**BAR MITZVAH SPEECH**

**FOR**

**RUBEN DAMAGHI**

Hello everyone!! Sanaz and I want to welcome all of you here and to thank you for sharing this wonderful occasion. I know I speak for both of us when I say, as very proud parents, that family means everything to us and to be able to share the joy, love, and energy that we all feel right here, right now, is priceless.... (**If you want to make a joke you can say)**.... welll... not **ACTUALLY** priceless.... and if Skyler wasn’t so busy right now, I’m sure he’d whip out his iPad and set up a spread sheet to show us the cost/value ratio breakdown.... **AHHHHHH**...my son... the entrepreneur!!! (**Wait for the laugh**)... Along with the importance of family... I would like to give a shout out to my parents, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, who are probably more proud of Sklyer and his achievements than they were of **ME** at that age... and so they **SHOULD** be!!! And of course Grandma\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is equally as proud and glowing today.... Sklyler astounds us all every day.... with his interests... his talents..... his incredible restraint when it comes to getting along with his brother Sebastian..... Eh.... not **REALLY** on that last one... Sanaz and I have gotten to the point where... if there are no bruises on either kid and they’re still able to do their homework after one of their “brotherly encounters,” ... we’re good!!! (**Wait for the laugh**)... we **KNOW** our sons love each other.... they just have their own language... and it’s usually pretty loud....

And speaking of Sanaz... I want to take a moment to acknowledge you.... for your dedication, ingenuity, and determination to make this the celebration of **ALL** celebrations... and I’m sure everyone would agree that you did a magnificent job both with organizing this party and with everything in our lives!!! Sanaz, for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years you’ve been by my side, you’ve given me a home and a family, and you’ve been right there, next to me, even when we had to run out of the house screaming when **THOSE TWO** started in on each other...(**Wait for the laugh**).... I could not have asked for a more beautiful, loving, devoted, and **patient** partner in this lifetime... thank you!!!

As I was growing up, I knew I had the best parents... and father/roll model I could ever imagine.... as I got older, my dad and I began to nurture and grow a relationship.... and a true friendship.... that is rare and special to find.... Skyler... as I married your mom and anticipated the day we would have children of our own, I prayed that we would have a son for whom, some day, I would mean as much as my father means to me....welll .... thirteen years ago, we were blessed with a baby boy... and wouldn’t you know? My dreams came true... after growing up with a mother and three sisters..... don’t get me wrong, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, you guys are great... but Dad and I were somewhat **outflanked**.... and yes, after thinking and hoping... and praying... you came along.... and here you are... intelligent, complex, inquisitive.... you’re so smart, in fact, that your mom and I have to ...

**wellllll**, to be honest, we have to “do some research” just to keep up with you!!! All I can say is, Thank you Google, for helping me understand my son!! (**Wait for the laugh**). No, really!!! It saves a lot of anxiety!!!

Skyler, while your generation seems to have its own language... it’s own **code**, I want to thank you for opening our eyes and trying to enrich our minds. You’re just thirteen, but already, you handle challenges and chances with an enviable curiosity and enthusiasm. You’re a great kid.... I mean... **young MAN**... and your brother Sebastian takes so much pride in knowing he has you as a guide through life. It’s been such a privilege watching you as you discover your place in the world... and you approach everything you do with respect, manners, and a true passion for understanding... Some day, as you get older, and hopefully have kids of your own, you’ll understand the love and pride your mother and I feel tonight. .... and believe me when I tell you, your poise and point of view are unique... you’re wise beyond your years... your sense of sophistication.... especially at this young age, is very special... we wonder where you got that from and we stand in awe as we think, “Someday, when **WE** grow up, we want to be just like Skyler!!”

Your mom and I know that your future is going to be interesting, bright, promising, and very special. We believe you are destined for great success... you’ve already shown an innate ability to find the goodness in people and to improve situations for the better... your teachers and mentors have always said that about you and we have confidence that you will fulfill even the most optimistic goals you set. Don’t ever let anyone tell you cannot do something, not even me.  If you want something and believe in its purpose... then go after it.

Thank you all for sharing this time with us....congratulations Skyler... we love you!!!