



The White House Doctor: My Patients Were Presidents: A Memoir

By Connie Mariano

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A riveting look into the personal lives of our presidents through the eyes of their White House doctor

Dr. Connie Mariano served 9 years at the White House under Presidents George H.W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush. She participated in world headline-making news events and traveled all over the world. She cared for visiting dignitaries and was charged with caring for all the members of the First Family. From flirting with King Juan Carlos of Spain to spending the night on the Queen of England's yacht, Dr. Mariano glimpsed a glittering and powerful celebrity that few ever see. *White House Doctor* is a fascinating look into what goes on behind closed doors at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This doctor is a bit of a celebrity herself: the first military woman in U.S. history to be appointed White House doctor, the first female director of the White House medical unit, and the first Filipino-American to become a navy rear admiral. And though Mariano humbly bows to the bigger-than-life presidents—George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton—she cared for during eight years in Washington, it's her journey that's so remarkable. Having begun life in 1955 as the daughter of a U.S. Navy steward in the Philippines, she was appointed a White House physician by the navy in 1992, and her mettle was thoroughly tested during medical emergencies—and political storms. Whether helping to treat Bush's skin cancer or dispensing a Band-Aid on the golf course, accompanying the president on overseas trips or performing a Heimlich maneuver on a choking guest at a holiday gala, Mariano always kept her cool and her sense of humor, which she retains in this unusual inside look at the White House. 8 pages of color photos. (*June 22*)

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About the Author

In 1992, DR. CONNIE MARIANO became the first military woman in American history to be appointed White House doctor. The founder of the Center for Executive Medicine, a medical concierge practice providing presidential-quality medical care to CEOs and their families, she now lives in Scottsdale, Arizona.

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ONE

Sweet Dreams

1.

I never slept with the president. I did sleep with the former president. In fact, I slept with three of them, all at once, on Air Force One. Actually, it was more like a slumber party, which sounds even more bizarre. This all started on a very typical White House day that ended up as anything but typical.

“Hey, Doc, we’ve got a tourist down in the State Dining Room.”

I looked up from my computer on the mahogany desk in my office on the ground floor of the White House. The tall dark-haired man standing in my doorway was a Uniformed Division officer of the Secret Service. I recognized the guard’s face, but his first name escaped me. Even after seven years at the White House, I couldn’t remember the names of all the guards who sat in a post outside my office, the doctor’s office, across the hallway from the president’s private elevator.

“Do you want me to call over to the clinic for the duty nurse to respond?” he asked tentatively.

I stood up, clipped my Secret Service radio to my belt, and inserted my earpiece as I walked around the desk, grabbing the AED, the automated external defibrillator, and my medical bag along the way. “He can back me up, but presidents, visiting dignitaries, kitchen help, and . . . tourists get the same treatment.”

Taking care of an ill or injured tourist is one of the first duties a White House physician assumes, even before meeting the first patient, the president of the United States. It was one of the first things I learned to do after arriving at the White House in 1992 as the Navy physician to the White House. It wasn’t the first time I had taken care of someone who had passed out. Years of working as a Navy doctor in emergency rooms, clinics,

teaching hospitals, and onboard a destroyer tender in the Pacific made me an expert in critical care. What was special this time was the setting: the grandeur and elegance of the State Dining Room of the White House.

Please don't let anyone die on my watch, I prayed as we rapidly ascended the marble staircase to the State Floor. The medical bag and defibrillator I was carrying were quite heavy. This was going to be my workout for the day: stair climbing and lifting medical bags. No chance for a run on the Mall. I was scheduled to leave in one hour with the president and first lady for an overseas trip.

I entered the State Dining Room where the line of tourists weaves its way from one end of the room to the other. A gold cordon separates them from the formal dining table in the center of the room, resplendent with a large floral centerpiece, with the chandeliers glittering overhead. The fallen tourist was an elderly, frail woman sitting in a chair in the corner of the room. A woman guard stood beside her. The Secret Service first-aid and trauma—FAT—kit was already on the scene, and the guard was waiting for my cue to administer oxygen. I squatted down beside the woman, looking at her eye to eye. She was approximately eighty years old, wearing glasses, hearing aids, and was sweating profusely. I took her hand in mine and squeezed it gently. It was cold and clammy. My index and third fingers planted themselves on her radial pulse, which was rapid and strong, not thready. I began my routine.

"Hello, ma'am. I'm the White House doctor. How are you feeling?"

She looked at me and blinked. "Are you the nurse?" she drawled. Her voice was soft, sweet, and fresh from West Virginia.

I smiled. "No, ma'am. I'm the doctor, and I'm here to help you. Are you having any chest pain?"

She squinted behind her glasses. "You're not the nurse?" She examined me closely, trying to comprehend how someone who looks like Connie Chung could be a White House doctor. I suppressed the urge to tell her, "Welcome to the Clinton White House," as I wrapped a blood pressure cuff around her arm.

"Ma'am, are you a diabetic?" I asked as I pumped the blood pressure cuff.

"No, no diabetes."

Her blood pressure was 110/60 and her pulse was 80 and regular. Respirations were 20, unlabored. I looked up to a woman in her fifties standing behind the chair, who had identified herself as the daughter of the elderly tourist. "Does your mother take any medications for blood pressure, diabetes, or heart disease?" She shook her head. "No. No medications at all."

"What happened to her this morning?" I asked.

"She was so excited about coming to see the White House that she skipped breakfast. Then we waited in line for an hour. By the time we got upstairs, she said she was sleepy and then she broke out in a sweat."

I looked at the guard and before I could say "OJ please," a White House usher had brought a glass of fresh orange juice on a silver tray.

"Ma'am, we're going to give you a sip of orange juice, okay?"

She nodded, accepting the glass and drinking it quickly. She patted her lips with a napkin the usher had handed her. She then noticed the embossed gold presidential seal on the napkin, and placed it surreptitiously in her pocket.

By now the White House nurse on duty had arrived. It was tall, brown-haired, all-American Jim Hosack carrying his medical bag. He hunched down beside me, looking guilty, and confessed in a hushed tone, "Sorry, Captain, I was delayed. We were swamped in the clinic."

"I think our patient is going to be okay," I reassured him. "She's a little hypoglycemic. Blood pressure and pulse are stable. I'm going to turn her over to you."

Suddenly, my radio blared—I had taken out my earpiece to attend to my patient. "All points on Oscar . . . Eagle moving . . ." Eagle was the Secret Service code name for President Bill Clinton. Oscar was the name of the Secret Service frequency. The voice was one of the president's agents reporting Bill Clinton's movements on the White House compound.

Jim looked up at me. "The funeral?"

I nodded. Jim tentatively asked, "With all the presidents?" I smiled. I could see intimidation in his eyes. That

was why I was taking Vince Starks, the senior White House nurse, with me. He understood: they were just patients. As I walked away, I could hear Jim introduce himself to our elderly patient.

“Oh, so you’re the doctor?”

As I hurried back to my office, I checked my watch. It was twenty minutes before we were to lift from the South Lawn on Marine One. The helicopter had not even arrived. Then I heard over my radio, “Eagle moving.” “Eagle moving” meant Eagle was on the move, going somewhere. But where? “Eagle moving to the residence,” someone said over the radio, as though he had heard my question.

I now heard the muffled sound of Marine One’s rotors as it touched down on the South Lawn. My ride had arrived. The helicopter would shortly take the president to Andrews Air Force Base. He was preparing to depart the White House and I, his physician, was to accompany him. As I approached my office, I asked the Secret Service agents across the hallway near the president’s elevator, “What gives? Are we going early?” They smiled and shrugged their shoulders; so much for Secret Service intelligence.

I stepped into my office, wondering how soon before we would depart to Andrews. The president could be upstairs for a minute or he could decide to leave in an hour. The Secret Service doesn’t know. How could I have not predicted that President Clinton would be true to form: predictably unpredictable!

But I had my own spy network: the president’s Filipino valets. I went to my computer and text-paged Master Chief Joe Fama, one of the president’s valets, with the message, “When is departure? Doc M.”

No sooner had I struck the send key when my phone rang. I picked it up and it was Joe: “Doc, POTUS wants to leave in ten minutes,” he announced, from POTUS’s (President of the United States) lips to Joe’s ears.

The president’s valet was among the most trusted and reliable of sources. Everyone at the White House knew it. Even Ken Starr knew it.

I walked out into the hallway, grinning like Socks the cat because I now had something that everyone on the eighteen acres of the White House coveted: the scoop. The military aide on duty had just arrived in the hallway now. We called him (or her) the “mil aide.” One is assigned each day to follow the president and carries the black briefcase called the “football” that contains the nuclear codes.

The mil aide on duty today would also be accompanying the president on our overseas trip. He was in full dress uniform, perspiring and breathing rapidly. The military aide was not cool; he didn’t have the scoop. I walked over to him. He greeted me formally, “Hello, Captain Mariano.”

I smiled back and tested him. “Any word about departure?”

He wiped his brow with a white handkerchief and then answered, “No, ma’am.”

“Oh,” I remarked. “The president’s valet just called me and said that POTUS wants to leave in ten minutes.” The mil aide’s mood brightened when he realized that I had just given him the scoop. You’ve got to have the scoop to be in the loop. And being in the loop is something military aides crave.

“Per the valet, POTUS wants to depart in ten minutes,” he announced into his radio with an air of authority. The Secret Service, White House communications, Marine One pilots, and military personnel who monitor the Secret Service frequency heard the announcement. The Secret Service agents standing in the hallway beside us gave the mil aide the thumbs-up. The approval went to his sweaty head, and he began to strut around like he was the man. Then he...

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The publication with title The White House Doctor: My Patients Were Presidents: A Memoir contains a lot of information that you can find out it. You can get a lot of gain after read this book. This specific book exist new expertise the information that exist in this guide represented the condition of the world right now. That is important to you to understand how the improvement of the world. This book will bring you within new era of the globalization. You can read the e-book on the smart phone, so you can read it anywhere you want.

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