**BAR MITZVAH SPEECH**

**FOR**

**STAN ROTHBART**

**REVISED**

Andreas, today we're all here to celebrate **YOU** and your Bar Mitzvah... your passage into manhood.... but before you go back to hanging out with your posse, I'd like to share some words of wisdom... even though somehow... even at this young age, you're practically ready to school **me**....

It's been one of the great blessings of my life to have you as my son. From early childhood, you had... and still have... that certain **something**.... that something that makes you stand out and let's everyone know that you are **one special person**. We are so proud of you... who you are and who you are becoming, how you're always willing to step into the fray and how naturally you become the peacemaker... I'm still trying to figure out from which side of the family **THAT** comes... after all, we're pretty **enthusiastic** negotiators... (**And wait for the laugh**). You give of yourself tirelessly and you're always willing to sacrifice your wants for the betterment of the group. Doing the right thing was never something you had to be told.... it was always instinctive for you...You're a team player, a best friend; you're a leader.... Andreas... you're the **ultimate**.... you're **THE** **MENSCH**.

Celebrations like these inspire taking a look back.... at our roots, our family... our history.... and someday, you too will be standing in a similar spot honoring **YOUR** son or daughter.... But **HEY**... let's not rush things!! You're only **thirteen**!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). But I **DO** want to take a look back to the person for whom you are named...you're named after my father....(**I would add**) his name was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ but we call him Pop...what an extraordinary man he was... you have some pretty big shoes to fill... and so far, I'm happy to say, you're on the right path.

Your grandfather and grandmother came to this country in 1949. They arrived as refugees having remarkably survived the Holocaust. We all hear of the legends of people that came over with nothing... your grandparents were those people.... but they had soul. They were Gutte Neshamas (**good souls in Yiddish)** and they were willing to do whatever was needed to sustain themselves- after all, not many people get second chances at life itself. Some very good people sponsored them to come to America and they found themselves in Ontario, California. These people were kind and generous. They gave your grandfather a job and a place to live for his family.... **YOUR** family. This great country found a way to open its arms and offer optimism to our family. This great country provided an opportunity to survive and succeed and that's just what Pop did.... and he spent his life giving back while giving to others. When your grandmother's brother immigrated, Pop was there to help and he gave Uncle Ben a job and a place to live. When Alex Katz, Grandma's friend, immigrated to this country, Pop also gave him a job and a place for his family to live. It was the same with Pop's childhood friend Alex Poll, and cousin Karchi Mausekeopf..... and for **many** others as well... you get the picture... Drester, I am so proud that you have the same character, the same goodness, the same sense of purpose and integrity. You come from an incredible lineage and although you never had the good fortune to know him, trust me, you have the **great** fortune to **be** like him (**HS- Do you prefer "take after" instead of "be like?"**) .

And with all that sense of conscience and humanity, there also exists within you a fantastic sense of creativity, fun, and curiosity... so much so... that sometimes I can't keep up....from your fascination with video games to your club, Bird Nation.... I'm grateful that we have so much time to live and explore.... **together**! I may not be Guy Fieri.... and I won't be dying my hair platinum any time soon (**HS- hope your hair isn't platinum!**), but our road trips in search of the "spicier" side of life are.... wellll they're really **HOT**!!! Some kids like to follow the sun.... my kid has the curiosity and the **taste** to follow the **HEAT**... one bite at a time...

Andreas, thank you for being my son. Thank you for being a great young man and the pride and joy of your mother and me. Thank you for the great relationship you have with your sister Gabriella... this kid really **IS** **something**... he even gets along with his sister!! (**And wait for the laugh**)

Sometimes we hear expressions like "a person is judged by the friends he keeps," but we know how people "flock" to you, especially because of Bird Nation.... and sometimes I think you have no idea of just how special you are, and in a way that's good.... just keep on the path you've begun and remember that it's always important to give. Count your blessings, remember our mantra that the glass is always half full, never forget to have gratitude for your gifts in life, and know that your mother and I will **always** have your back. Albert Einstein said, "Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of **value**."....... wellllllll a **little** success won't hurt.... (**Wait for the laugh**). Just know we wish for you success on **YOUR** terms. You're on the right **road** to finding your way in this world... just place one foot in front of the other, trust your gut, be bold but considerate... and if all else fails, remember this: once, a long time ago, a famous movie star (I **don't know if Andreas will understand about Bette Davis so I made it generic... use your judgement... I also threw this in more for the adults... and if you want to show him the mural as explanation, I believe it's on** ) was asked for "the best way to get into Hollywood," ... you know... the best way to succeed... and I think the wisdom of her timeless response still fits today ... **TAKE FOUNTAIN**!! (**Wait for the laugh**)... Mazel tov Andreas.... we love you!