REHEARSAL DINNER SPEECH

FOR

AKIVA ISSER

Hello everyone!!! This is quite a momentous weekend for all of us and of course, especially for my great friend Andrew and his beautiful bride Elizabeth. This rehearsal dinner is a terrific opportunity to hang out, get to know each other, and enjoy our last meal before we have to squeeze into our fancy clothes (**Wait for** **the laugh**). As this dinner progresses, the excitement builds, and when we next see the happy couple, I have a feeling Andrew will be on his **VERY**. **BEST.** **BEHAVIOR.** (**Say those 3 words with emphasis and wait for the laugh**).

There was a famous radio talk show personality in New York named Bernard Meltzer, and he once said something that I think really applies when I think of my ~~long~~… I mean **enduring** and ~~crazy~~…. I mean **exciting** friendship with Andrew. He said, “A true friend is someone who thinks you are a good egg even though he knows you are slightly **cracked**.” (**Turn to Andrew and say**) Andrew, I think that says it all… I am **DEFINITELY** a true friend!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

For those of you that may not know the legend of Akiva and Andrew, we met in college, and contrary to the blurbs on the wedding website, it was **NOT ME** who was “on Andrew’s floor” when we met… (**if you think it’s appropriate you can say**) Jeez… that makes me sound so… I don’t know… Loose?? It would have been more likely that **ANDREW** was doing **SOMETHING** to distract all of the dorm residents…. but then again, that’s why we love him!! It’s hard to resist the wit, wisdom, and spirit of Andrew Friedman. I mean, show of hands… did anyone else ever have the dream of being the Syracuse mascot on his or her bucket list? Andrew did!! Does anyone set a goal to be an orange Muppet in a baseball hat? Andrew did!!! (**Wait for the laugh**)… Elizabeth, before you give up on him, keep this in mind… had we attended the school fifty years earlier, your husband to be would have been “The **Saltine** Warrior!!” You know what I say to that? I say… good with soup… not so much as an alter ego!!

Yes, Andrew is a character with a long list of accomplishments. I know that there are several guests present tonight who bear the distinction of being among the hundred or so people who supported Andrew’s **most impassioned** cause, “Get Akiva to Join Facebook.” Really… **YOU** tell **ME**… **HOW DOES ONE RESIST**? It’s futile!!!! And yes… I joined…

But the truth is, to know Andrew is to love him. We’ve now been friends for about twenty years (**If you want to make a “techie joke” you can say**) … or to put it in different terms… about the length of 8 upgrades of IOS… (**And wait for the** **laugh**) and as our lives take twists and turns, the measure of **TRUE** friendship is that our connection endures. With all of his “shtick,” Andrew is an intelligent, inspiring, down to earth guy who is there when it counts; in fact, he officiated at my wedding to my beautiful wife Meg. (**If you want to make a joke** **you can say**) … And **we’re** still talking!! (**And wait for the laugh**) .. Just kidding!!

Elizabeth, although we haven’t spent too much time together … **YET**, Meg and I look forward to getting to know you even better as we continue on this path of friendship and discovery. From what I can observe, the two of you truly **COMPLEMENT** each other and all of us are very happy for both of you now … and forever.

Andrew, all jokes aside; I am honored to stand by your side as one of your groomsmen. It’s another great milestone that cements our bond of friendship (**if you want to make a joke you can say**) … and it sure beats being “on Andrew’s floor” at Syracuse!!.

Andrew and Elizabeth, we wish you health, happiness, patience, partnership, understanding and much love, and (**If you want** **to get a little sentimental you can say**) I am sure I speak for all of us when I say that we **CANNOT WAIT** to dance at your wedding!! Mazel tov!!