**14346, Fred Brown**

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today I am honored to be here to stand as best man for my very best friend. Darryl and I have been best friends ever since the day we met on the very first day of the seventh grade. Ever since that day we have been totally inseparable. We’ve gone to school together, we’ve lived together, played golf together. We even travelled to Las Vegas together. I guess it would be too much trouble for me to expect to go with him on his honeymoon. Sorry, Darryl, I guess that tradition has to stop today. But, if you don’t already, you’ll thank me for this one day.

Of all the careers we considered growing up I don’t think either of us considered that Darryl would become an addictions counselor. He helps other people to deal with and overcome their addictions. We’ve spent so much time together our whole lives that some of our friends’ joke that he is addicted to me. Since he’s getting married today I guess he’s going to break that addiction cold turkey today. You might say he’s trading one addiction for another, me for his bride. If she weren’t so beautiful I might be offended. Instead I think I’m just jealous. He’s getting the better deal here.

Darryl is marrying one of the most beautiful girls I know. Her name is Tara. One possible meaning for Tara is elevated place in Gaelic and comes from a term that meant where the Irish high kings dwelt. I guess that means you’re becoming royalty today Darryl. You couldn’t have a sweeter queen than Tara. The two of them have two beautiful girls name Norah and Violet. Obviously the girls get their looks from their mother. Today they make it official that they are all a family. Funny, they thought they already were but it’s nice to get it all down on paper.

Since we’ve been so close our entire lives our families have been close also. Darryl’s parents Pat and Donna have been like my second parents. Growing up together we took the same classes, ran with the same group of friends, we even got into the same trouble. Of course, that meant when we did get into trouble it was double trouble because we had both sets of parents to deal with and try to convince not to punish us too severely.

One way that we differ is that Darryl is extremely thrifty. Or should I say cheap. He knows how to pinch a penny until it screams, “let me go.” I remember when we went to Las Vegas Darryl was trying to think of all the ways he could make a dollar stretch. It was downright embarrassing when he tried to sneak back a tip so he could give it again the next meal. As long as he and Tara are thrifty together they should be fine for the next 50 years or so.

I said before I think I’m just a little bit jealous and that’s true. Tara is a truly wonderful woman and she is perfect for Darryl. She is the yin to his yang. She is sweet where he is just plain ornery. She is beautiful where he is on the plain side. She is his opposite in several ways and should balance him out. I won’t say she is a spendthrift but she at least does know how to spend a little money to celebrate good things. Darryl may actually come out of his shell a little bit in that respect now.

 I remember thinking when they met that she was too different from him, but after all these years I can see that their differences are what have become their strengths. In ways that he may have a little weakness, that is her strength. In ways that she is not so strong that is where Darryl can be her rock. Together they make perfect parents for their little girls. They show them in every way how a mom and dad, and even how a man and woman should relate to one another.

Darryl and Tara know how to treat each other well. You could never doubt how much they love each other and how much they love their girls. They know how to stand together with each other in the midst of a storm and they know how to celebrate together when the storm is over. They have taught the girls so many life lessons just by how they live their lives.

Today they become man and wife and their journey changes from what it was. It becomes stronger somehow by the official joining. They were already a couple. They were already a family. They already loved one another and loved their girls mightily. Today is a day to celebrate what they have already made successful.

Would everyone please join me today and toast the happy couple?

Darryl and Tara,

May you always remember how you fell in love. May your love grow from day to day. May you always remember why you fell in love. May you always remember how you fell in love. As you travel life’s road may you always remember to put the other’s needs before your own. No matter how much you love your children may you always remember to put your relationship with one another first because it is your combined strength that will keep your family strong. And when life throws curves your way, as it always does, remember that together you can do anything. Your journey isn’t just beginning today but it is taking a fork in the road. Today you make permanent something that was already formed together from your love. May you look back on today 50 years or so from now and think, “I am so glad I made the decision to marry the love of my life and my new best friend.”

Good luck to you Darryl and Tara.

Thank you