**WEDDING SPEECH**

**FOR**

**CONNIE RIENGNIMIT**

Hello everyone!!! For those of you that may not know, I am Connie, Winny’s younger sister. I am thrilled to be here to celebrate the marriage of Winny and Justin, and I’m even happier to have the chance to say a few words about my sister, the person that guided me, inspired me, and was always there for me and still is.

Obviously, since Winny is my older sister, I cannot remember... or imagine... life without her strength, her lessons, her guidance, or her wisdom. Even as a young girl, she was there for me. Our dad used to follow us with his camcorder and film us all the time. One video in particular shows me, little three year old Connie, struggling to open a candy jar.... I was determined... after all... **CANDY**!!! ... but I just couldn’t get the jar opened. I didn’t understand the complicated world of metal latches... I mean, I was **THREE**!! (**Wait for the laugh**) but there was Winny, my big, smart, resourceful sister... who, by the way, was all of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years old at the time, but she figured it out and there I was... totally in awe of my sister and fully prepared to enjoy my sugar rush!!

Throughout those “formative” years, Winny always, unfailingly did whatever she could to make sure her little sister was taken care of. Of course there was a “price” to pay for being at the receiving end of such “tender loving care... “ I guess this was during her “entrepreneurial” phase... you know... the one in which she practiced learning office hierarchy and employee management... only back then it was more like...”Get me some water...” or “I’m hungry... I need a snack... Please get me some....” Yes. Back then I learned about service to others and for years I would just naturally do as I was told.... until one day I finally woke up and told her to do it herself!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

There were times we shared that no one even knows about... those special, private, “secret sister” moments that make us realize and celebrate that the two of us have a rare and unique bond. What about the time she cast a spell on my light up sneakers? Did we think at first she was faking? **YES**. Did the sneakers **EVER** light up again??? **NOOO**!!! And then, of course, I’m talking about our incredible collaboration of our interpretive dance for that 90’s classic, “one hit wonder,” otherwise known as “The Sign” by Ace of Base. Boy were our moves corny!!! Fortunately no other living creature on earth will be psychologically damaged from having viewed our masterpiece in motion... but all I can say is we had **FUN**!! Winny also was a **HUGE** fan of “seaQuest DSV...” for those of you that may not know, that TV show was about inhabiting colonies at the bottom of oceans. I am just so grateful to Winny for not asking or making me **live** at the bottom of the Potomac during that time (**or name a large body of water close to your childhood home and wait for the laugh**). I think our father would have also had a pretty tough time videotaping us under water too!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

I suppose that, yes, being Winny’s little sister also taught me how to assert myself.... her training program was full and comprehensive... I learned just about everything from her... Thanks Winny!!! ...and that devotion continues today. Her generosity knows no limits... she’ll cook a good meal for me.... she’ll teach me yoga.... and she’ll happily give me bags and BAGS of clothing... whether I want them or not!! Today all of these memories and gestures come back as I proudly serve my big sister one more very special time, as her maid... of **honor**.

 When we were growing up, in terms of how we viewed and reacted to events and details in life, it felt as though we were really two very different people, but I have come to realize and celebrate that the older we get, the more our similarities become evident and for that I am very thankful... oh. And we also get just a little creeped out that we really ARE becoming our mother and father... but you know what? I’m grateful for that too!

As Winny came into her own and established her career in finance AND her second career devoted to her yoga practice as an instructor, she also found time to indulge her passion for golf and would go to the golf range.... and **NOW** we know why those practice ranges were invented... Cupid must have been in on the development and marketing because it was right there at the East Potomac Driving Range that his arrow... or I should say **putter**... simultaneously struck Winny and a young man named Justin... and the rest is history! I mean, who can resist a strong, confident young woman with a winning golf swing? Justin, welcome to our family. Thank you for loving and appreciating Winny as you do... and let us know if you’re game to be in one of our choreographed dance numbers! We’ll work on some other 90’s one hit wonder... got any requests? (**Wait for the laugh**).

Winny, you and I grew up as part of a family that truly honored what **FAMILY** means. We saw the incredible closeness of our mother with her six sisters and brother, (**Do you want to name them?**) and they all set such a great example of just how close, loving, respectful, and devoted siblings can be. They set a very high bar, but I know that we have what it takes to inherit that bond for ourselves and hopefully for the future generations of our kids... may we be that blessed. I once read a quote by Alex Haley, “In every conceivable manner, the family is link to our past, bridge to our future.” I cannot think of anyone on earth with whom I would want to continue to build strong, meaningful bridges... and with Justin by your side, it will be that much stronger.

I know I speak for everyone here when I say we wish you all of the best of health, happiness, prosperity, partnership... birdies... eagles... holes in one... and more.... Congratulations! We love you!!! And ... **NAMASTE**... **HAPPY**!! Thank you all!!