

Dear Mr. And Mrs. Wood,

6/14/02

I was so sad to hear about Mary. I know this must be an unimaginable loss for you and a deep loss for anyone who knew Mary.

I wanted to let you know how much Mary meant to me. She was one of those landmark people in my life. I first met Mary at a time in my life when I needed a like-minded friend so badly. I was absolutely amazed to find out that just like me, Mary lived in an alternative teenage world of books, poetry, music, ballet, and movies. This was not normal behavior at that time in northern Wisconsin. After I met Mary I didn't feel that I was crazy or weird anymore. I had someone I could talk to.

We were both awkward teenagers trying to become our adult selves, but Mary was different from me. She was different from anybody I had ever known. She already knew what she felt and what she believed. No one that young was ever so passionate! She was brave and strong and stood up for the truth. She had a sense of adventure and was so sure of herself. I admired her so much. She gave me strength just by being near her. She made me feel like I could do anything too.

Over the years we would keep in touch by writing from time to time. She was always a stunning writer! As time went by we drifted apart writing less and less. Then not at all. Until about a year ago I suddenly got an e-mail from her on my computer. It was so great to hear from her again. It was the same old passionate Mary, living in Utah on yet another new adventure. When I moved and unplugged my computer, we stopped our communication. It was good to know that Mary had been true to her nature and had carried on her passions. She was unique.

I send my love and condolences to you and your whole family,

*Niki Kapton*