BAT MITZVAH SPEECH

FOR

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REVISED

Hello everyone! We want to welcome all of you and thank you for sharing this wonderful moment with our family. We are especially happy that Talia’s grandparents, my parents, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are here from Israel, and we are so happy that Grandma \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is here with us to celebrate this great day with Talia. The two of you have an incredible relationship and this is a moment when we are so proud of our beautiful and regal princess. Of course we all miss Grandpa \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ but we know he is here in spirit, full of pride, watching over the festivities. He is definitely smiling down on all of us, especially our Bat Mitzvah girl. This is a very special event in our family’s history for an exceptional young lady who is a unique blend of all of us. Today we have a chance to really appreciate how she has blossomed into the beautiful young woman we see today. Each one of us here are all connected in different ways throughout life and today we honor those special connections and treasured relationships that all center around our beautiful Bat Mitzvah girl, Talia.

Although I may be known as a man of few words, I want to say that I am also a man of many thoughts. Most of those thoughts center on my love for my family and the many memories and observations of my children as I witness them becoming beautiful, poised, graceful and caring young women. The celebration of one’s Bat Mitzvah is an age-old rite of passage that calls attention to the process of entering adulthood, but for those of you that really know Talia… and I’m going to say that would include **ALL** of you, you’ve had the opportunity to see her demonstrate a natural poise and self-possession way beyond her years. I may have a somewhat biased opinion, but I would go so far as to say Talia has a regal presence. She is composed and elegant… She’s like a princess… but in the best sense of the word!! It’s almost like she might belong in another place in time…. but fortunately she’s **HERE** and I am the lucky one who got to be her Dad!! I sometimes wonder- to what do we owe this gift of grace? To paraphrase one of the popular weekly magazines… Good genes or good dance lessons? I would like to think a little of both is involved when it comes to Talia. Baryshnikov has said that every ballet and every dance that he has learned and performed has given him something important. I think the same is true of how dance has inspired Talia throughout her life. It takes a special person to want to spend the time, determination, and training to focus on the practice of dance. I think that even though she is still only a young girl, Talia has taken that practice and used the best of the discipline to inspire her throughout her life. Whether applying her focus in school or in studying for this day, Talia has shown us that she is beautiful, smart and elegant.

Today is a day to pause and remember what life with my daughter has been like for the past thirteen years and although those memories have been flashing through my head non-stop, I would have to say that even the simplest, most everyday events were as special as a moment like this. First of all, I really have to thank Alex, Talia’s older sister, for letting me practice being a dad on her… some of you might remember I was a little shy when Alex was first born. But by the time Talia came along… I would like to think I had the situation under control… sort of… (**Turn to Talia and say**) Talia, can you remember back to the day when I surprised you and brought home Milky? Wow!! That was an occasion!! You two fell in love instantly and it is a great relationship that has withstood the test of time. Of course Milky has had her moments… and so have you…. and I… like when you were just a little more than a baby, I so lovingly offered to feed you pasta (**you can add**)… after all I was no longer a new father… I was **experienced**… a real pro!! … and **you bit my finger**… You were so adorable I barely felt the pain**….** Alex… it’s a good thing **YOU** didn’t do that!!There’s something else I have to mention when I think of memories and thoughts about you…. most people here may not realize this but you have another talent that I think is world class…. of course once again I may be biased, but frankly, I don’t know of **ANYONE** that has the capacity to give better hugs than you can!! Just check with Milky!! I also love that even though you and your sister Alex are such different people, your mother and I are happy that the two of you are so close and such good friends. We are proud of the both of you and thrilled that the two of you really love each other and are genuinely close. Remember that you are always there for each other no matter what.

Talia, you really are the “whole package…” you have such wonderful qualities. You’re a great friend and a “Super” sister. Your enthusiasm for life is infectious… don’t ever lose that spirit… and now you’re ready to take the next steps on your own special life adventure. Be mindful of those around you. Remember to be considerate to others and to do all that you do with integrity. Remember that it’s been said that young girls with dreams become women with vision. Your mother and I have done our best to instill in you values and lessons that will serve you as you grow up and become an adult. Today you showed all of us a glimpse into what you will be like as a young woman and your potential takes my breath away. As you go through life, remember to keep your heart, your mind and your eyes open to new ideas, be compassionate and caring, and know that learning and giving to others never ends. I once heard that “The future belongs to the curious- the ones who are not afraid to try, explore, or question.” I believe that you are **THAT** kind of person and although I want you to be my little girl forever; I cannot wait to see how you blossom throughout your life. Mazel tov! (**Congratulations?**) We love you!