BIRTHDAY SPEECH

FOR

JOE FORD

Hi everyone!! It’s so great to be here with all of you to celebrate my mother’s **75th** birthday. Can you imagine?? For the past **SEVENTY FIVE YEARS \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** has been working, raising kids, living, loving and learning about life while inspiring each one of us in her own inimitable way. **75 Years!!** You know what’s really funny? Parents that were “raised” in the mid 20th century relied on Dr. Benjamin Spock for so much guidance and wisdom and even now that I’m older and only a minute into this speech, I have already proven one of his basic theories of child raising… He said, “There are only two things a child will share willingly… communicable diseases and his mother’s age.” (**Wait for the** **laugh**)… (**Turn to your mother and say**) Well Mom… I guess I proved him right on one point… and to the other point, at least we have stronger antibiotics now!!! In all honesty however, the only thing that’s contagious here tonight is the joy we all feel for having you in our lives.

What can I say about a woman so special to all of us… no really… What **CAN** I say? Mom was very specific about how each one of us was to prepare for and behave at this party and my instruction was to give a short toast, and ... **(If you want to, you can pretend to** **fumble through your** **pockets and say**) Mom, I just know I have your notes somewhere right here…. (**And wait for the laugh**)

Let’s face it and let’s be just a little serious for a moment. I am the luckiest man on earth to have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as my mother. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Men are what their mothers made them.” Apparently I hit the jackpot! As the product of a loving and close Italian family, Mom was and is the “fiery” one. Devoted to her family, dedicated to her causes, and enthusiastic beyond compare for all of the good life has to offer, I cannot imagine having a better example of how to live and appreciate life. All you have to do is look at her to know that her strength and resilience give her that glow. It hasn’t always been an easy life for her, but clearly she has learned her lessons and taught each one of us what it means to truly be alive. If 50 is the new 30, then 75 is the new 50, which sounds good to me, but might be a little tricky since that would make her younger than all three of her sons!! (**If you want to put a modern spin** **on it you can add**) Of course in this day and age of technological advancement in a world where your cell phone can do almost anything, it **MIGHT** be possible to have a mother younger than her sons, but I haven’t yet discovered **THAT** app… (**Wait for the laugh**).

No celebration of my mother would be complete without some acknowledgements. To Charles, thank you for being so good to Mom for the past thirty years. Thank you for caring for her and keeping that smile on her face. To my brother Jim, our cousins Jake, Sarah, Brianna and Marina, thanks for planning this great party. Your attention to detail has created the perfect setting, and your decorations, invitations and delicious treats are a beautiful acknowledgement of this great woman. And although Nana and Uncle Bob are not technically with us, I know they are looking down and smiling as they watch us enjoy this party, each other and a woman who means so much to them and to us.

(**You mention in the notes that you’re to give a toast. If so, you can phrase this as a set up for the toast, If not, you can just give the wording as your conclusion**)

(**Turn to your mother and say**) Mom, as I look at you today, I see a beautiful, vital, energetic and fashionable woman. To some you are an icon. To many you are mother, friend, wife, sister; but to all of us you are our heart. I would like to invite all of you to raise a glass as I propose a toast:

To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_... Here’s to the NEXT 75!! We wish you a happy, healthy, joyful and productive life, and to paraphrase the great Sophia Loren… and I am sure you will agree…” Everything you see I owe to spaghetti!!” Enjoy!!! Mangia!! Thank you!! I love you Mom!!