FATHER OF THE BRIDE SPEECH

FOR

COLIN SNELL

Hello everyone and thanks for joining us on this beautiful, special occasion. The atmosphere is incredible, our bride and groom are spectacular today, and the feeling of love and hope and promise for a rich and exciting future is really palpable. All of our children mean so much to us, and Katie… well, who on earth could have ever asked for a more wonderful, caring, and beautiful daughter, both inside and out. As Wynne and I have gone through the process of “pre-wedding excitement,” we’ve celebrated the rites of passage afforded to the parents of the bride, and believe me, it’s been a process. And as we are finally here to witness and celebrate Katie and Blake’s union, so many memories and sentiments have been going through my mind. It’s all been so overwhelming that I wanted to make sure I organized my thoughts. Katie, you’ve really been the perfect daughter and I want to make sure you fully understand just how much you mean to us and how proud we are of the woman you’ve become. (**If you want to make a little joke you can start taking out a zillion colorful post its, one at a time, and start sticking them on the table in front of you**). So many things you’ve done have inspired those who love you most… let’s face it… has anyone ever made better or more organized use of Post It’s than **YOU**… especially when you had to keep your roommates in line? (**Wait for the laugh**). I will never forget when we visited you at college…. little sticky bits of paper with notes…reminders…instructions left **EVERYWHERE**… What a sight that was…. and it has been indelibly seared into my brain ever since (**Keep on taking out the Post its from your pocket as though you’re reading them and wait for the laugh**). It did seem somewhat over the top back then but you know what? It’s a really good idea!! (**If you want, you can add**)… but there’s a time and a place for everything… let’s be glad I know what all of the controls are for in the cockpit…I’m not so sure how this would “**fly”** on the job!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Katie, maybe I’m prejudiced because I’m your father, but throughout your life, even as a child, you were special and people knew it and celebrated your unique, kind, caring soul. Remember that vacation when we all went to Sea World in Florida?? You were about four years old and boy, were you kids having a great time! I remember your Grandma \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ decided to buy each one of you a little gift as a token of a super fun adventure, and you chose the adorable little stuffed sea mammal and named him Nip Nip. Things were going quite well… or so we thought…. until we prepared to leave the park… do you remember how you started to cry? Do you remember **why**?? Your Grandma asked what the tears were for and through the very dramatic blubbering you managed to blurt out that you were afraid that you might not love Nip Nip later on as much as you loved him at that moment!!! Uh… **Blake**???? Let’s both pray Katie grew out of **THAT** one!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Yes, you were and are a sweet, special, exceptional young woman. As the middle child between your brothers Greg and Cory, life could have been challenging but you all worked it out and you guys are the best of friends… your mom and I are so happy for that. As a young girl, you had a way about you… so easy going and the neighborhood kids naturally gravitated to you. You were like the Pied Piper of (**Name the street she grew up on**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Street. You were the go –to baby sitter and even on weekends and holidays that you would get to come home from college, the kids visited you. It’s no surprise that in your career you’ve risen to the challenge to make a difference in the lives of children that really need your care and compassion. Never one to turn away from someone in need, you have made such a humane and inspirational contribution to the pediatric patients you care for at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. All of us are in awe of your strength and capacity to care for those in need.

And then you met Blake and as far as we’re concerned… you hit the jackpot! Blake, your musical talent is extraordinary, you’re a caring, mindful, respectful young man, your thirst for knowledge is legendary… in fact we’ve heard… from reliable sources… at this **VERY** table… that through age eight or nine you would not stop talking!!! Katie… I hope that hasn’t continued and doesn’t extend into his sleeping time!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). Your natural passion and curiosity for life served you well… as a wonderful student, an extremely talented and versatile musician, and as a respectful, humane, caring and loving soul. All of us Snells and of course Greta, will never forget your kindness and consideration when you baby sat for her at school, and you won all of our hearts when you sent us the sympathy card when \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ passed on to that rainbow bridge (**I was not clear which dog passed away- and Blake sent the sympathy card**). Thoughtfulness and respect like that are rare and truly appreciated and we appreciate you.

Katie and Blake, the two of you have an ease and caring for each other that is so special. The two of you really “fit” together. We know that as a united married couple you will each find your strength and a fuller voice to self-express. In the book, The Little Prince, St Exupery says, “It is only with the heart that one can see rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye.” We know that the both of you have the depth of connection and the sensitivity of understanding to really want to make a contribution to this world in your special ways. Think of today as the beginning of your new life and the entire, exciting, unpredictable world lies ahead for you to travel as husband and wife. Orville Wright once said, “The airplane stays up because it doesn’t have time to fall.” Trust in your journey together and find strength in momentum…. because for sure the both of you are too busy, too talented, and way too wonderful to do anything but succeed in life and have everything your hearts desire. Think of this as well… I’ve heard it stated, “The bad news is time flies. The good news is, you’re the pilot.” Life is short. Time really does fly. Use the momentum of all of this love and good wishes to chart your future course as you find strength and partnership within each other.

Before I go (**Take some more Post Its out of your pocket and say**) I want to welcome Blake’s family to ours. To (**Name Blake’s mom**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and Chuck, Anne, Dennis and Shaun, we want to say how happy we are to have Blake and all of you as part of our extended family. Blake is an exceptional young man and we are proud to call him “Son.” (**If you want to thank Reverend Mia you can say**) To Shaun, Reverend Mia, thank you for your beautiful and touching service.

I would like to invite all of you to raise a glass as I propose a toast to the new Mr. and Mrs. Parsons (**Is Katie taking Blake’s name? If not you can say “bride and groom”**):

To Katie and Blake. In honor of your marriage, I would like to share the Naval toast:

“May your life’s voyage be blessed with ‘fair winds and following seas,’” and may you both have more health, happiness, love, success, partnership, fun, and respect than you could ever wish for! Congratulations!! We love you!!