h
reading on the topic compounded by this recent\h\h

65
00:06:09,360 --> 00:06:14,430
intensity of research I'm simply swayed that\h
whatever role Lee Harvey Oswald actually played\h\h

66
00:06:14,430 --> 00:06:20,370
on history's grand stage his was not a one-man\h
show but one populated by and synchronized with\h\h

67
00:06:20,370 --> 00:06:25,710
multiple unseen actors that is the point of\h
view from which I've written this fictional\h\h

68
00:06:25,710 --> 00:06:31,530
account since we live in a time of often bitter\h
polarization it is also worth noting that I'm a\h\h

69
00:06:31,530 --> 00:06:36,270
lifelong Democrat who remembers when America's\h
two great political parties at least tried to\h\h

70
00:06:36,270 --> 00:06:41,730
work together for the good of the country\h
I write this book to me it's scenario is a\h\h

71
00:06:41,730 --> 00:06:47,010
fascinating what if not because of any agenda\h
involving President Kennedy this alternative\h\h

72
00:06:47,010 --> 00:06:52,560
history depicts Kennedy accurately I believe as\h
an enormous Lee charismatic man whose intelligence\h\h

73
00:06:52,560 --> 00:06:58,590
political mastery and legendary charm could\h
not ultimately disguise his deeply human flaws

74
00:07:01,630 --> 00:07:07,930
surrounded by enemies is not a research book\h
I have changed names compressed events and in\h\h

75
00:07:07,930 --> 00:07:12,970
the interest of presenting an alternative history\h
made up some things completely I have tried to do\h\h

76
00:07:12,970 --> 00:07:17,590
all of this with a healthy respect for the actual\h
facts of the matter but there is no question that\h\h

77
00:07:17,590 --> 00:07:22,480
I have taken many liberties on the other hand\h
I also ask that everyone who sees a real name\h\h

78
00:07:22,480 --> 00:07:27,490
in this piece of fiction understand that the\h
person in question is a character in a story\h\h

79
00:07:27,490 --> 00:07:33,160
that takes place in a parallel universe in a\h
world that accepts stories about Abe Lincoln\h\h

80
00:07:33,160 --> 00:07:39,370
as a vampire hunter this story should not offend\h
but intrigue in several instances I have taken\h\h

81

00:07:39,370 --> 00:07:44,230

existing documents and quotes from the Nixon and
Clinton impeachments lines from past State of the

82

00:07:44,230 --> 00:07:50,920

Union speeches etc and modified them to fit this
story in this context I hardly think this sampling

83

00:07:50,920 --> 00:07:56,860

is a literary sin but a device to show just how
possible it is to see JFK in a similar context

84

00:07:56,860 --> 00:08:02,740

in any case very little of this book contains
this type of historical transposition I have

85

00:08:02,740 --> 00:08:07,660

not footnoted my work with tedious accounts of
its accuracy or fabrication because it is meant

86

00:08:07,660 --> 00:08:12,520

to be read as an immersive piece of fiction to
undertake such an academic challenge would only

87

00:08:12,520 --> 00:08:17,770

distract the reader those engaged by the events
of this story are encouraged to begin their own

88

00:08:17,770 --> 00:08:24,280

research and draw their own conclusions the plain
reality is that Jack Kennedy had a lot of things

89

00:08:24,280 --> 00:08:30,250

he was hiding and there were numerous powerful
men who wanted him dead if those conspirators had

90

00:08:30,250 --> 00:08:35,260

taken their shots and missed President Kennedy
would have come back at them not only with the

91
00:08:35,260 --> 00:08:40,900
vengeance but also with a carefully constructed\h
strategy the very existence of Attorney General\h\h

92
00:08:40,900 --> 00:08:46,540
Robert Kennedy and his family loyalty guarantees\h
that I've come to see this entire story despite\h\h

93
00:08:46,540 --> 00:08:52,720
its many working parts and vastly different\h
points of view as a story of two brothers had\h\h

94
00:08:52,720 --> 00:08:59,260
the shots fired in Dallas Texas missed their\h
target on November 22nd 1963 they would still\h\h

95
00:08:59,260 --> 00:09:04,870
have set the 1960s ablaze turning John and\h
Robert Kennedy into the original conspiracy\h\h