

Full Name

Grace Terstriep

Your Age

17

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Jeff Terstriep

Name of Your Dance Studio

Art In Motion

Your Essay

Dear Mom,

You are the most incredible human I've ever known. I say that with all sincerity, and I mean it with everything that I am. You are incredible. Your heart is like nothing this world has ever seen before. I've never known another human who loves like you do. You are the biggest source of encouragement, and that's not just for me but for everyone. You are so genuinely excited to listen to what everyone has to say, and you are always able to help them with whatever they're going through. You bring so much joy to the lives of all of those around you. Your smile has the capability of lighting an entire room, and it has so many times. You have been the light of my life for the past 17 years, and I'll never forget that day in November when I lost you. It was so unexpected. Too soon. I miss you every day.

The night before you passed away I came into the living room and you said, "I have something for you!" You excitedly reached over and grabbed a present which you then handed to me. I opened it up and pulled out what is now my favorite sweatshirt. I told you that you should have saved it for Christmas, but you just said "I try to make every day like Christmas for you girls." I think that does a pretty great job of summing you up in one sentence. You were made to be a mom. You never let a day pass when you didn't tell me how much you loved me. You gave everything for me, and all you ever wanted was for me to be happy. You filled my life with so much happiness. You are the most incredible mother that any girl could ever ask for, and I miss you more and more each day. I wish I could tell you how thankful I am and how much I love you, but I know you know.

I know that you're watching over us, but I wish I could tell you everything. I know that you always wanted me to be happy, so that's what I'm trying to do. It's so hard, but I know that's what you would want. I think that's what we're all trying to do. I miss you telling me how much you loved me. You never let a day pass without reminding me. I can't wait to see you again. I love you so much, Mama.

Facing every day without you has been the hardest thing I've ever had to do, and I miss you constantly, but I know God wouldn't have taken you as one of His Angels if it weren't the right time. I'm looking forward to finding my path in life with dad by my side, but I really wish you were here too. I don't know how I got so lucky as to have you and dad as my parents. You are truly the greatest parents I could have ever asked for. The love you both have given me is unbelievable, and I hope one day I can love with a heart half as big as each of yours. These past two months have been difficult without you, almost impossible, but Dad has been here for me through everything. He took me to my first dance competition as an official dance dad. After 17 years of you never missing a single competition, last weekend was hard, but Dad and I made some great memories. He's going to be a great dance dad for these next two seasons. I'm so thankful that I had you and Dad to support me in what I love to do. There's no feeling that compares to being on stage, and I am so thankful that you have given me so many opportunities to do so. I know the dance bills are expensive, but you both know how much I love to be on stage. I'll forever be grateful for everything you both have done for me. Thank you for working so hard for me. You've given me the world and more, and I love you both so much.