mouthing was hanging open because she wrote the way I and people I knew talked. It was a revelation to me.

"She was a beautiful lady, like my mother and my aunts. You didn’t have to be a drunk living in Paris—you could be a nice lady and be writing books.

"It was an honor to know her."

"GRAND LADY" ADMIRE FOR PURE VOICE
(BY GARY PETIT)

The death of Eudora Welty, whose mind and heart pondered the separation between human beings, brought many together Monday in a mutual grief to regard for the Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

"A giant tree has fallen," said David Sansing, historian and professor emeritus of history at Ole Miss in Oxford.

"William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, Richard Wright, Eudora Welty: Who would think that this little state, with such a high rate of illiteracy, would produce these giants of literature, and all of the same generation?"

"Eudora Welty was the last of those, the great four."

Dean Faulkner Wells of Oxford, niece of perhaps the greatest of those four, William Faulkner, said, "A grand lady of letters is gone. We will always revere her words, as will countless generations.

"Wells' husband, author Larry Wells, said Welty 'spoke to all generations. It was that pure voice, that humanity. You can't afford to lose people like Eudora Welty.'"

"In matters of the heart, she was never wrong.

"One of the people who knew her heart best is Suzanne Marrs, a noted Welty scholar and an English professor at Millsaps College in Jackson. In a Monday news conference, she was reminded of the famous Lou Gehrig farewell speech that echoed in Yankee Stadium decades ago. "Today," Marrs said, "I think I'm the luckiest English teacher on the face of the earth. I had Eudora Welty as a great friend."

Marrs recalled a crowded elevator ride she took long ago with her friend, who was surrounded by doting and wordy-witted writers attending a seminar in Chattanooga. When Welty noted that everyone else in the car wore an ID, she said, "Oh, I’ve forgotten my nametag."

"She was modest to believe she needed a nametag among all those people who knew her greatness," Marrs said.

Her humility and talent connected with people on both sides of the political and philosophical aisle. Mississippi Gov. Ronnie Musgrove, a Democrat, and U.S. Rep. Roger Wicker, a Republican, honored Welty on Monday.

"Not only will Mississippians miss her," Musgrove said, "but people literally around the world will miss her wisdom."

In remarks made on the floor of the House, Wicker said, "Eudora Welty understood not only the South, but the complex family relationships and individual struggles that have combined to give America its rich texture. Her works of fantasy and tall tale narration included two of my favorites, The Robber Bridegroom, and The Pender Heart."

"She chronicled the power of place in small towns and in rural areas with an intimacy and elegance."

That eloquence charmed and inspired writers of various generations, including Eliza-