FATHER OF THE BRIDE SPEECH

FOR

MICHAEL ESKANDER

Hello everyone and welcome to the wedding of the year…. at least it is in the eyes of the Eskander family!!! Olivia and I want to thank all of you for being here…. and truly honoring all of us with your presence. I also want to take a moment and thank all of you for really using modern technology, because trying to find this place, as beautiful as it is, would have been a real challenge only a few years ago!!! (**Wait for the laugh**), so thank you Google maps and any other app or old fashioned map you had to use to get here!! I can appreciate the effort made to find the place, and I can also sympathize with the stress it might have caused (**Raise a glass of milk in a beautiful Champagne flute and say**) … Sorry Lisa, Time for the first sip!! We appreciate all of the effort that goes into every detail of planning and attending a wedding, and we are particularly **moved** …. no pun intended….to welcome Laure and Omar Rahmy, a couple that **REALLY** showed some major movement… by travelling all the way from Canada to be here to celebrate with us. I also want to extend a special hello to Lisa’s cousins and partners, Linda and Roger, for making the trip from Sydney to be with us today, and also to their father, George Labib. Welcome to Melbourne to all of you!! We are so happy that Lisa and Terry have found each other and of course that could not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of his wonderful parents, Nick and Vicky. (**Turn to Nick and Vicky and say**) Olivia and I want to welcome all of you to our family and we thank you for raising such fine children (**name Terry’s other siblings**) as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and of course, one that has such great taste in appreciating a wonderful young woman!! We look forward to a rich future filled with new adventures and much joy as our families blend and grow. … And no pressure, but may it grow soon!!! (**Turn to Lisa and say**) Honey, can I get you some milk to calm **YOUR** nerves? (**Wait for the laugh**)

(**Turn to Lisa and say**) Lisa (**or whatever nickname you may use for her**), today is one of the most special days of your life, and believe me, it’s also a day that your mother and I have dreamt of, wondered about and planned for since you were born. I love each of my children equally, but each one of you have your own distinct and special traits, and on an occasion like this one, as you and Terry prepare for the next phase of your life together, so many memories flood my mind and heart. Every day you are beautiful, kind, hard working and always willing to pitch in and help, no matter what is needed. … And I’m not just saying that because you were the one to give me my Father’s Day book on the day it was due!!! (**Give a sly look to Pauline and Alan and wait for the laugh**) Today you are radiant and I want to make sure everyone here knows just how special your mother and I … **know** you are.

Years ago, there was a comedy act in the US and they were called the Smothers Brothers. Tom and Dick had a familiar running joke…. Tommy would always whine, “**Mom always liked you best**!” That is not the case in our family, but as I said, Alan has his priorities and talents and we are proud of him and his achievements, and Pauline is also special in her own unique way. But you? Today the adjectives will flow as we try to allow our guests to see our Lisa through our eyes. When others don’t seem to be able to find the time or words, you are there. When neither Alan nor Pauline were able to think of funny or embarrassing stories to help me with this speech, was it because they just couldn’t think? Or was it because you’re so wonderful and there was just too much to say? (**Give a wink and say**) I think I got a “zinger” in **THAT** time!!! (**Raise the glass of milk again and say**) May I please have a sip of my milk now? (**Wait for the laugh**). Your mother and I love the relationship you have with your brother and sister and we’re especially proud of how close you are with Alan. I guess the fact that he couldn’t think of any old stories is a testament to how much you and he are “**in the moment**!”… And how much you appreciate each other as equals, friends and contemporaries.

As I think of all of the treasured times we’ve had while you and Alan and Pauline were growing up, I think of the wonderful trips we took together… the family bonded and grew closer (**Turn to Pauline and Alan and say**) hey kids…. have you remembered anything yet? No? Well I do!!! We’ve been traveling together since the late 80’s. Who can forget the family trip to Queensland or the Orianna apartment we had on the Gold Coast? What about those delicious lunches at the Pearl Café in Richmond on those beautiful Sunday afternoons? To some it might have been just a moment in time, but to me, as I count the value of my life by my memories of my family, I realize I am indeed very rich.

We’ve had some great family times, but I have to say, the best trip ever was the one the family recently took to Greece, along with our newest member, my newest son, Terry. (**Turn to Terry and say**) Terry, you really raised the bar on that trip. Olivia and I have never felt so well taken care of by anyone as you and your family cared for us on that trip. We got a glimpse of just how considerate and attentive you are, and Lisa is going to expect at least that level of attention… let’s face it, at this point, we all know that Lisa is the kind of girl that knows what she wants, you’ve proven you can deliver, and I hope you’re prepared for that!!! Don’t make it a problem… think of it as a thrilling challenge to always please **MY** daughter, and remember… **Happy Wife, Happy Life**!! (**Wait for the laugh**) And if you’re getting a little anxiety, may I offer you something to calm your stomach? How about a glass of milk? (**Raise your glass and wait for the laugh**). Your parents did a wonderful job of raising you and your brother Vitano, and I think you know by now we can really appreciate a family that is as loving, close and considerate as we are. Vitano and Tina were fantastic hosts and we are all hoping that we, as guests, lived up to your family’s expectations… and may there be many more invitations both **from** your family and for **your family** in the future!!! What a wonderful thing to dream of!! We were all really spoiled for the beauty only offered by late summer in Greece and it would truly be a gift to be able to revisit the place, Serras, and the people…ah, something to look forward to!!! Lisa, come to think of it, Terry is looking better and better as your husband!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Before I get “**The Hook**” …. or get asked to give up this moment, I want to thank everyone who worked so hard on our behalf with preparations and planning in order to make this wedding and reception so memorable, Olivia and I are thankful more than words can express for all your good wishes of health, success and happiness for our children, Lisa and Terry, and we wish that all of you are as happy as we are today. In years to come, when we all sit around the family dinner table and remember this day, we will remember a day filled with pure joy, family, celebration, and much love…. and milk…(**Raise your glass of milk**)!!

I would like to propose a short and sweet toast to the happy couple and I invite all of you to raise your glasses:

Here’s to Lisa and Terry, the world’s newest great couple. May you live a long, happy, productive and joyful life and may this be the beginning of an even more wonderful, close and loving family! Congratulations! We love you!