

# People

**JOHNNY DEPP LIVING SINGLE**

# LOVE GONE WRONG



VANESSA PARADIS AND DEPP

## THEIR SEPARATE LIVES

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LAST DAYS**



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**BOOK EXCLUSIVE:** RoseMarie Terenzio, JFK Jr.'s assistant, shares new details of his marriage to Carolyn Bessette and their final days.

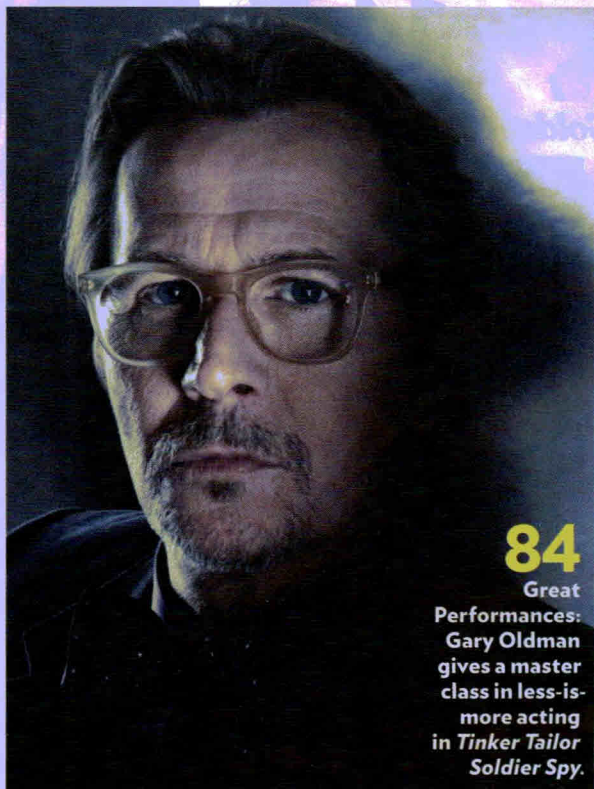
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**Food Network star Paula Deen, known for her down-home persona and deep-fried cooking, has Type 2 diabetes.**



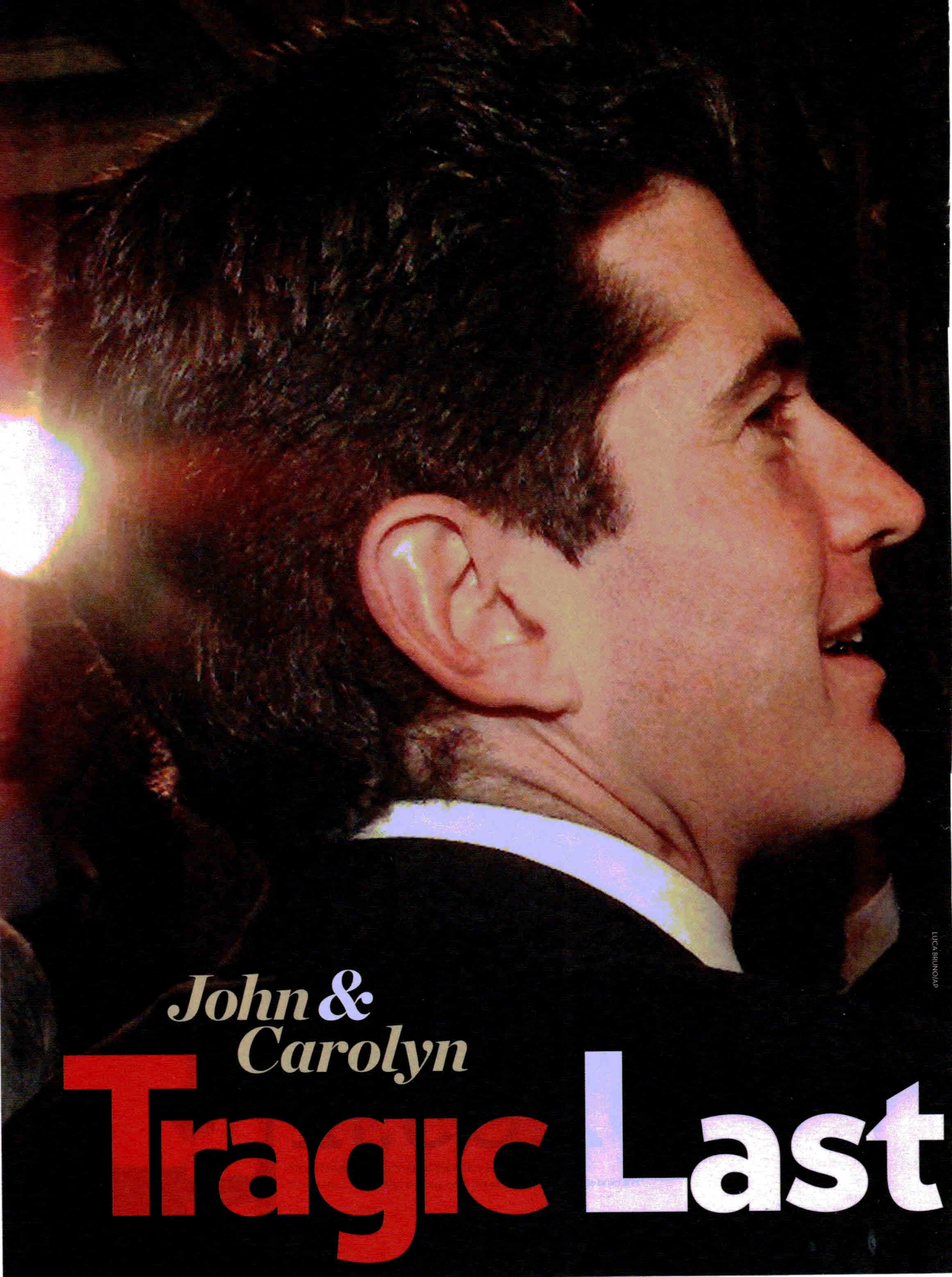
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**Great Performances:** Gary Oldman gives a master class in less-is-more acting in *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*.

**98** They ruled the skies over Europe in World War II, defeating Hitler and Mussolini. Then they returned home and were told to sit in the back of the bus. Now those men of honor—the **Tuskegee Airmen**—are flying high again in the new film *Red Tails*.

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*John &  
Carolyn*

**Tragic Last**

TWELVE YEARS AFTER  
JFK JR.'S DEATH,  
HIS ASSISTANT  
ROSEMARIE TEREZIO  
REVEALS INTIMATE  
DETAILS ABOUT  
HIS LIFE—AND FINAL,  
FATAL FLIGHT—WITH  
CAROLYN BESSETTE

**T**here weren't many people who were closer to John F. Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bessette than RoseMarie Terenzio. As John's assistant and loyal gatekeeper at *George* magazine, the brassy girl from the Bronx soon became his trusted friend and later bonded with the sophisticated Calvin Klein exec who became his wife. After the plane crash that killed the couple on July 16, 1999, Terenzio felt as if she might never heal. "It took me years to feel that the best part of my life wasn't behind me," she tells PEOPLE's Liz McNeil. "I had to find my identity again." Now 44 and the head of her own public relations firm, Terenzio is finally ready to tell her story, and theirs. In *Fairy Tale Interrupted*, excerpted here, she recalls John and Carolyn's sometimes tempestuous relationship and sheds light on their final days—revealing for the first time that Carolyn almost didn't board the plane for that fateful flight. She hopes her book will provide a more nuanced picture of the couple she loved. "John was more than a mannequin of good looks and privilege; Carolyn was not this uptight, cold and guarded person," Terenzio says. Writing the book "felt like paying tribute to them. It felt really good."



# Days

DEC. 7, 1997

"They were glamorous but also genuine," says Terenzio of the pair (at Milan's La Scala Opera House).

Carolyn, whom John began dating seriously in the fall of 1994, intimidated the hell out of me. Wearing a Calvin Klein pencil skirt, a white T-shirt, stiletto heels, and blue nail polish, she looked like a model, effortlessly perfect. When John introduced us, I felt like I'd gained ten pounds. But I could tell Carolyn was different from the typical gorgeous girls you see around Manhattan. Standing with her legs crossed, she held her Prada purse behind her back with one hand, while absentmindedly twisting a lock of hair with the other. She wasn't trying too hard. She wasn't trying at all.

John and I didn't talk about his personal life when I first began working for him. But I knew Carolyn was becoming important in his life because whenever she phoned, he took the call. The only other person he did that with was his sister.

Carolyn quickly became a fairy godmother and confidante to RoseMarie, dispensing advice on men and taking



**COMING TO TERMS**  
*"I don't feel responsible for what happened," says Terenzio (above on Jan. 6), "but I will certainly always have the feeling that I should have kept my mouth shut and not told Carolyn to [get on the plane]."*

her shopping. "Nothing feels better than new clothes," she'd say. "That and vodka are your new best friends."

Carolyn and I both lived in John's unique world. I was often the only person who could relate. "I know this is a little kind of sad, but there's no one else I can really talk to," she said one night, having fled to my studio after an argument with John. John's insensitivity was the biggest catalyst of their arguments. Carolyn would decline invitations because John said he was coming home for dinner. So she would wait while he worked late and went to the gym, then waltzed into the apartment way past dinnertime. Carolyn was not only angry but also worried about him. Another classic scenario was when he would spring information on her, such as, "I'm bringing home a friend for dinner... right now." It wasn't mean-spiritedness. He was simply as disorganized and clueless as a kid. "Sure, I want to kill him sometimes," she said. "But I respect him." And no matter the issue, John and Carolyn always

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY RICARDO PHIBBS; HAIR: ANA POPIC/ALICE; MAKEUP: MARGUERITE ANEVIZ/TEENIEWA; STYLING: PALLA KAMAL/CZ/MIKHAILA; ROBERT SPENCER/RETNA; MICHAEL FERGUSON/GETTY IMAGES; JOHN BARRETT/GETTY IMAGES; ALAN GOODMAN/JOHN F. KENNEDY PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM AND; LIBRARY: BOBTON/ZUMA; ©1996 DENIS REGIE; BEX FEATURES

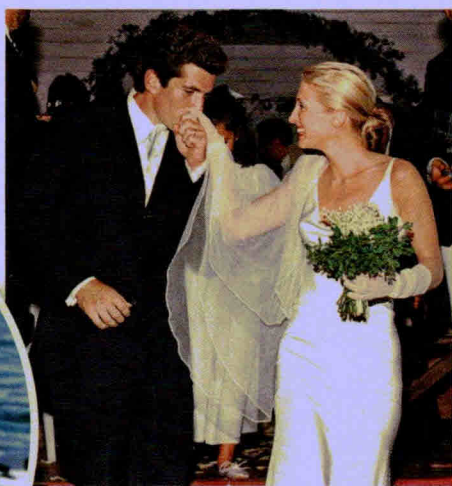
## A Fine Romance

Together just five years, John and Carolyn "were like every young couple," says Terenzio, "but under extraordinary circumstances."

**1997**

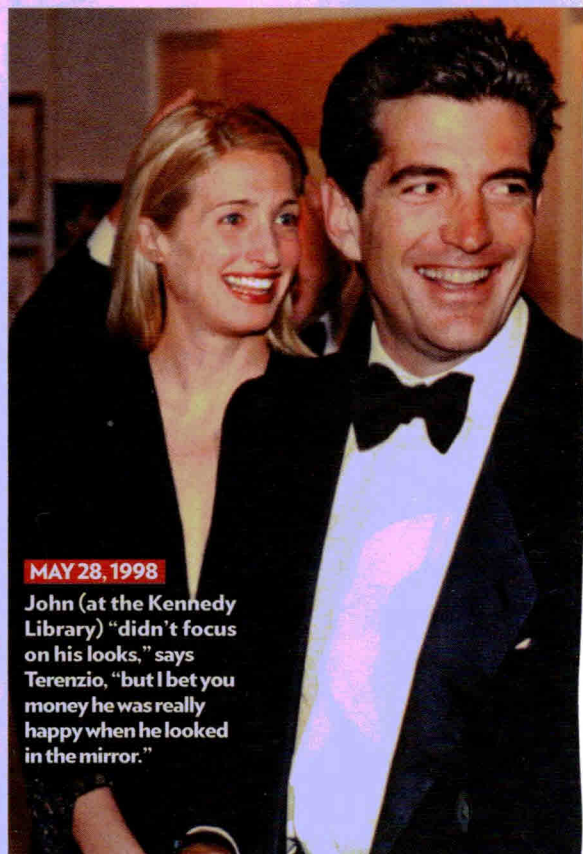
Carolyn embraced John's favorite sports—up to a point.

"She went ice climbing once," says Terenzio, "and vowed never again."



**SEPT. 21, 1996**

The couple, who wed in a tiny church on Georgia's Cumberland Island, managed to keep their wedding a secret until the next day.



**MAY 28, 1998**

John (at the Kennedy Library) "didn't focus on his looks," says Terenzio, "but I bet you money he was really happy when he looked in the mirror."

diffused the situation with a joke. In July 1995, Carolyn called with the news that they'd gotten engaged. They had been at his house in Martha's Vineyard when John suggested they go fishing. "I wanted to go fishing like I wanted to cut off my right arm," Carolyn said, laughing. But she was always a good sport.

"He asked me to marry him out on the water," she said. "It was so sweet. He told me, 'Fishing is so much better with a partner.'" "That's amazing!" "Yeah, but I've been a nervous wreck ever since." She was worried that the media would tear into her, saying she wasn't good enough for John. Their Sept. 21, 1996, wedding, kept secret, went off without a hitch. (Though they invited RoseMarie, she thought her absence from the office would arouse suspicion.) Sounding giddy, they called RoseMarie to check in two days later.

"Is it in the papers?" Carolyn asked. "Are you kidding me? It's everywhere on the planet." "Jesus." "The dress looked amazing in the

“

**JOHN'S FAME WAS DIFFERENT THAN ANY OTHER. HE'D BEEN FAMOUS SINCE HE WAS BORN”**

—ROSEMARIE TERENZIO

pictures I saw.”

“Oh my God, the dress. I couldn't get it over my head at first. I was freaking out.” John grabbed the phone. “Hey, stupid,” he said.

“Hey, stupid, congrats,” I replied. “How does it feel?”

“It's really great,” John said happily. Upon their return, Carolyn struggled with the constant paparazzi attention.

Whenever she went out—to get coffee, walk the dog, or meet a friend—they were there, pushing in close and shouting things like “whore” and “bitch.” If they could break her perfect exterior, it would be an instant story: “Carolyn on Verge of Nervous Break-

down” or “Problems at Home.”

Carolyn retreated into herself. Unfortunately, John didn't understand. “Just don't pay attention to it. I don't,” he said. I knew that John's dismissive attitude was due to his frustration. He couldn't protect his wife. He should have told her as much—I know she really wanted to hear it.

By the summer of '99, the marriage was under intense strain. Carolyn said she wasn't going to attend the July 17 wedding of John's cousin Rory. “She's determined to stay home,” John told RoseMarie. “I'm not going to fight with her about it.” RoseMarie tried to change her mind.

“Are you f...ing kidding me?” I said. “What are you doing?”

“I'm not a priority,” she said. “It's always something else. George. Somebody getting fired. A trip to meet advertisers.”

“I know. But now's not the time to take a stand. His whole family's going



**JUNE 12, 1996**

The couple (in N.Y.C.) “teased each other a lot,” says Terenzio. “One Valentine's Day, there was some tabloid story about him cheating, so she sent him flowers from all these famous models and actresses, like Pamela Anderson. He thought it was hilarious.”



**OCTOBER 1997**

“She wanted a home outside the city when they had kids,” says Terenzio of the couple (near their Tribeca apartment). “She was motherly.”



**OCT. 6, 1996**

“I think the hardest part for them was trying to find some peaceful married time amongst the media frenzy, the magazine struggling...”



Terenzio (with John in '96) says, "He could be irreverent and goofy."



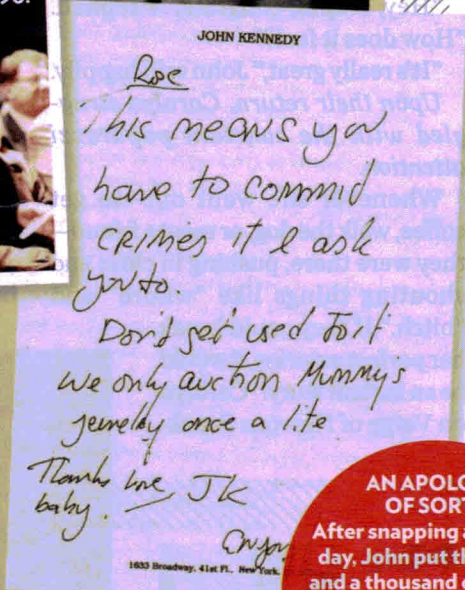
John brought her to a Knicks game on her birthday in '96.

## My Boss JFK Jr.

"I learned so much from John," says Terenzio, whose position gave her a bird's-eye view of his unique fame.

Initially misinterpreted some of his behaviors as insensitive or spacey, when in fact they were coping mechanisms for his insane life. Take the 15-minute rule. Whether attending a screening or meeting a friend, John was always exactly 15 minutes late. He couldn't risk [waiting] on a street corner or at a restaurant bar. He'd be a sitting duck for anyone wanting an autograph.

I was also unsure how to approach some of the minor details. When I booked plane tickets, should I say "JFK" or "Kennedy Airport" or "the airport named after your father"? It was awkward. He finally said to me, "I don't mind going out of Kennedy," and that's the term I used from then on.



JOHN KENNEDY

Rose  
This means you  
have to commit  
crimes if I ask  
you to.  
Don't get used to it  
we only auction Mommy's  
jewelry once a life.  
Thanks love JK  
Onyx

1653 Broadway, 41st Fl., New York

**AN APOLOGY OF SORTS**  
After snapping at her one day, John put this note—and a thousand dollars—in her purse. "He could be kind of a jerk," she admits. "But it wasn't with an intent to hurt your feelings."

Reserving a hotel room was particularly confusing. I decided it would cause havoc if people knew he was coming, so I reserved the room under my name. After I'd booked two or three trips this way, John approached me. "Hey, Rosie, when you book my hotel room, it's okay to put it under my name." "Oh, okay. I wasn't sure you wanted that. Was there a problem?" "Well," he said, his face breaking into a grin, "I don't get the fruit basket, the upgrade or the champagne when it's under your name. It sucks to travel as you, Rosie."

to be at this wedding." "I just want some normal married time," she said. "I'm exhausted." "Listen. You don't want to put yourself in a position of being judged," I said. "You get enough of that." "I don't have anything to wear." "Go get a dress, and I'll get you a car to the airport." That Friday night, with the couple headed out of town, RoseMarie planned to sleep at their loft. Her air conditioner had broken and John insisted.

He followed his magnanimous gesture with a wisecrack: "Just don't sit around sniffing my clothes," he said. "I know you want to, because you're so in love with me." John was flying his plane to Massachusetts and dropping Carolyn's sister Lauren off on Martha's Vineyard before continuing on with Carolyn to Hyannis. As he walked out he turned to me and said, "Rosie, you're the best. Thanks for smoothing things over."

Shortly before 10 p.m. John's plane crashed off the coast of Martha's Vineyard, killing all three passengers. A little after midnight, Carole Radziwill (John's cousin Anthony's wife) called John's apartment, hoping they were there.

"Hello," I said. "Oh, Carolyn, thank God you're home." "Carole, it's Rose. What's going on?" "Where are they?" Carole asked.

"What do you mean?" The friend who was supposed to pick John and Carolyn up in Hyannis had called the house on the Vineyard when they didn't arrive at the airport. Carole, who was spending the summer with Anthony at John's Vineyard house, had been hoping the busy signal at the loft meant they had never left the city. Realizing they weren't at home, she released a small "Oh God."

I thought about my last conversation with Carolyn and how I'd told her to get on the plane. Oh God.

Heartbroken, RoseMarie helped John's sister Caroline plan the funeral.

We bonded over how much John



**TABLET BONUS VIDEO** Author interview on the real John & Carolyn

would have hated the hoopla over his death. “Don’t you feel like he’s going to get angry at us for letting this whole thing get so out of control?” Caroline said in a sentiment shockingly close to my own. I protested when Caroline told me I could pick only five people from *George* to attend the funeral. “Caroline, I can’t do that,” I said. “There will be people sitting in that church who didn’t give your brother credit for running a magazine—and I think it’s time they did. The staff needs to be there.” (Caroline eventually relented.)

*After the funeral RoseMarie went to their apartment to pack up their things.*

I tended to the practical stuff first, such as cleaning out their fridge. I pulled the vodka and ice cream out of the freezer and threw it in the trash. I moved on to the bedroom. Carolyn was very organized. She always picked up after him. When he came out of the bathroom after showering, she yelled, “John! Three wet towels on the floor!”

She didn’t have an enormous wardrobe, but everything was beautiful: cashmere sweaters, sleek pencil skirts, sheath dresses, and incredible shoes. It was relatively easy to pack up her side.



**SUMMER 1999**

John “was under a lot of pressure,” Terenzio says.



**CAROLYN HAD NO QUALMS ABOUT FLYING WITH JOHN. THEY LIKED THE FREEDOM OF IT”**

Going through John’s hats was the worst part. He had so many beloved, goofy hats. Not surprisingly, his sister Caroline gave them to the women John had been close with.

The first few months after John died, I was inundated with condolence cards and calls. It was comforting. As long as everyone else was grieving with me, I could hold on to them. Eventually, of course, people moved on.

That’s when my grief became paralyzing. John’s death was all I thought about for the first few years. Life with John and Carolyn was wonderful but all-consuming. They were the center of my life, and once they were gone, I had to fill that place myself.

I often wonder what John would have thought of this or that news event or headline. When I do something stupid, it makes me laugh to think how he would have made fun of me for it. Standing in front of the mirror, I sometimes ask myself, “Would Carolyn be caught dead in this?” But I no longer dwell on what might have been. It’s enough of a struggle finding the light at the end of the tunnel and knowing that eventually you’ll come out the other side. ●



**JULY 18, 1999**

Mourners left a mountain of flowers, pictures and notes outside the couple’s Manhattan apartment.