**WEDDING SPEECH**

**FOR**

**ANNELIE McCREIGHT**

**HS 6/9... New comments and revisions in this purple....**

Good evening and welcome!  For those of you who don’t know, I’m Annelie, Joe’s mom, and it is an honor to say a few words and offer a toast to the bride and groom. First and foremost, thank you for joining us today. As I look around me, I am reminded of the role that family and friends play in our lives…and the importance of those relationships. Your presence has made a special day even more wonderful.

HELENE – I mentioned that Joe is NOT golfing the day of his wedding……. HE IS golfing the day before so it doesn’t interfere and he doesn’t have to choose. Can we shorten this part up and make a quick mention or comparison of TWO loves. I love the verified course conditions or consultation with weather service statements. Can we do a comparison instead of a Torn approach? **HS 6/9.... I just saw he’s golfing the day before... let’s try this...**

Marriage is a daring, uncharted journey. In so many ways, it’s like golf... you have to walk the course to know it’s ups and downs, you have to be willing to forge through the rough, you have to work together to balance all the “stuff” you take with you and make sure the “golf cart” remains on the path, Heaven only **KNOWS** someone is usually keeping score... and there’s lots of **love**... oh. Wait. That’s tennis... **KIDDING**!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). I want to acknowledge Joe and Anna for their dedication to each other, for venturing off into the future,... even without verified “course conditions...” Joe, i know how significant it is that you agreed to wed on a day when you could have been playing golf... which would have been **ANY** day. We all know you have two great loves and I am proud of you fordemonstrating maturity... finding the value in compromise... and being an early advocate of the adage, “**Happy wife, happy life**...”…You’ve shown us that, contrary to the famous jazz lyric, “it **DOES** mean a thing if it ain’t got that swing...”. At least for **ONE** day. (**Wait for the laugh**).

Weddings are about looking forward...They are about celebrating love... new beginnings and honoring old traditions.... they focus on partnership.... as two people pledge to grow together and strengthen commitment. Weddings are also a time for a little nostalgia.... for recalling the memories and milestones that led to this wonderful moment.

Joe, as I look at you today, I see a handsome young man, dressed in a sharp tuxedo, poised to embark on the greatest adventure of your life.... but if I close my eyes for even half a second, I see you on another threshold... you’re five years old, heading off to kindergarten, wearing a backpack that’s almost as big as you. I blink my eyes again and see you’re graduating from grade 8, walking away with all of the accolades you’ve earned, including the leadership award. ... I blink again...you’re a teenager and you and most of your hockey team have taken over my living room, playing video games. I wouldn’t have minded, but I worked at home, so it was more than a little distracting. It was always an interesting balancing act running both VP Construction and a full video arcade in our house.

Other milestones I vividly recall...Your first job, at twelve, was working for our family business. Construction work is hard, and historically so, especially back in the day when Grandpa Van Pelt was at the helm. He made sure you understood the work ethic demanded through your Dutch roots. You met the challenge, getting up early and working your tail off.

**HELENE – when I read this paragraph out loud “I considered going…..” it doesn’t really refer back nicely to what I was intrigued/horrified by…….**

**My mind fast forwards to a few years later.... I’m picking you up at your college residence and I remember being intrigued…. Or somewhat horrified... as ONLY a mother might be... at the way “young men APPARENTLY live together in their youth...”.  (CAN I SAY A BUNCH OF MEN LIVING TOGETHER or at the way guys live together) (CAN I SAY SOMETHING ABOUT DISARRAY OR SOMETHING THAT CONFIRMS JOE LIVED IN A PERFECTLY IMMACULATE AND ORGANIZED HOUSE? I am comfortable with neat and tidy and it did give me great anxiety….. I like what follows here…….. and I don’t want to use hazmat gloves as someone asked me what that was. Lol.**

I considered going in and cleaning it myself.... but I value my life and health and knew this was **probably** a project for a firm **that has more experience with cleaning up** natural disasters. Fortunately, I came up with a better solution – the next time I picked you up for dinner, I sat in my car and waited for you to come out.

After college, you pursued your career elsewhere, moving up the ladder and honing your skills. So often, in life, things come full circle, and a year ago we got to welcome you back as our General Manager.

As a parent, you hope your children will find partners who will not only love and support them but challenge them. Joe has certainly found that in Anna. She is kind, loving, generous, and we simply could not imagine a more wonderful daughter-in-law. ...And that’s not all...she loves golf and hockey. Joe, if I didn’t know better, I’d think you created her in a lab. The stars truly aligned for you the night of Neve’s hockey banquet where you first met.

Anna, I’d like to take this opportunity to officially welcome you into our family. You risked quite a bit to commit to this relationship, leaving your teaching position with the York Region School Board and moving to Mitchell, not knowing anyone. It didn’t take long for you to become an indispensable part of our community and our lives – and we’re so glad you did. You complete our family and you complete Joe in more ways than we can count. Also, I know every bride is beautiful but you are simply stunning....and if the care and thought you put into planning this event are any indication, you have your future well in hand. Plus, you’re a Red Sox fan, which means you’re not only loyal, but you understand life’s ups and downs. What more could a mother want for her son?

And now I’d like to acknowledge Anna’s mom, Elaine Blando. It is an honor to be formally related through the marriage of our children. We’ve shared a few holidays and you and Anna were gracious enough to include me in the wedding-dress shopping. You and your husband have raised an incredible daughter and we are blessed to have her – and you – in our lives. Thank you for your part in making today come together so beautifully.

HELENE – does the following sound OK. I changed it a bit. My daughter in law came the other day and made the statement about how Cupid was nowhere to be found that day so I thought I would use it?!

Joe and Anna, you’ve now officially embarked on a new Chapter of Mr. & Mrs. in your lives. It may not always fit your pictures, **Cupid may not always be visible, but he... or SHE.. is always hovering...** , **With** love, respect, resilience, and humor, I know you’ll stay the course. ...And if the going gets tough, never forget that a successful marriage is comprised of two people who refuse to give up. I’d like to recall the wisdom of that renowned sage, Jon Bon Jovi, who shared his secret to a long, and healthy marriage. “My wife tells me that if I ever decide to leave, she is coming with me.” (**Wait for the laugh**)

.... And speaking of music... I know that everyone is eagerly awaiting for the festivities to begin this evening….. Helene – I think we should not have the following humor here because there was a little in the above paragraph with the words of wisdom. (**HS I like it... I think it’s sweet... let’s keep ‘em laughing... but you can tweak if necessary)** Despite Joe’s legendary two left feet, Anna still wants to dance with him... **NOW, so I’ll wind this up with some traditional Gaelic wisdom...**  **you see, our family also has Irish roots...** HELENE I need this to flow very naturally into the last part here……(**see below shortened revision**)

~~Do I say “and now in closing”~~

~~Our family also has~~ **~~Irish~~** ~~roots, so let me leave you with a proper Blessing:~~

***May you always have plenty and never lack***

***May you both always have each other’s back.***

***May you always be healthy and rarely ill***

***May you, in each other, feel loved and fulfilled.***

***May your lives be long and full of grace***

***May you always seek the good Lord’s face***

***May both your heart and your home be warm***

***May peace and joy always be your norm.***

Ladies and Gentlemen, please **~~stand and~~** raise your glasses as I propose a toast ~~with me~~ (**you’ll be raising your glass... maybe just “raise a glass?”**)…. To Anna and Joe: Here’s to a lifetime filled with love, health, happiness, and more than you could ever wish for!!

Congratulations!! We love you!! Thank you!!

………………………………………………….…………………………………

**Here’s the fully cleaned up... notations removed, final draft:**

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