BAT MITZVAH SPEECH

FOR

PATRICK IFRAH

Hello everyone!!! On behalf of the Ifrah family I want to welcome all of you here today to share Isabella’s special milestone. Today is cause for great celebration. Thirteen years of growing, learning, and discovering all sorts of details about life have gone into the development of a wonderful girl whose Bat Mitzvah we celebrate today. It’s been thirteen years of love and laughter, of occasional tears and, **of course**, unreasonable parental demands (**Say this with exaggeration and** **wait for the laugh**). How quickly time flies. Our baby is suddenly standing at the crossroads between childhood and adulthood. It is a fascinating and exciting time. I want to thank all of you, both family and friends, who are here today to witness and support Isabella for this occasion. It means so much to us to be sharing this very special occasion with each onel of you.

Isabella, it would be nice to take credit for all of the talents, determination, personality, and “smarts” that make you such a fantastic daughter, but I have to admit that your ability to accomplish what you set out to do and the way you bring happiness to others is a gift you were born with. From day one you captured my heart and my love for you just keeps on growing. When you were small, it was such a joy to watch you discovering life. I sometimes wished the years would slow down, even just a little so that I could savor and enjoy those precious times a little longer. I love our conversations about the world around us as we discuss thoughts of life’s mysteries waiting to be discovered. To me it’s so special that we share the same inquisitive approach to everything we do and that is a very special bond.

The times we spend together are so precious, but the years have continued to rush by and although I wish I could observe this time in your life at a pace that would allow me to really take in all that I see that astounds me about you, the time just flies. It seems that before we can say “Happy First Birthday,” you’ve become a beautiful young lady. You have amazed us with your academic abilities, your leadership qualities, your gift of writing, your musical talents and the courage you have when faced with new challenges. Whether it is dealing with Type I diabetes, speaking or singing in front of hundreds of people, being interviewed on television, or being a JDRF Ambassador, you have always exuded confidence and the way you continue to dare to be different is refreshing and inspiring. You always pushed yourself to do what you felt needed to be done. You have continued to share joy and optimism about the world around us, and you certainly never cease to give new reasons for us to be proud of you.

You are at the center of one of the greatest and most worthy traditions, religions and cultures in the world. Within you now are responsibilities and opportunities that will reveal themselves to you as you continue to mature and understand more and more about life. We hope and we know that as you will grow into adulthood, you will take your faith and wisdom and become a worthy member of the community.

Isabella you have so much to give and so far to go. In a world of forgotten values and neglected beliefs, it is good to see that you are acknowledging God as an important part of your life and what could be more fitting than your Torah portion today on the commandments to help chart your journey and guide you forward.

I hope that you will learn that your faith is a gift and that it is something that will stand with you for the rest of your life. Remember too that without family and faith, life can be a lonely journey. Enjoy every day. Enjoy your youth. Be kind to others so that they can find the good in life too. Be especially kind to your little sister, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, who looks up to you and loves you very much.

Remember that sometimes life can challenge and change the greatest laid plans. Remember that we have done our best to give you a strong foundation. Believe in the traditions we’ve shown you. Embrace change and learn to go with the wind. Continue to be fascinated by science, but know that sometimes there is a greater purpose at hand, and all the while remember that the lessons you have learned will continue to guide you through life. Whatever you do though, do it with all the enthusiasm possible and remember that all the money, all the fame in the world does not help if you do not have peace of mind and a clear conscience.

Your Papi who unfortunately cannot be with us today is here in spirit. He would be so proud, as we are, of what you have accomplished and that you will be carrying our faith as you are doing right now and from today forward. He loved you so very much and he was always very fond of how sweet and attentive you were to him.

Try to always remember to keep God in your life and bring Him with you wherever you go. Make him a part of everything you do. He will definitely be there for you when you need him. May God keep you in the palm of his hand and remember you will always be our little girl and we will always be there for you. We love you!! Mazel Tov!!