**WEDDING TEXT**

**FOR**

**LEE BROOMHALL**

**(SECTIONS NOTED AS HIGHLIGHTED PORTIONS ON ATTACHMENT)**

**JANE TO SAY:**

Hello everyone and welcome! I know I speak for Lee and Neil and their families when I say that it is wonderful that you are all here this afternoon and are able to witness the joy as we celebrate the union of these two wonderful people. I’m sure we can all feel the excitement building as **THE MOMENT** quickly approaches, however on behalf of the bride and groom, I will ask you now to please silence your phones and hide your cameras.... and put them all away.... **REALLY** away. (**Say this with mock seriousness**). Although we are all aware that “If it wasn’t on Instagram, it didn’t really happen....” trust me... **it’s HAPPENING**!! (**Wait for the laugh**). There will be plenty of opportunity after vows have been exchanged and Lee and Neil find their way back up the aisle, for you to document the gloriously happy couple, the gorgeous scenery... the festivities ... the flowers... the **food**... (**Wait for the laugh**) and I am quite sure that Lee and Neil will absolutely **LOVE** to see all of the documentation that is posted **AFTER** the ceremony has concluded (**Have you designated a hashtag for posting? If you haven’t thought of one, let me know and I will come up with something**). As an additional security measure, we will **NOT** divulge the couple’s hashtag....**YET**... patience is a virtue, especially when it comes to sharing very special moments like the ones we are about to share. There is a song lyric that reminds us, “Some people wait a lifetime for a moment like **THIS**.” If you were ever going to be encouraged to be present and open to witness something wonderful, it’s **NOW**. We appreciate your cooperation (**Do you want to add**) and your **incredible** self restraint. (**Wait for the laugh**).

I will ask you to stand once the music begins and the bridal party commences their approach down the aisle. Thank you.

**THE WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:**

It’s not difficult to acknowledge and count our blessings on a day like today, when we are gathered in this beautiful atmosphere to celebrate love. Each one of you here... family member, friend, colleague, neighbor.... represent a point of light that lives within Lee and Neil. You are the reflection of who they are, as individuals and as a couple, and each one of you possesses a facet... a characteristic... that when put together represent the heart and soul of these two people and their love of, and commitment to, each other. In one of his poems, Alfred Lord Tennyson said, “I am part of all that I have met.” On days like today, that has special meaning.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge all of the guests that have traveled from far and wide to be here to witness and celebrate this event. While your relationship is usually more distant, the light that connects you to Lee and Neil clearly burns very bright and so geography becomes just a concept and not an obstacle. I would also like to recognize those special people who, although no longer with us, are truly here in spirit. Their light doesn’t dim either and they are integral parts of both Lee and Neil. (**Do you want to mention anyone in particular of the deceased?**) it was people like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who lovingly gave of themselves and their memory lives on.

There was an old expression that taught us that only **TWO** things are certain in life: Death and Taxes. Whoever coined that phrase forgot the **THIRD** certain thing in life... Dogs need to be walked and they love to play. At dog parks. With other dogs. Sometimes they just get all slopped up with mud.... and then there are those other times when undeniable **MAGIC** happens. It’s been said, “Dogs come into our lives to teach us about love...” **DON’T WE KNOW IT**!! (**Wait for the laugh**). Four years ago, there was a chance meeting in a dog park... but destiny was at work... when Bodhi Broomhall met Pablo \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**please provide Neil’s last name**). Clearly the humans approved... they became fast friends .... dog park friends... until one day, Caitlyn, Neil’s oldest daughter, **REALLY** wanted Lee invited to dinner... dog optional (**Wait for the laugh**). The rest, as “ they say,” is history. (**Is it possible for Bodhi and Pablo to be present for the exchanging of vows? Just a thought**). We now know that in some incarnation, Cupid just might be a dog...

As Lee and Neil got to really know each other, they realized each had met “**the one,**” and while they have their contrasts and complement one another, the “whole” that is combined from the meeting of these two souls is filled with love and respect, empathy, and exercise, compassion and consciousness. Lee is a giver; generous and eager to share her time and talents with others. She’s gentle, sensitive, discreet, compassionate, amiable, modest and merciful. And folks, Lee has **an extremely strong memory.** (**Do you want to add**)...Just saying.... (**and wait for the laugh**). She loves her dog Bodhi, and is proud of his skills as a “**wingman**.” (**Wait for the laugh**). She is fiercely loyal to friends and family, loves to dance, write and cook. (**Do you want to mention something about Neil’s children? It might be nice to acknowledge them here. Let me know and I will add**). Neil is a practical, hard-working, detail-oriented, meticulous, perfection seeking problem solver who is motivated with a ‘get things done’ approach to life. He loves his kids, (**Do you want to name them? I think you should**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, his family, Pablo, golf, exercising, good wine and superb whiskey.... and, **of course**, Lee.

Throughout time, much has been said about the power of love and many have tried to define the meaning of “soulmate.” George Eliot said, “What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined for life... to strengthen each other... to be at one with each other in silent unspeakable memories.” The poet Rumi reminds us, “The minute I heard my first love story, I started looking for you, not knowing how blind I was. Lovers don’t finally meet somewhere, they’re in each other all along.” True, lasting love is as natural and as beautiful as the magnificent nature that surrounds us... it’s seemingly elusive while being right there, inside of us, all along, only to be unlocked by the one who possesses the matching “secret formula.” In honoring Lee and Neil today, we have an affirmation that love exists and grows geometrically when two people pledge themselves to one another.

Love doesn’t come in grand gestures or expensive gifts. (**If you want to, you can say**) ... I mean they’re **REALLY** nice....but... (**and wait for the laugh**). When two people truly love each other, every interaction and exchange is a context for love, respect, and partnership to flourish.... even the simplest of moments... even the struggles act as an opportunity to reassess and recommit to the person that holds the key to your soul.... and by Lee and Neil’s own description, they understand that a marriage is the ultimate partnership.... constantly evolving... complete at every step and juncture, yet never actually “finished.” They would tell you that together as a couple, they are **genuine**..  What you see is what you get.  While both enjoy the finer things in life, they understand that **quality** is important.  They agree that time is precious in life and that we shouldn’t waste time with pettiness or bitterness.... or if a situation arises, **LEARN** from it... find value in everything. They know they’re there for each other’s ups and downs without question. Their mutual commitment is to be encouraging of one another, to bring out the best in each other, to be the best possible versions of themselves. There is an implicit understanding that this is all a **kinetic** journey, perpetually shifting and changing and each shift is an opportunity to learn about themselves and one another. Over the past four years, these two have been in a constant condition of discovery, self-expression, mutual support, and partnership, and that is the ultimate that anyone might wish for... realistically, that all takes work... and when two people are committed, the love and understanding deepens.... (**If you want to make a joke you can say**) Even when **tolerating**... I mean **CELEBRATING** each other’s individual quirkiness and idiosyncrasies, they know that while one is way better at some things than the other, that’s OK! They love to exercise together and go for long walks.... always in the same direction, side by side... .  They love each other’s companionship...date night, movies (when Neil doesn’t fall asleep) .... (**If you want you can add**) which reminds me... there was an American performer.... very wise... who frequently commented on the longevity of his marriage.... what was his secret? He explained, “We believe in keeping the excitement and fun alive.... every week, **WITHOUT FAIL, TWO** **times** each week, we go out... delicious dinner, fine wine... maybe some dancing... she goes on Tuesdays, I go on Fridays (**Wait for the laugh**). Neil loves Lee’s cooking which is fortunate because she hogs the kitchen. But fair’s fair, because he hogs the doona. Equally so, they know time apart is just as precious– he plays golf and she gets to her me-time or Lee-time. They love to help others and do things for others and have an equal sense of the importance of community giving. Successful as individuals, together they will make a quantum difference in the world.. **the best is yet to come**....

The greatest part of sharing a deep and abiding love is being able to grow and flourish even more than as an individual. While Lee and Neil are accomplished and evolved professionals, their ability to access joy, even in the seemingly simplest of moments, works to fan the flames that nourish their spirits... from spontaneously “busting a move” in the middle of the kitchen to reveling in the awesome majesty of nature... with Neil taking Lee to see snow for the first time, the magical proposal on Doubtful Sound, and even just simple, beautiful walks on the beach in the summer, these two appreciate and understand what it takes to keep the magic alive.

Friends and family mean so much to Lee and Neil, and the exchange of their vows would not have been the same without all of you here to witness and share their joy. Love truly is in the air.... it’s palpable, and it intensifies and magnifies as the love emanating from Lee and Neil resonates and blends with all of yours. We may be in the vast backdrop of open nature, but this moment is as intimate and special as it gets... so thank you all for being here to share that.

**THE DECLARATION:**

Lee and Neil, you have just completed the “Vows” portion of the service and have declared before each other, all of us, and the universe, your intentions and commitment to this union. You joined hands and exchanged rings... two unbroken circles symbolizing the meaning of life, love, partnership, and eternal, infinite connection. On behalf of all who are present... family, friends, children (**dogs?**) I want to extend congratulations and best wishes for more than the two of you might ever dream of.

Remember to stand together while gazing out into the future... in the same direction... while maintaining your own unique and individual light... after all, that’s what brought us all here today... I am very proud to pronounce you husband and wife... **CONGRATULATIONS**!.... You may kiss the bride!!

**PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE AND CONCLUSION:**

We **DID IT**!! We have completed the formal portion of our service, (**Do you want to add**) we made it “**legal**,” and it’s time to **really** celebrate!! Lee and Neil are about to make their way up the aisle, their first “official” function as “ wife and husband....” (**yes. I switched it for a change!**) I want to acknowledge all of you for your “remarkable” restraint. Please feel free to now express your congratulations and enthusiasm for Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Immediately following, Lee and Neil will be joined by their immediate family.... you know who you are... for photographs... which can only mean one thing.... your phones and cameras may now be “**released from captivity**!!!”

All guests are invited to relax and enjoy the spectacular scenery. Cocktails and canapés will be served at 5 pm in the al fresco area in front of the Main Reception House..... **ENJOY**!!

... And now, family and friends, let’s hear it for Lee and Neil!!! (**Applause**).