**MAID OF HONOR SPEECH**

**FOR**

**LARYSSA GOMES**

Hello everyone!!! It’s great to be here to celebrate the wedding of Morgana and Kevin, and for me, it’s special on many levels. First of all, it’s amazing to have the chance to get up, get dressed up, and see so many happy, smiling faces. Secondly, this is a great day for my family.... you see, as some of you may not be aware, I am Morgana’s sister-in-law.... but the **BEST** thing about Morgana is our true, deep, lasting friendship.... There’s an old saying that has something to do with “choosing” things.... all I can say is, while we may not be able to pick and choose our family, in his case, I am doubly blessed. Morgana is like my sister....and as friends, our bond is even closer.... if that’s even possible, and now I, and all of you, get to come together and share in this happy couple’s joy!!!

As sisters-in-law, we’re connected through marriage. As professionals, we’re separated geographically. As great friends, there’s an invisible bond that defies distance yet thanks the fiber optics networks connecting this entire country!!! I may be in Massachusetts. Morgana may be in Connecticut... but **NOTHING** stops us from reaching out to one another or from being inspired to follow the word from the beginning part of her home state name ... **CONNECT**. And what a connection it is!! The best thing about our friendship the closeness we have with each other. It’s so reassuring that we’re able to talk about anything... and it’s always with honesty. Do any of you have **ANY** idea how much we’ve discussed this wedding??? (**Wait for the laugh**).

As we continue to create special memories together, I realize just how lucky I am... how lucky **WE** are, that we have this bond that goes beyond the meaning of sister in law. Morgana, you have given me this wonderful friendship.  You are an honest and true person and this is what makes you amazing.  I love you for this reason and I am sure Kevin agrees that when it came to choosing you as his partner for life, there was never any question .... because of who you are and just how much you care for and honor the people you love.

...And speaking of Kevin, I will never forget the first time I met him... It was at a barbecue at their home in Avon. I definitely knew they were meant to be together before I met him but seeing them together, in person was all I needed... it was just the icing on the cake to assure me their chemistry was real and deep. Kevin has a way about him... he’s generous and warm and always welcoming in his home. I also love how Morgana’s daughter, Amanda is such an important part of Kevin’s life. He takes care of her like she is his own daughter. It’s so heart warming and I love the relationship that all three of them have together.

Marriage is a journey. It’s a commitment... a ride or die proposition that works to strengthen our bonds, build the future, and reinforce partnership, mutual support, and, of course love. Morgana and Kevin are two people that, clearly, have “gotten it right.” We’ve all learned, especially this year, that none of us have a clue as to what life may send our way, but if we have great kids, a loving family, terrific friends, and a wonderful partner, we will be able to make it through anything. I’m so happy that these two have gotten to be one of the very bright spots in this year of change. This is change for the good... and we all take note. Today notes a beginning... the official beginning of new family bonds and hope for the future.... for them and for all of us. We can see how all of us feel the energy in this space. May that spirit and connection continue way beyond CONNECTicut as we all join together and wish these two only the best of everything forever!!!

I’d like to invite you to raise a glass as I propose a toast:

To Morgana and Kevin: Heres to a life filled with love and laughter, partnership and good health, humor, celebration, and more than you might ever wish for!! Congratulations!! We love you!! Thank you!!