**BEST MAN SPEECH**

**FOR**

**CLAY SHILL**

Hello everyone.... Being here tonight is a wonderful moment for me, my wife Paige, our daughter Emily, And the Shill family... it marks the beginning of this wedding weekend and I am very happy and proud on several levels... (**Do you want to say something like....** ) I’d love to share some thoughts with all of you, about how much this wedding means to me, but I also know there’s a lot of dining and catching up to do, so, like a great new undergarment ... I will be **brief**... and **clean**... (**Wait for the laugh)**

I am thrilled to see my son marry such a wonderful young woman as Murphy. I’ve heard the expression, “Life is not a rehearsal,” but **boy**, am I glad weddings have them!! Tonight we have the chance to prepare for tomorrow, but mostly this get- together is to practice, bond, and really relate.. as friends and family, joined through love. I am excited and happy to be here, with all of you, sharing our family’s joy, and I am humbled to have a son like Greg....a young man who knows his mind, cares for others, and makes excellent choices in life.... oh.. did I mention I am also the Best Man??? Like I said... Excellent choice, Greg!! (**Wait for the laugh**). I know there was some tough competition for this honor, but I am proud that you felt I was best suited... in the **TWO LEGGED** category... I wasn’t sure how Boagie would handle your choice, and quite frankly, I really believe if he’d get over his “shyness” and practice his public speaking, we’d all be eating kibble and hearing dog stories right now... (**wait for the laugh**) but fortunately, there’s room enough for **BOTH** of us in this weekend’s festivities!! (**Wait for the laugh**). All jokes aside, it is one of the great blessings of my life to have a son.... one who is really my **best friend**... one of the great lights of my life.. and, what I would hope, is a reflection of the best I could give. I also want to acknowledge all of you for being here.. for traveling from far and wide, to witness this celebration and for spreading the joy and happiness we all feel for Murphy and Greg. I’d like to congratulate Murphy’s mother, May, her father, Donny, and Murphy’s step-dad, Dennis, as we officially welcome Murphy to our family. You’ve raised an amazing, young lady and we love her even more knowing how much she loves and cares for our son.

To Doug Grote, I want to acknowledge you and thank you for officiating at tomorrow’s ceremony. This weekend is about realizing all of the destiny there is in life... how two people meet... and whether this refers to friends, spouses, colleagues, it’s clear that special connections make life so much better. I am proud of the bond Doug and I have formed... from work acquaintances to true friends... you will always be a part of the Shill family legacy (**Do you want to make a little joke and say)** ... and we will now have the pictures to prove it!! (**And wait for the laugh).**

Someone once said, “A father is a man who expects his son to be as good a man as he is meant to be.” Ahhhhh... if only... because although I wonder how I’ve done in my own life, in **MY** eyes, my son Greg is pretty great... he does everything with a **full** **heart**... he’s kind and compassionate... he puts others’ needs before his own... he loves unconditionally... especially Murphy, Boagie, and the University of South Carolina Gamecocks.... and when it comes to being thorough... complete... all encompassing... **NO ONE** can **completely** aggravate another human being quite like Greg can annoy his sister Emily!!! Now **THAT’S commitment**!! (**Wait for the laugh).** Raising children... and tonight we focus on Greg, has been one of the greatest privileges and learning experiences of my life. To watch him grow... from a baby to a boy... to a man who is proud, filled with integrity.... someone who places others before himself... has been a real education for me. A life is made up of a series of events... memories... images that stay with us and define our own lives... and thankfully, I have many images of my son and the time we’ve spent together... my life is enriched with shared memories... Atlanta Braves baseball games... four wheeling in Georgia... snowmobiling in Maine... I **LOVE** hanging out with my son... feeding off his youthful energy... and speaking of... I would like to take a moment to acknowledge Greg’s terrific groomsmen... a father spends his entire life planning and plotting and wondering about what it will be like for his son to be a best friend and wing man... and then... like **MAGIC**!!! It **HAPPENS**!!! And what’s even better, there was a bachelor weekend that involved six great groomsmen. Greg, I can see why these guys are your friends.... they’re true gentlemen... in every sense of the word... how do I know that??? **EASY**!!! Each one of them knows... **deep down inside** that I had no business trying to keep up with six strapping guys in their twenties... but **NOT** **ONCE**... did any of them complain when they had to **revive me** when I needed help breathing!! **KIDDING**!!! I had a **great time**!! (**Wait for the laugh**). Greg... your youthful enthusiasm keeps me young, but let’s not push it!!!

In 1 Corinthians 13:2, we learn, “If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.” Greg and Murphy... you both have intelligence and compassion... warmth and curiosity... faith and patience... and now, for sure, you have love... the kind that will grow stronger as the two of you find your way through life **together**. May you live a happy, healthy, fulfilling, loving and meaningful life, and may we be there to share your joy and cheer you on!!!

(**Do you want to propose a toast? If so, you can say)** ... I’d like to invite you to raise a glass as I propose a toast:

To Murphy and Greg... Here’s to a **WONDERFUL** life!!! Congratulations!! We love you!!

Thank you!!