MOTHER OF THE BRIDE SPEECH

FOR

RUTH CELY

Hello everyone and welcome to this really momentous and special occasion! Some of you may be thinking that, as the proud mother of such a beautiful bride, I am referring to the moving and life-changing ceremony we just witnessed. You can think that if you want, however, to me, the real triumph in these festivities, and especially right now, is that we were able to get Yoshie to sit still for a few minutes!! (**Wait for the laugh**). (**Turn to Yoshie and say**) ..Honey…to think I’d have to go to these lengths…. and get dressed up to boot… just to get you to stay in one place and listen to me for a few minutes!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). But you’re soooo worth it!! I’m really happy that all of you are able to be here today to share in all of the joy and celebration. I believe that good and true friends really are family and each one of you is here for a very special reason. We are all connected to each other through Yoshie and Brent and whether you share DNA with one of our happy couple, like me, or whether you have a precious and unique perspective on Yoshie and/or Brent as friends, colleagues, or co-conspirators, all of those **facets** come together with the bride and the groom at the heart to inspire us, make us laugh, encourage us, and ultimately form a big beautiful jewel.

My daughter Yoshie, as some, or **ALL,** of you may know, has a strong and independent spirit. Okay-let’s say it-she can be a very head strong, Type A, “bossy” kind of person…yes it’s true that even though she was a wonderful student, racking up those “A’s” like a champion, the section on the report card that we can call, “works and plays well with others?” …. **eh**…not so much … but judging by today’s crowd and all of the love in this room…I think we can give her a grade of “most improved!!” (**Wait for the laugh**). Yoshie has always been tough, strong, adventurous. I can remember, even as a young child, she loved camping, horseback riding, biking…. and I noticed a consistent formula throughout the years. Let’s put it simply…basically anything that would make me worried sick would be on her list of priority activities!!! Look up “adrenalin rush” in the dictionary and I bet you’ll see Yoshie’s picture …with me in the background in kind of a **DEER IN THE HEADLIGHTS** frozen expression of terror! (**Wait for the laugh**).

And wouldn’t you know it… it looks like Yoshie has **REALLY** met her match in Brent. Every few months the kids do something to give me just a little mild heart arrhythmia…. you know…just enough to make sure MY adrenalin is flowing and my stress hormones are still functioning….

* A few years ago when Mexico was considered not the safest place for American tourists, they decided to go wine tasting there with Jack and Wisam as their first vacation together. I didn’t even know there was wine in Mexico. **Wine in Mexico**? Did you all hear me **WHINE** in Arizona over **THAT** one? Yoshie… what’s the matter? The peaceful, serene, bucolic Napa Valley doesn’t have enough grapes? (**Wait for the laugh**)
* After that wild ride, this adventure didn’t stop. There were weekends to New York for photo safaris and treks to see Remington,
* A week long beach party …. back to Mexico (are Karl and Niko here?),
* A food crawl through New England with Melanie and Kathryn for calamari and lobster rolls – Did you REALLY believe they don’t have lobster in LA? Not even a food truck?? (**Wait for the laugh**)
* And who can ever forget that obscure post card sent to her Granny stating they had taken the dogs and were going to **Death Valley** for two weeks? Who wants to go to Death Valley? And then they wonder why the dogs have such issues. (**Wait for the laugh**). The comedian WC Fields once said, “I spent a week in Philadelphia one day.” And Philadelphia is civilized!! Using this formula, two weeks in Death Valley seems like a lot of dirt and trembling puppies!!! (**Wait for the laugh**)

But Yoshie, all of your quirks and passions and particulars are what make you so special. And now that you and Brent are married, it looks like I have to get used to the volume being turned up!!

And speaking of Brent, (**Turn to Brent and say**) I want to officially welcome you to our family. I want you to know that I think you’re wonderful and a great match for Yoshie, and although the both of you individually are each forces of nature to be reckoned with, together, there’s magic, chemistry, and the sparks fly. I’d like to say, “**Hide the matches**,” but I do believe at least one of you can talk the other down in the heat of a moment. I love your energy and spirit, and I truly see you as my son. That having been said….**WATCH OUT**!! Because if I think it’s called for, I won’t hesitate to butt in and give you a piece of my mind… after all… **FROM WHERE DO YOU THINK YOSHIE GOT ALL OF THAT SPUNKINESS?? (Wait for the laugh).** Just remember that with all of the pieces of my mind that I offer as I see fit, I will still love you unconditionally… just as I do Yoshie.

And Brent, now that the “deal is sealed” and you’re stuck with us, I thought I would share a little something about Yoshie that most people don’t know. Sure, we all picture a vibrant, independent adventurer, but how many of us know the actual source of her strength? (**Turn to Yoshie and say**) Honey (**or whatever term of endearment you typically use for her**), Are you getting nervous? Ladies and gentlemen, friends and family, distinguished guests and everyone in between…. how many of you knew that Yoshie’s most prized possession was her ….**blankie**???? And… Show of hands… how many of you have ever seen this thing? Or is it a legend- like **Sasquatch**? (**Wait for the laugh**). Actually-and additionally…fun fact…she kept it by her side until she was thirteen… and for all I know, the legend may still be alive!! (**Act like you’re whispering and say**) it might even be in this very room!!! If it is, then it’s as tough as Yoshie…. imagine-a blankie surviving the threat of Mexican banditos!!! Raging New England lobsters… **I mean LOBSTAHS!! …** Death Valley with neurotic dogs**!! (Wait for the laugh**) For years, whenever I would observe Yoshie packing for one of her camping adventures, there Blankie would be-there was always room for it. I used to tell her that I was going to sew a piece underneath her wedding dress. I am so pleased this long anticipated day has arrived, however, I’m kind of sure that Monique L’hullier never planned on this type of alternation to her exquisite couture!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). In reality, that Blankie provides insight into my daughter’s personality and reveals a softness that is not really typical of our bride. I always found it very endearing that she had this secret sweet and vulnerable side. That softness is revealed with her demonstrations of affection and now, it’s especially evident and we really see it in her love for Brent. I suppose in some parallel universe, Blankie has morphed into Brent…. in the very best way!!! (**Wait for the laugh**)

And now our happy couple begins the next phase of their lives together. With their recent move to Arizona, and with a new house to call their own here in Gilbert, Yoshie and Brent are in the process of defining their next great adventure. I’m sure everyone is as proud of Brent as I am, for having passed his second bar exam in Arizona. He has really taken to the rigors of work at his new law firm, Steptoe, and to me, it looks like he’s really beginning to enjoy working on weekends! And Yoshie really impressed me when I asked her how work was going at Banner and she actually commented, “My boss is really smart!!” (**If you want to make a joke here, you can say**) Take **THAT** Marilyn Vos Savant!! (**At one time, she was listed in the Guinness book of world records as having the highest IQ**) Yoshie, AKA, Ms Ivy League, thinks someone is smart!! It was shocking at first to hear those words spill from that mouth, but it was also a testimony to Yoshie’s newfound maturity and magnanimity!! I may joke, but I am truly thrilled that they are really finding their way here and achieving a balance by making new friends here in Arizona and keeping up with all of the wonderful friends they have been blessed with, from all over the world. I could not be more proud of these two!!

I think that typically at weddings, it seems that the focus is on the bride and groom and the families that join to make a new and extended family. (**If Brent has immediate family, acknowledge them here**). I am thrilled to have our family now include Brent and his family, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and as I am so happy to share this occasion with them, I look forward to the memories we will all make together in the future, and I want to also say that, as I look around this room, there is an even bigger family, inspired by great friendship. As I said earlier, each one of us holds a special facet or perspective of Yoshie and Brent, and regardless of whether you had a “speaking part” or walking part, or holding part in today’s ceremony, each and every one of you has served a really essential role today. The purpose of a wedding is to honor the tradition and acknowledge the rite of passage of two people becoming one. You are all here to participate actively in the evening, so I am challenging each one of you to be inspired by the courage and moxie and spirit of Yoshie and Brent, and I challenge you as follows:

* Just when you think you couldn’t possibly have another bite to eat, savor some more cake!
* Just when you think you’re way too pooped to move another inch, grab one of the kids on the dance floor and “break it down” just one more time
* And just when you think it’s time to call it a night, go for it! Have another cocktail for the road…because, then again…it’s an open bar!!

Thank you all for sharing our joy!!!

Thank you Brent and Yoshie for being the greatest children a mother could possibly wish for…

And let us all raise a glass and say, to Yoshie and Brent, Mazel Tov!! We love you!!