WEDDING SPEECH

FOR

ANNALIA STEBELSKY

Hello everyone. It’s so great to be here to really participate and “play” at this wonderful occasion. This is a fantastic moment to really celebrate!! Everyone that is here today has been carefully chosen and we all serve an important purpose for the bride and groom. It’s always life affirming to be privileged to witness the marriage of two people, joining forces to find their way in this world as a caring, loving, committed… and don’t forget…. game playing team… but that’s only in the **ACTUAL** sense of the word, people!! When it comes to each other, they are and will be real, honest, considerate and respectful… providing who is at the controls… if you know what I mean!! Alicia and Patrick are about to embark on the greatest team challenge of their lives, their own unique **amazing race**…. and **WE** are all here as witnesses at the starting line… and what a view it is!! Most of us know and some of us appreciate, the spirit and sense of fun and adventure these two bring to everything they do in their lives and in some ways I suppose we might say that today signifies the beginning of their most ambitious and long lasting role playing yet… that of husband and wife!! So as we join in, we are about to see one of life’s ultimate fantasies for just about everyone… come to life with this happy, loving couple.

…. If we go way, way, **WAY** back in time, in a quest to discover how the earth was formed, there are many theories that can be proposed as an explanation. One theory suggests that **a long time ago, in a galaxy far, FAR away**, possibly about **4.6** **BILLION** years ago, particles of rock and ice swirled around and they collided and merged and smashed together to create planets. As I thought about that theory in preparation for this occasion, I imagined we can say that those molecules coming together and forming an entity greater than the individual particles can be described symbolically as the earliest and most basic form of marriage. Two objects, inextricably drawn to one another, join forces for the greater good of mankind… and here we are, a few billion years later, and the molecules are still merging!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

As members of the human race we’ve lived and learned and followed tradition…. and sometimes we don’t even know where certain traditions began. Did you know that back in the 1500’s people made it a practice of getting married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and they were still fairly clean a month later? Of course the bride also carried a bouquet of fresh flowers to make sure she was a little “fragrant,” just in case… Good to know!! (**Wait for the laugh**). Did anyone know that in olden times in Scotland, before the wedding, it was a common practice for a man to kidnap his bride? The friend of the groom who found the bride first was known as “the best man.” It’s a relief that life is a little less complicated now! (**Wait for the laugh**). Most brides wear their engagement and wedding rings on the fourth finger of the left hand because it is believed that there is a vein leading from that finger directly to the heart and it was called the “Vena Amori,” the vein of love.

And know today, Alicia and Patrick, you will be joined together as husband and wife, but always remember who you are and why you’re committed to each other. Look to your passions to guide you, as there is wisdom all around. Who can forget the passage from “The Fellowship of the Ring, “It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept off to.” Or what about a little wisdom from one of our all time favorite sages, Yoda, who counseled, “ Do. Or do not. There is no try.” Marriage can be a dangerous business too…. but only if you enter it with eyes, hearts and minds **closed**. Marriage is a partnership and from this day forward, you two are on the same team. You’ll wear the uniforms of a united front and you’ll have each other’s backs no matter what. There are some little bits of advice I’d like to give both of you. Patrick, now that you’re about to be married, remember that although we didn’t technically use the words “honor” and “obey,” Alicia is your queen and you must always treat her with love, humor, compassion and respect. And also I’d like to paraphrase the sound words of comedienne Loni Love who said, “If you can afford an Xbox, you can afford to take her out to Panda Express” (**Or name some other local fast food restaurant that people in the area usually joke about and wait for the laugh**). To Alicia, I also want you to know it’s important to express yourself. Discuss with Patrick if something isn’t working right and try to discover the issues that are affecting your relationship … reboot as needed and don’t let small issues turn into big problems… And by the way… calls to tech support… **ANY** tech support, do **NOT** qualify as marital therapy!! (**Wait for the laugh**)

It’s really an honor and a privilege to officiate at this service that acts to lawfully unite two of our favorite forces of nature, Alicia and Patrick. It’s time for both of you to become the real “**Lord and Lady of the rings**” and as you place these rings on each other’s “Vena amori,” know that it is a symbol of connection, commitment and respect. And as you both “seal the deal for al of us to witness, remember the words of Mr. J.R.R Tolkien who wrote, “And he took her in his arms and kissed her under the sunlit sky, and he cared not that they stood high upon the walls in the sight of many.”

May you have a lifetime of health, happiness, prosperity, and major bonus points and … Oh… one last thing… (**Give the Vulcan salute from Star Trek and say**), “**Live long and prosper**!” Congratulations!