MAID OF HONOR SPEECH

FOR

TRACY LEWERENZ

Hello everyone! It is such a joy to be here to witness and celebrate the wedding of Sasha and Chris. Sasha and Chris-you make a gorgeous couple and we all know that you get along “**swimmingly**!” I’ll try to **pace** myself and won’t make **too many** sports jokes, but I will say that my “**goal**” tonight is to make sure the world knows how much I love the both of you and how special you are to us. From my point of view, I now know who put the “honor” in “Maid of Honor!” (**Since you are married, perhaps you should say Matron of Honor**) It really is a privilege and an **honor** to be able to be here as Sasha’s attendant-after all, I’ve been doing it for years-may as well get all “dolled up” for **this** great occasion!!

Sasha and I met one evening long ago. At the time, she was a little more casually dressed than she is today-she was probably in feet pajamas and getting ready for bed. Yes, we began our lifelong bond when Sasha was just 2 years old-and I was her babysitter! Our bond began with me changing diapers, taking trips to Florida with the family, and meeting her brother…what a great job **THAT** was!! It was actually a real **hat trick** as well-I not only got to watch over and play with Sasha as she grew into this great young woman we see tonight, we became as close as friends and sisters could become, and I got a husband out of the deal!!! What a bonus!! What started out as a $1.50 an hour (**or insert the amount you actually made**) weekend gig turned into meeting the love of my life and giving me a sister. For those of you who may not know, I am married to Sasha’s brother, Jim.

I have been Sasha’s friend and (hopefully) mentor for just about her entire life and I have been through many milestones … and diapers… and tissues … with her as we shared **all** of life’s experiences. We’ve laughed. We’ve cried. We’ve texted… I was there when she got bitten by that dog. I was there with her on that pontoon boat-she was about 4 years old. The day started out sunny and beautiful, but as Jim-my husband-her brother, Sasha and I enjoyed our little cruise, the storm clouds rolled in and someone…not naming any names…. began to panic (**If you want to make a little joke, you can say, “And Sasha was scared out of her pants too!!” and wait for the laugh**). I held her tight until we got to shore. I’ve seen her embark on many adventures and I’ve witnessed many milestones-like her first day of kindergarten when the school bus came to pick her up. I remember “Sasha-the elementary school years” and then the middle school and high school years. I watched with pride as she got ready for homecoming dances and proms and I rooted her on at all of those swim meets-whether it was at Great Oaks, high school meets, Michigan State swim meets, Big Ten championships at Purdue University, we shared the “thrill of victory and the agony of defeat’ and fortunately, there has been more victory! We’ve laughed together, cried together, and had “lively conversations” … we’ve been as close as 2 sisters could possibly be.

And then came the time that we knew Sasha was seeing someone, but for some reason, the mystery man was kept in the dark for a very long time. We heard stories of this amazing guy, but we had a better chance of finding Waldo than seeing him until we realized that Sasha loves and appreciates her amazing family so much that she would not bring just “anyone” to be a part if it, so we waited, and waited, until one day, Chris was allowed to be submitted to what can be called “**the bulldog test**.” We have an adorable American bulldog named \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - well **WE** think she’s adorable-even when she barks incessantly at anyone who walks into the house, but something strange happened when Chris walked through the door. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**Name of dog**) stayed silent and friendly and calm and adorable. Even \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ knew Chris was the one!

Sasha, I want you to know that I couldn’t have chosen a better sister if I tried. You have a heart of gold and everyone in this room knows it, and they know what a good sport you are. You are a beautiful and wonderful person and you deserve the best. I want to thank you for including me in your life and plans and I wouldn’t have it any other way! It’s been a joy and a privilege to watch you blossom and grow into the beautiful bride we see today, and I have loved every minute of sharing and planning this wedding with you.

To Chris, you and Sasha, truly make a beautiful **team** and we are so happy for the both of you and we welcome you to **our** team. You may be a “Predator” by profession-and we love supporting you and cheering you on at your games as well, but to us, you’re our newest family member! We want to welcome you with open arms and we look forward to many years and cheers for both of you!

Congratulations!! We love you….and so does \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**dog’s name**)!!!