**MATRON OF HONOR SPEECH**

**FOR**

**MONICA TANEDO**

Hello everyone!! As many of you know, I am Sandra’s sister, Monica, and I am very happy to be here, to witness Sandra marry Michael, and to honor our relationship from yet another meaningful, supportive, loving point of view. I want to thank all of you for being here to be with us at this very special moment. After all is said and done, it’s those people who can share our good times as well as our challenges, that make life worthwhile. I’d like to extend **BIG** and special thanks and, of course, congratulations, to Michael’s parents, Sheri and Donnie, for being so helpful and supportive in putting this together... it’s a pleasure to form an extended family with you!

When Sandra was born, I became a “sister.” When circumstances of our way too young lives gave us unusual challenges, I had to grow up really “fast” and take a motherly, protective approach to our relationship. When fate forced our hands, we fought together for our health and well being, yet through it all, no matter what, we have been best friends... and now, today, we all get to see Sandra as a stunningly beautiful bride, and we realize that life works in mysterious yet wonderful ways. Sandra, looking at you in this beautiful setting, seeing you with Michael, finally joined in marriage, having your closest friends, family, and colleagues share your joy, I know that although he isn’t physically here, our father, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, is very proud of you. You were little more than a toddler when he passed, but trust me... he would be one happy man!!!

Sandra, growing up with you was never boring, I will tell you that! You were only three years old when Daddy died.... and let’s just say that.... “we got around” for quite a while because of other family issues. In many ways, we.... or at least I, had to grow up really fast, but through it all, my goal was to watch over you, guide you, be the best motherly presence I could be, even though I was a kid myself.... boy, that was **SOME** education!!! But through it all, we had each other, and with each challenge, as we were tested, you showed me and our relatives, and your friends... and everyone... just how strong, determined, adaptable, and willing you were, are, and always will be. Nothing stops you.... not crises... not tragedies.... not a near fatal car accident that would land you in a hospital for **THREE MONTHS**.... Every day, before school, after school, whenever I could, I would visit you in the hospital to check on you... after all, you were only nine...and every day I would see just who you were... I’d see you get stronger and stronger.... and deep down inside me, I knew, even though I was not more than a kid myself, that you’re our “**Energizer Bunny**...” you keep going and going and going... (**Wait for the laugh**). And even though all of the challenges we faced could have left a big mark on you, somehow, it worked to transform you into this beautiful sweet, attentive, caring, and talented young woman we know and love.

People... I want you to know that Sandra and I had good times too... we were always together... playing school... running around at the park... even going to the store to go shopping... we were inseparable. Sandra, you were my priority back when we were kids, and I always wanted to make sure you received the moral support, the education, the love and encouragement you deserved... **wellllll**... looks like **SOMETHING** went right because **LOOK AT YOU**!!! You’re a fantastic hairdresser.... you just bought a home... you’re a loving, caring, good friend... and now you’re a **WIFE**!!! And you’re not **EVEN** **THIRTY** yet!!! **We did GOOD**!! (**Wait for the laugh**)

And then along came Michael.... Ahhhhhh Michael!!! You’re one of the “ good guys.” You’re calm.... relatable... you and Sandra really complement one another, but most of all.... **YEP**... one word... **BASEBALL**... we are **DEFINITELY** a baseball family and we all know... you fit right in... even people that can be some of the toughest critics.... namely my son, Matthew, after all, he **IS** (**give his age and say**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and **DEFINITELY** has his point of view and opinions... (**Wait for the laugh**)... respects and values Michael’s considerable tips and constructive criticism on the sport. Coincidentally, Matthew has a coach named Rocky, who’s here today... (**You can say**) Hi Rocky!!! ... who also coached Michael and his brothers when **they** were kids... and even though Rocky is a great coach, Mathew really wanted Michael’s feedback... there was that one time... Michael attended a game... we anxiously awaited his valued opinion on how my son played... I made sure Michael knew he was there for a reason, and of course, we got some “brutal honesty.” “I can’t **BELIEVE** he had such a **HORRIBLE** at bat...”. Naturally, I shielded Matt from **THAT**... and as he approached his turn at bat, a revelation struck Michael... “**OH!!! THAT’s MATT**?!?! I was looking at the wrong kid!!!” ... welcome to the family, Michael!!! You fit **RIGHT IN**!!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Sandra... we’ve had quite a wild ride as sisters... keeping you happy and healthy... optimistic and confident... proud and creative... has always been my priority... we’ve been through a lot and we both survived and thrived... looking back, I would have to say that all of those tests prepared me for the greatest challenge of all.... being your... **MATRON OF HONOR**!!! It’s exhausting!!! The parties... the planning!!! The plotting!!! The challenge of being **crafty**!!! (**Wait for the laugh**)... Let’s be clear... I am **NOT** a graduate of the Martha Stewart School for Creative Crafting!! (**Wait for the laugh**). You were my maid of honor at my wedding in Hawaii, and it is one of the great joys of my life to be able to “Stand up” for you on this most important day of your life. Thank you for this privilege.

(**Toasts are customarily at the end of the speech**). Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to invite you to raise a glass as I propose a toast:

To Sandra and Michael... Here’s to a lifetime of love and good health, happiness, partnership, and more than you might ever wish for... Congratulations for making the newest and greatest **TEAM**! We love you! Thank you all