MAID OF HONOR SPEECH

FOR

JENNY WYSOCKI

Hello everyone!!! For those of you that may not know who I am, I would like to introduce myself. I am Jenny and I am proud to be Laurie’s maid of honor. I am thrilled to be able to celebrate the union of these two beautiful souls, Laurie and Sheen, and I am even more proud to be Laurie’s best friend… a distinction both of us treasure.

In this crazy, connected, tech happy world, people come into our lives in unique, magical and unexpected ways, and that is usually a sure sign that something is meant to be. Several years ago I placed an ad for a roommate on Craigslist. I imagine most of you are waiting for the punch line…. I will tell you this. There are plenty of weird stories about Craigslist experiences… after all, statistics tell us that Craigslist users post on average over **100 MILLION** classified ads **each month**!!! That’s a lot of opportunities for the crazy to happen!!! But you know what? Like winning the lottery, like finding that one rock that turns out to be a diamond in the rough, I met Laurie and the rest is history! As I placed the ad I prepared myself for whatever might have come my way. I needed a roommate and had to search somewhere. Did I ever in a million years imagine that the girl that responded would become my closest friend? No… **Not. At. All.** To be honest, I had my circle of best friends… those that had been with me most of my life since we were little kids in elementary school. We knew each other like we were family and I was content… not looking for any more “besties” **(-or if you prefer use a word that might be more appropriate for you**), but Laurie moved in and slowly but surely, with time and trust, our close friendship developed and our bond strengthened. Laurie isn’t like my childhood friends. She’s unique. Over the months and years of sharing our apartment she became even more than a sister to me. For those of you that know Laurie, you know just how special she is. Her selflessness is epic. Her big heart is legendary. Her ability to listen and encourage and allow you to see things about yourself is a gift. Maybe it’s because Laurie has such a generous and giving soul, but in Laurie’s reflection people have the ability and inspiration to become more of who they really are. I think that comes from her passion for honesty and authenticity. (**If you want to make a joke you can say**) Some may say that Laurie has a really low threshold for you-know-what, but this is a wedding and we’re all dressed up so I will refrain from using more graphic language!! (**Wait for the laugh**). She really tells it like it is…. even if the other person… or me… doesn’t want to hear it. By the end of our “sessions: I always knew I was thankful for her wisdom, input and intolerance for, well, you know. I learned early on in our friendship that when I have issues or problems and I work them out with Laurie’s guidance, I am able to see other aspects of life. It may fell like she’s changing me, but I realize I trust her to be able to discover more of myself thanks to her insights and caring.

Living, laughing, experiencing life with Laurie has been one of the greatest rides of my life. It didn’t matter whether we were trying to escape from a tornado at the US Open… man… those things are **FAST**!! (**Wait for the laugh**) … or being stuck in hours of traffic on the way to a Rutgers football game, or having one of our “life talks” on the roof of our building, being such good friends with Laurie really made me appreciate true and special friendship. Discovering who she is as a person and watching her grow and blossom really taught me how precious and rare it is to have a really great friend.

In the time we shared as roommates we learned so much about one another, but something that was pretty apparent from the beginning was that she spoke about one guy in particular quite often. His name was Sheen. Apparently she met him in an airport while waiting for a flight to Israel. Hmmmmm…. Another random, once-in-a-lifetime, who would have believed **THIS** moment, but here we are and their meeting was clearly meant to be. We all know the song lyrics, “Some people wait a lifetime for a moment like **THIS**…” I think these encounters demonstrate just how special Laurie is. There is an expression that goes something like, “Fortune favors the bold…” Knock on wood. It also favors Laurie!! She spoke of Sheen often - even going so far as to say that she “would one day marry him.” … And look where we are!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Being as intuitive as she is, Laurie used her powers of observation and honesty on herself as she got to know Sheen. After some time and several phone conversations, Laurie chose to go and see this “exotic creature” in his natural habitat… Florida. (**Wait for the laugh**). Laurie, I have to admit that I was able to tell from the way you spoke of Sheen from the beginning, that if the two of you were to be reunited, that would be **it**. The two of you would be together. It was clear how you felt about him. I also have to admit that I was a bit skeptical about this “mystery man.” Of course I had heard some great things about him, but was my source somewhat biased?? (**Wait for the laugh**). Was he good enough for “Our Laurie?” I did my best to keep an open mind and eventually I got to meet Sheen. I thought back on all of those great, wonderful things I had been told by Laurie and yep… Sheen was and is, all **that** and more!! So what were my first impressions? I thought he was laid back and calm…look… he’s from Florida.. Compared to Jersey girls **MOST PEOPLE** are laid back and calm!!! (**Wait for the laugh**)… and that’s a good thing!! I think Sheen has had a great effect on Laurie. I see the difference. Laurie has mellowed…. she’s more patient… she’s less likely to let the small things in life get to her. I can tell you that the restaurant industry is probably thankful for Sheen’s calming influence… (**Wait for the laugh**). It’s clear that Sheen is her rock, her “super hero,” her safety net. … And don’t forget… when the going gets tough…. Sheen has the **ONE** thing that’s on stand by in case of emergency… **THE BUG OUT BAG**!!! Let’s just use our imaginations on **THAT** one and let’s also hope Sheen never needs it!! (**Wait for the laugh**). It’s really great to see that evolution in Laurie inspired by this wonderful relationship. There is one thing I have to say though… Thank goodness original “spunky” Laurie was with me as we faced that tornado at the US Open… Chill Laurie would have…. oh I don’t even want to think about it!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

The way in which Laurie and Sheen met was so special, almost mystical, and clearly (**Do you want to use the Jewish term “Bashert?”)** It was “**beshert**.” (**It means meant to be**… **pronounced beh SHAREt**.). They make a beautiful couple and they really and truly complement each other. I know I speak for everyone here when I say how happy we all are for the two of you.

Laurie and Sheen, each of you brought your own unique story and character into this marriage and although you may have been on separate paths, today your life journey combines into one. Don’t ever forget to honor each other and embrace each other’s **soul**. You both know that your souls really are the light that shines from within each of you and today those two flickering lights have become one strong beam to guide you through your future together. Laurie, I know it wasn’t easy for you to leave your family and friends and move from Jersey to Florida. It takes some getting used to and there’s a lot about home that you probably have missed, but you know what? Sheen is worth it. … And we’re all still there to welcome the both of you with open arms when you come to visit. You and Sheen have a new home and that is with each other…. wherever life finds you.

Laurie, I will never forget our great times together. We spent many nights and some days out on the town in Hoboken and whether it was at Texas Arizona or City Bistro or our home away from home… 10th and Willow, I know that our differences in personality made us stronger and closer friends and I will always treasure our relationship. Laurie, there’s something else I won’t forget. The last time you and Sheen visited Jersey, he took me aside and let me know that he knows just how blessed he is to be marrying you. I think you’re both the luckiest people alive to have found such a special, deep love.

Ladies and gentlemen, I’d like to invite you all to raise a glass as I propose a toast the Mr. and Mrs. Sheen \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

To paraphrase “poet laureate of New Jersey, Bruce Springsteen,

“… Nothing else matters in this whole wide world

Because Sheen’s in love with a JERSEY GIRL…”

To Laurie and Sheen… no matter where life finds you, may the two of you never forget that you have each other. May your love grow more and more each day and may every day together give you more health, happiness, love and blessings than you could ever wish for. Congratulations! We love you!!