**WEDDING SPEECH**

**FOR**

**JENNIFER MOLINA**

Hello everyone!!! It’s so great to be here, with all of you, celebrating this wonderful occasion. Today, my sister Melissa has married Von... and sharing this moment shows us the importance of love, family, friendships, and honoring life itself... how we got here... those that came before us, that made all of this... and **us**, possible, and how, by joining together as husband and wife, family to family, parents to children, we **ALL** become connected. Celebrations like these also bring us together.... and while many of you have traveled long distances to be here, I just bet that we all realize that no matter where any of us might be in the world, our thoughts, prayers, good will, and open hearts keep us connected... even when we can’t be physically present... (**If you want to make a little joke you can say**).... Although our iPhones, Androids, WhatsApp, and FaceTime give us some good options!! (**And wait for the laugh**).

I once heard an expression that goes, “I am part of all that I have met.” To us... me, Melissa, our sister Damaris, and our brother Levy, we are definitely a part of or parents, our heritage, and those that came before and shaped our family.... we all got strength, pride, resilience, and a lot of love (**or name the qualities you feel more describe how your parents raised you**) from our wonderful mom, Maritza, and our father, Luis. Although our Dad technically isn’t here with us, I am sure he is watching over this beautiful moment, and is very proud of the children he and our mother brought into this world.... and because, as I said, we **ARE** part of all that we have met, that **REALLY** applies to family members.... our dad lives on in Melissa’s smile, Damaris’\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Levy’s\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and now in Hayden and Indivar.... and those two **are true** blessings.

Each one of us has our own stories to tell. Today we focus on Melissa, the chapters of her life, and how she... and Von... wound up on this same, beautiful page. For me, Melissa and I have always been close... so close, in fact, that it’s hard to think of any wild or outstanding stories.... she’s just always been ... **Melissa**... part of me and an important part of my life.. like the air that we breathe... although **admittedly**, during those winter months, she’s breathing **warmer, sunnier** air than I am up here... (**Wait for the laugh**). (**Name three characteristics the describe Melissa**). To me, my sister has always been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. These are traits that showed themselves early on and continue to develop as she has grown up, become a mother, a professional, and now Von’s wife. Personally, I am **REALLY** happy she and Von decided to get married... in **New York**!!!! **EXTENDED** **VISIT**!!! Fun preparations!!! Catch up time!!! Reviewing and debriefing after the wedding!!! And we get to do it **IN PERSON**!! (**Wait for the laugh**). We may not be physically, geographically close, but there is one thing we each know for sure about the other... Melissa is always there for me, and Damaris, and Levy, and we are there for her.

Melissa has constantly shown her resilience, strength and dedication... to her studies... having just completed graduate school for nursing at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, in her career as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, as a great, caring, devoted mom to Hayden and Indivar, and as a partner and loving wife to Von.

About three years ago, Melissa met a handsome young man named Von... and life has not been the same since. ... And while so many of us may settle into our known comfort zones, when we open our eyes and hearts and minds, we discover whole new worlds and experiences.... and opportunities... and let’s face it.... no matter where we might find ourselves in this world... physically or symbolically, we are all the same, and each one of us represents the rich heritage that made us who we are and how we relate to one another.... but one thing is certain... as our cultures mix and make us stronger, we realize the similarities... while Melissa may have been used to the colorful, spicy, tasty legacies of our families from (**Name the areas and countries your family is from**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I have a feeling that the richness of Von’s family legacy is probably very similar.... spicy... colorful... tasty... I mean, in the long run, is “chapatti” (**Is Von from India? If not name the food that is similar in his culture)** that different from a tortilla??? Isn’t **chicken and rice** the **universal language** of **love**??? (**Wait for the laugh**)

Von, I would like to officially welcome you to our family and say how proud I am of the family you are building with Melissa, Hayden, and Indivar. May you always learn from one another, teach your children well, show mutual respect, stand together, find your dreams and build them, and live a long, happy, loving, healthy life.

(**Do you want to propose a toast? If so**) I would like to invite you all to raise a glass as I propose a toast... To Melissa and Von... Here’s to a wonderful life!!! Congratulations!!! Thank you all!!