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Amid grief, love blossoms

By **Claire Martin**
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They met when both were reeling in the wake of deaths — her brother's suicide; the deaths of his wife, Kathy, and sons Tanner, 10, and Shea, 6, killed when a boulder crushed their car.

The Feb. 26, 1995, accident that left Art Daily abruptly widowed and childless drew sympathy throughout the world, especially in the Dailys' hometown, Aspen, where Daily is a partner at the law firm Holland and Hart.

At her home in Aspen, Allison Snyder began praying for Daily.

"I don't know why, really, only that I hoped someone was praying for me when my brother died," she said.

She decided to make a music tape "to help him grieve," and mailed it to him anonymously, signing only "A Friend."

When Daily listened to the tape, he was stunned to hear Bette Midler's version of "The Rose," a song fraught with meaning for him. It's the theme song of the Temenos Academy, which teaches a creative spirituality workshop that he and his wife followed.

"When I heard that, I was just blown away," Daily said.

"It's the closing song at the Temenos course. Kathy and I'd heard it so many times. I knew I had to meet whoever put it on that tape."

He wrote back to "A Friend." Shortly afterward, Allison Snyder and Art Daily met in person. If it wasn't love at first sight, it certainly was close.

After a courtship that swung between caution and impetuosity — what about their 25-year age difference, would Allison always dwell in the shadow of Art's grief? — they married, roughly 15 months after the Glenwood Canyon accident.

Some of their friends "probably wondered if I jumped too quickly," Art Daily said recently.

"But we never heard anything negative," Allison Snyder Daily added.

"When you're as good a person as he is, and you're in a community as good as Aspen is, the purity really settles everything that the outside world might look at and judge."

Art and Allison Daily's life together since then seems nearly charmed. A vasectomy reversal succeeded, resulting in the couple's sons, Burke and Rider, now ages 11 and 12. They spend mud season in the Caribbean, a trip they're skipping this year in favor of promoting "Out of the

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Canyon."

They live in the same house that Kathy, Shea and Tanner shared with Art Daily, the same art and photographs hanging on the walls. Only the sofas are new.

"I've changed where a picture is, but the photographs of Kathy and the boys are still there, and they're a part of our lives," Allison Daily said.

"It's great," Art Daily added. "That helps them remain a part of our lives, and Rider's and Burke's lives."

Most of "Out of the Canyon" is devoted to the singular story of how Art and Allison met, but they have also added an afterword, "Grief Has No Rules," sharing their thoughts on mourning and on the best ways to comfort someone in the wake of a death.

They both remain hyperaware of others who lose loved ones in accidents. Art Daily immediately approached Frank Bingham upon learning of the drunken driver who killed Bingham's wife and two children as Bingham watched them cross a downtown Denver street on Nov. 10, 2006.

"We didn't really have a purpose for meeting, except to kind of be together and see where that took us," Art said.

"What began as slightly awkward, feeling our way in to talking about our own experiences, turned into three or four hours of a very sweet time, reminiscing about our respective families. Neither of us changed any lives that day, but I think we made a difference to each other."

The Dailys still have the tape that Allison made for Art in 1995. Somewhere.

"That is the one thing we have not been able to find," Allison said.

"But we still love that song."

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Author reading

Meet Art and Allison Daily and hear them read from "Out of the Canyon" at 7:30 p.m. May 20 at the Tattered Cover, 2526 E. Colfax Ave., Denver. For more of the Daily family's remarkable story, visit outofthecanyon.com.



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