**BIRTHDAY SPEECH**

**FOR**

**KAZEEM AJALA**

Hello everyone and thanks so much for being here to share such a special celebration with us. I may not tell her all the time, but to me, my wife Oluwamayo is worthy of being celebrated **EVERY DAY,** but it’s still good that we have special occasions like birthdays to **REALLY** express how happy we are to have wonderful people in our lives. My wife.... what can I say... she’s smart, loyal, loving, and a great mother. How did I get so lucky? I’m also **VERY** happy that Oluwamayo (**do you have a nickname for her? If so, maybe use that**) took time from her **busy schedule** to be the guest of honor here today (**Wait for the laugh**). For all of you that know her, you know how Oluwamayo “keeps herself occupied.” (**Wait for the laugh**)

Yes. To know Oluwamayo is to love her... to be in awe of her accomplishments... and to get out of her way when she has to get something done. Ever since she was a young girl, life has presented its challenges to this wonderful woman, and with each test, she taught herself and the world around her just how strong, thoughtful, devoted, and determined she was and is.

Even though she lost both of her parents at a young age, Oluwamayo managed to complete her education and put herself through college. How many of us witnessed **IN AWE** as she goth her Master’s degree five years ago while she was pregnant... with twins! She gave birth to our twins two weeks after my mother passed... they were preemies and even so, she insisted that I go back to Nigeria for my mother’s burial.... those weeks that I was away were so difficult with one baby having been released from the hospital while the other was still in neo-natal care. I remember being so worried ... on top of being so sad... but somehow, Oluwamayo got us through... She became a first time mother with the birth of our first son... without any help from experienced people, and unfortunately I was not around at that time either. There aren’t enough ways to celebrate a person with so much love, consideration for others, and resilience, but we’re all here today, and we are **REALLY** going to give it our best try!

Oprah Winfrey reminds us, “The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.” Being blessed with a wife like Oluwamayo has been a gift every day. Each day she surprises all of us with her strength, loyalty, and dedication to our three children and me. I’d like to take Oprah’s words and switch them a little and say, “The more you celebrate and praise your **WIFE**.... the more there is to celebrate.” That is so true, especially for us.... so allow me to heed that advice..... To Oluwamayo... my wife, my friend, the mother of our children... you are my hero.... my guide.... and my inspiration... Happy 40th birthday! May you be blessed with more than you might ever wish for... and may the next **HUNDRED AND FORTY** years bring you health, happiness, wisdom, and tons of love!! Happy Birthday!