21ST BIRTHDAY SPEECH

FOR

BRADLEY J. RAINS

Hello everyone and thank you all for being here to celebrate Chloe’s twenty-first birthday. This is a real landmark day in our lives, and especially in Chloe’s ….. And not for the reasons you might think… It’s truly a miracle that we are all here together… and that Chloe agreed to take some time away from her urgent and ardent life devotion…. **power shopping,** to be here with us. (**Wait for the laugh**). Actually, there are times when I feel the need to wear a price ticket in order to get some attention, but hey!! That’s a small price to pay **(get it?)** to have the privilege of being Chloe’s Dad… (**Wait for the laugh**). Truthfully, it is a joy to be Chloe’s father. She has always been a wonderful and devoted daughter, a loving sister, a great friend, and even though some may consider her headstrong, the upside is that she is determined, enthusiastic, full of life, and devoted to expressing herself with love and style and a charm that’s all her own.

As a baby and a little girl, Chloe was always special. From those expressive and clear blue **(?-are they blue?)** eyes to that adorable smile, the minute I saw her I was toast… and she knows it!! As she grew up and matured into the beautiful young woman we all love, she has demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt, her passions, her preferences, and her incredible sense of style. Although I am “just her father,” I know that to others she would be described as “hot.” In my opinion, however, I would think that’s caused by the friction burns on her credit cards and the overheated battery on her mobile phone, but remember…. I’m her dad-I see things from a different perspective!! (**Wait for the laugh**). (**Turn to Chloe and say**) Chloe, you know I’m just kidding. Please don’t change…. **REALLY**. I don’t know if you know this, but the JMA-That would be the Johannesburg Merchants Association (**or mention some really big shopping center name or favorite** **store**) has contacted me to let me know they credit you for being responsible for the resurgence of the upswing in the city’s retail sector. Chloe-you’ve just turned twenty-one…. I can’t even imagine what achievements in shopping you’ll attain by the time we celebrate your thirtieth!! You’re already a master!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Chloe, everyone here knows you and loves you, so I want to make sure that no one thinks that I think you’re obsessed with fashion, style and shopping. After all, in your young life you’ve achieved so much. From attending prestigious schools like La Salle Holy Cross College (**If she had to wear a uniform you can say:** **“Who could resist those cute uniforms?)** to Varsity College where you’re studying BCom, (**You can also say, “ Who can resist those cute school** **supplies?**) you’ve really made your mark… and let’s be honest, who was more proud of you than I when you represented South Africa in the African Judo Championships? What a perfect example of how you blend your sense of style (**more cute uniforms!!)** your determination, and of course not the least, how your power shopping skills translate to ultimate domination in this other high level contact sport!! What an inspiration!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Chloe, you are our light and our spirit here in the Rains family, and that light extends to all of the love and support you share with your family and friends. (**If you can have a little sign printed –just a photo copy will do, and get a really cheap but ornate frame to present to her, say this**). A long time ago, I heard an expression that was powerful, moving, and that applies to NO ONE more than it does to you. I can’t imagine, but somewhere, somehow, I think that cosmically, you were the inspiration for this pithy saying. It meant so much to me and really stayed with me, and I know it will resonate with you even more. I want to end my little birthday speech to you with these words, but first I want you to know how much we love and respect everything about you. May every day be like a birthday to you… oh wait… it already is… (**Wait for the laugh**) and remember to live by this saying every day:

**“EACH MORNING I WAKE UP AND I THANK THE LORD FOR MY ABILITY TO ACCESSORIZE.”**

We love you!! Happy birthday and many, MANY more!!