

Thank you all for being with me and our families these past few days. Your outpouring of love has been absolutely tremendous.

Many of you have asked how you can help. You've already been so helpful during this dark and difficult time. I am forever grateful and shall not forget your overwhelming kindness. In the weeks, months and years ahead, I ask that our friendships continue. Robert was truly one of the greatest gifts that life could ever have bestowed upon me. He is gone now, but in his absence I realize that he very lovingly left me with a tremendous army of friends. Each one of you here reflects Robert in a small way. I need your steadfast friendship to remind me that everything will be OK, and that life will once again be good.

With the help of several friends, a memorial trust is being created in Robert's memory. Your contributions to this trust will go toward the causes that were so near and dear to his heart. Every cause he cared about involved the betterment of humanity and society. Nothing made him happier than to help others and to watch them succeed, especially in a world that was not always kind.

There are countless stories about Robert that made our marriage so absolutely beautiful. Today, I'll share a couple of them.

Four months ago, I had major surgery. To get in and out of bed, I needed complete assistance. During my first night home from the hospital, I had to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night, so I kept poking him until he woke up. At first, he was startled and immediately asked what was wrong. I told him I had to go to the bathroom, so he stumbled out of bed and managed to set everything up. I started taking my first steps with the walker when all of sudden, he started doing **this** with his arms while making beeping sounds. This really confused me. He then stepped aside and did **this** to direct me to the bathroom. When I got to the door, he did **this** to stop me so I could transition to crutches. I then realized he was treating me like an airplane that was taxiing to its gate. I laughed so hard at this, and for the gazillionth time, I fell in love with him all over again. We fell in love with each other over and over again, every single day. We were by no means perfect, but we were so perfect for each other. I am so very humbled and so very blessed that he asked me to his wife.

The second story involved a question. A while ago, I asked him “If you knew you could not fail, what would you be?” His answer – a senator. I then asked what his second dream job would be. He answered “Chief of Staff. You know, I want to be the clown that’s trying to organize all the other clowns.” That was Robert, always finding the time and a way to make us laugh. He welcomed everyone, and in his gentle way, extended his love and friendship regardless of how busy he was. The world is a much sadder and emptier place because of his absence, but we are all better people for having known him.

I have received a countless number of the most heartfelt sympathies these past few days, but there was one in particular that showed how deeply Robert affected us all. The letter reads like this:

Dear Kathy,

We offer our deepest condolences and heartfelt prayers for you and your family on the loss of an exceptional husband and son. My son often prodded me when I spoke highly of Rob, saying “he was the son I always wished I had.” There was some truth in his jesting. We held Rob in great esteem for his grace and brilliance. We will always hold his memory dearly in our hearts for his generosity of spirit and unwavering friendship he demonstrated over the years towards our son.

We’ve known Rob for more than eight years now. He was always thoughtful, kind, and shone through with a quiet sense of humor. Never one to boast about his accomplishments, he did indeed do so much in such a short period of time. His loss is painful, but his memory is to be cherished. We will always smile when we recall his visits, his gifts of gourmet pies, his willingness to help. Perhaps my son was wrong. Rob wasn’t the son I wished I had. He was the man I wished I was.

Thank you.

Katherine Wone