MATRON OF HONOR SPEECH

FOR

JACKIE ARREDONDO

Hello everyone!! I’m Jackie and it is an honor to be here as Genevieve’s Matron of Honor at her wedding to Joseph. I want to congratulate Gen’s and Joseph’s families and say that it is so great be able to share such an important moment. Gen, we may not see each other regularly but it is a testament to our friendship that neither space nor time can keep us apart. We always share great moments and there’s always a genuine closeness no matter how many miles might separate us. I’ve heard it said that laughter is the shortest distance between two friends and you have really proven to me that is the truth!! It’s also true that genuine friendship really is NOT about being inseparable… it’s about knowing in both of your hearts that there really is no distance too big to keep our friendship separated. **NOTHING** can stop us and our conversation!!

Just n case you may not know, Genevieve and I have been best friends since high school, and like most legends of deep, true, authentic friendship, I will **NEVER** forget the first time I saw Gen. …And neither would **YOU**… It was special and I bet NO ONE in this room ever experienced a future best friend making such a lasting, permanent, POWERFUL first impression… but Gen did!!! … You see, the first time I laid eyes on her, it was in our sophomore year at Gregory-Portland High School. The year was 2004. We were young, eager, and enthusiastic… well at least ONE of us was… you see the first time I saw Gen she was physically fighting with another girl in the school hallway!!! She was strong!! Spirited!!! Feisty!!! … And I remember thinking, “Note to self… stay away from **THAT One**!!”…. Well I was able to manage that for about two years. My streak came to an end… thankfully, in 2006 when Genevieve and I found ourselves in the same 2nd period Theater Tech class. The rest is history. We became best friends and although we had different groups that we hung out with, there was always something about Genevieve … and the years have proven that our friendship is the **real thing**.

After high school Gen stayed in Portland and I moved to San Antonio to go to college. We weren’t in constant contact but every time we reconnected, the space between us just evaporated and we didn’t miss a beat. I really treasure the occasions we would get together over the course of a weekend and catch up and the mutual understanding and friendship was always there. It just didn’t matter if weeks or months had passed; reconnection was and is so natural… never any awkwardness. We truly are like family… (**If you want to make a joke you can say**) Honestly Gen, I don’t know what’s tighter… our jeans or our friendship!! (**And wait for the laugh**).

Gen really was a wild child when I first saw her… I’m not gonna say “Bully” because it **IS** her wedding day, but she did have what we might call a “**hot head**.” Now that she is a mature, professional, married woman, I have to say that I have really seen an amazing transformation. That hot head has become passionate and fiercely caring. Her temper has turned into enthusiasm. Her yelling has become a more enthusiastic style of management!! Gen has blossomed into a really great woman and she has found her Prince Charming in Joseph. These two have been dating since 2004, so they **REALLY** know each other!! Gen and Joseph make a wonderful family along with their beautiful son Masen. It’s great to see Gen as a trustworthy, loyal, loving and inspirational mother to Masen and an exciting, dedicated, and supportive partner to Joseph. Now Gen keeps her cool…. almost **TOO MUCH**… because her house is **HOT, HOT, HOT**!!! Joseph, as the great chef that he is, is responsible for keeping the kitchen HOT… Gen on the other hand, just turns it up around the whole rest of the house!! Those of us that know and love Gen know that when we visit it might be a good idea to bring a little fan… just in case! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Joseph, your love of Gen and Masen and your talent and patience know no bounds. It’s an inspiration to watch… Your skills and keen eye for design stretch from the kitchen to the whole house, and even though your wife and I may not have a clue for what looks good on your walls, you’ve shown all of us that your great taste goes way beyond the kitchen. You’re a wonderful chef… and someday our favorite picky eater (**Turn to Gen and give her the side eye**) will savor every wonderful dish you make.

I hope I’ve given you an idea of just how much the both of you mean to me. It’s funny how life works out. Would I have ever imagined that the bully in the hallway kicking the %^&#!!@# (**Can you say crap??** **Heck???**) out of that poor girl would end up being this beautiful loving wife and mother? And would I have also ever imagined back then steering clear of the ruckus in the school corridor that I would be so happy for all that she has accomplished? Gen, you have shown all of us that your strength lies in your character, your devotion to Joseph and Masen, and your commitment to having an amazing, loving marriage and life. I know everyone shares my sentiment that we wish the three of you more than you might ever wish for yourselves. Here’s to a lifetime of love, health, happiness, strength, partnership and laughter! We love you!! Congratulations!