**WEDDING SPEECH**

**FOR**

**DAN MALERBA**

Hello everyone. My name is name is Dan and for those of you who don’t know me, Fritz and I have been friends since middle school. Now that I've confessed that and reminded some of you of what life was like, there might be a few people out there who knew us in back then and may just be reaching for just a small headache remedy right about now.... Standing before you, there’s a handsome young man, mature and in love (**If you want to make a little joke you can say,** **But enough** **about me**… **back to the groom!!** **And wait for the laugh**)... Miracles DO happen... And if you don't believe me, I’d like to share just a few memories of the two of us and what it was like growing up together. This may reinforce or shatter a lot of preconceived notions of what kids actually did in Ohio just a few short years ago….

I think you might easily be able to say that we had a typical American adolescence... Just don't check with our parents or the local authorities for back up... (**Wait for the laugh**). We used to play this game that we affectionately referred to as “Break the Ice.” And NO… it didn’t involve practicing witty cocktail party conversation starters. Nope... No hand shaking or small talk... This was a game where two (**ahem**) idiots would go out onto a frozen pond with “tools” …really pretty much anything we could find that was heavy and dangerous, usually an axe (**you can say, “Nothing says ‘wholesome’ like a 13 year old with a rusty axe” and wait for the laugh**) and we would randomly chop holes in the pond’s surface until someone eventually fell in. There were no real winners… oh-except we survived **somehow**...but I suppose we could say we got some good exercise..... Another memory I have is the two of us in the kitchen of the Portage Path house. I remember one time when Mr. Phil Franz walked in and began to ask us a few questions about what we’d been up to. …Which would usually have involved jumping off the roof, breaking things, chatting …**REALLY** chatting… on America Online, which, by the way… **fun fact**… Fritz and his charm somehow managed to get my parents kicked off. I mean, **WHO** gets asked to leave **America Online**? (**Wait for the laugh**) Ah… It’s times like those that made “Break the Ice” seem like unfulfilled expectations… (Feel free to ask him about that later). We weren’t always hell bent on destruction…Actually one of my favorite things to do was to try on Mr. Phil Franz’s sport coats. He had the most incredible collection - Pinks, plaids, patterns, etc. He was some dresser!! A typical end to any conversation in quintessential Mr. Phil Franz fashion was, “Oh and…FRITZ, stop drinking my beer. And Lerbs …that would be me…, don’t smoke my cigars. Have a good night boys.” He was so cool.

And not unlike most 8th grade boys, one of our preferred topics was, of course girls. Sadly-especially for the females in our lives back then, Bevis and Butt-head were the unofficial voice of our 8th grade generation. All they ever wanted to do was to “score.” We wondered with whom we’d end up and what she’d be like. After all, doesn’t even this brief trip down memory lane make us look like “real catches?” (**Wait for the laugh**) I think it’s safe to say that if 8th grade Fritz knew that 18 years later he would “score” the not only beautiful, but kindhearted, intelligent person he has fallen in love with today, he would be dumbfounded. Thin ice couldn’t stop him; axes couldn’t either. Jumping off restaurants and houses (**clarify what you jumped from**) were child’s play, but Chrissy, who my kids call “icky”, had the secret formula to tame that wild beast! In the short time we've known her, she has proved to be everything Fritz dreamed of and described, and she’s so much more. Some people have to sow their wild oats. Some people have to sow their **WILDER** oats, and some just live their lives full on. It’s so clear that the joy and enthusiasm that Fritz brought to those crazy antics are the same characteristics that brought him to Chrissy. There’s a lot to say about the plus side of growing up… like “**somehow we lived**.” (**Wait for** **the laugh**) And then there’s the really great part of life that gives us friends who make us laugh, challenge us, get us in trouble, and then share the really great stuff, like this wedding.

I’d like you all to raise a glass while I propose a toast.—Uh, Fritz-choose something other than Mr. Phil Franz’s beer please!!

To Chrissy and Fritz, I’m so happy for you both!!! Here’s to a life full of lots of adventures and no thin ice… And may I suggest, Chrissy… Hide the axes? (**Wait for the laugh**) Congratulations!!