**13979, Vikas Soma**

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are all so happy you could be with us to celebrate my brother-in-law’s wedding. We weren’t sure for a while if the wedding was going to take place because of the difference between the bride and groom’s cultural backgrounds. Her idea of what the bride should wear during the ceremony was very different from ours for instance. The ceremony for Indian weddings and Western weddings is also very different. But, all in all I think they came up with a mutually acceptable compromise, don’t you? Of course, the language barrier was a little difficult since she only speaks English. I wonder if she really knows what she agreed to. One good thing, her sister married an Indian guy so he probably helped translate a few things.

First let me tell you a little bit about the groom. He’s quite a combination of things really. He’s very ambitious and a very hard worker. But, he’s also stubborn, bull headed and a little on the juvenile side. He’s got a great smile and he’s always laughing about something. Actually, it’s little hard to tell when he’s serious and when he’s not. He really loves to drink beer. I mean he really loves to drink beer. He always talks about making big money and how he wants to be filthy rich. Of course that’s probably because he is so broke due to all his student loans. All in all he is well-liked by everyone who knows him.

As for those student loans at least he got them preparing for a career that should earn him all that money he wants so much. He’s training in cardiology just like me so I totally understand his student loans and why he wants so much money. He and I have done a lot of things together so I guess I know him about as well as anyone other than his family or the bride. We did triathlons together, and he went to Europe with us. Of course he brought his fiancé (then girlfriend) along without either family knowing, TWICE. He really loves the shock factor.

As much as he loves beer he also loves to try different diets and exercises and somehow convinces his friends to do it too. He wants to try the paleo diet now. Not quite sure what all that entails but I’m also not sure he can convince me to try this one. He was a vegan for over a year while I was vegan for only a week. I enjoy my food. Of course it wouldn’t hurt me to try one of his diet and exercise ideas since I'm fat he is not. In preparation for the wedding we have been binging on food and drinks and trying to burn those calories by running at midnight..this week. Hopefully our foolishness doesn’t show in our appearance today. We wanted to enjoy our fun before the wedding but not upset the wedding celebrations. Did we succeed? I think we did. I think we actually outdid ourselves guys. Don’t you agree that we did the ladies proud today?

My friend’s beautiful bride is the opposite of my friend. I think she’ll be good for him. She is very down to earth. She’s also sweet, helpful, kind and a great baker. Hmm, with his love for good food she might actually put some weight on him. I couldn’t believe it when he told me how he proposed. He said he took her out on the Brooklyn Bridge in New York City where they live on one of the coldest nights of the year. She was either very much in love or too cold to disagree. Seriously I think she was just very much in love. I can see the love shining out from both of them.

If history is any indication of success I think these two have a great future ahead of them. They met at medical school in the Caribbean. My wife, who is his sister, and I also met at medical school in the Caribbean and we are deliriously happy. Of course we went to a different medical school but I don’t see how that could make any difference. I’m believing for their success. Especially since my wife spent a boatload of money shopping for this wedding. I am now officially broke so I’m rooting for him to come into all that money he’s always talking about so he can pay me back.

We’ve had some fun today with my pale attempt at public speaking but now I need to get a little sentimental. My wife and I truly are happy as are all of parents. That happiness doesn’t come from just having many things in common or following some plan of action. Life-long marital happiness takes work. It takes thinking about the other person more than you think about yourself. It means wanting to make your marriage successful. “A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person.”

Please join me now in a toast to the bride and groom.

May you always remember why you fell in love

May you always remember how you fell in love

May you always see the good in any challenge

May you always count a blessing to match every trial

And remember to fall in love a little bit more every day