**Golden Anniversary Wedding Speech**

**For**

**Srinivas Rajsheker**

It’s been said that things happen for “a reason, a season, or a lifetime.” Today we are all quite blessed to share our family’s joy in celebrating the **GOLDEN** wedding anniversary of my parents, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**please clarify your parents’ first names**). Thank you all for being here to mark this incredible milestone… the one that we pray will last **a few** lifetimes…. You know…. **50 YEARS!!** The milestone where my parents didn’t want any fuss… “Keep it simple,” they said. “Just being with you is enough for us,” they said….. so **over six months** (**or exaggerate a little**) of organizing every single detail with expert teams of party planners … okay… my sister, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ …. gathering **TEN THOUSAND** of their closest family and friends…. Okay. I **exaggerate** … **THREE HUNDRED** … **still**… **substantial** (**Wait for the laugh**) …. And here we are… honoring this amazing couple… **Fifty years** of love, commitment, wisdom, and partnership…. What a testament to the strength and beauty of their relationship!!!

Mom and Dad, your adventure together began half a century ago, and what a trip it’s been. You've shown us all what it means to truly love and support one another through thick and thin. Some of us, fortunately, got an infinitely closer look (**shyly raise your hand and say**) namely **me**… (**and wait for the laugh**) and for that, I am immeasurably grateful.

**A LOT** can happen in **FIFTY YEARS**… but if I stood here and told you all of it, my father would no longer have to practice anesthesiology… (**I hope he’s still practicing…. Or you can say, “it would be more effective than my dad’s anesthesia” And wait for the laugh**). Let’s go back to where it all began, more than 50 years ago, 1971 to be specific. 21/B St. Johns Road, Secunderabad. Telephones were rare back then but my grandfather’s home had one… he was the Superintendent for Central Railways. Dad was a handsome young man, studying at Gandhi Medical College. Legend has it that for a time, he got numerous phone calls from girls from school. My grandmother would answer and grew increasingly suspicious with each one. One day my grandmother had enough and confronted my dad, asked him what’s going on, why were all those girls calling, etc. if you were lucky to know my Nannamma you’ll probably be able to picture this scene, she may have been a “**mini-Nannamma,”**but was the strongest and most independent woman I’ve known. Dad assured her not to worry, his focus was on his studies, and he’d only settle down after securing a job. He promised my grandmother he will only marry whom they chose for him. His focus was solely on helping my grandparents. He also assured my nanamma that the only reason he was receiving all the calls was that the Gandhi Medical College class president elections were going on and they were all lobbying for his vote. So much for being Mr. Popularity!!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Fast forward to 1973. Through word of mouth my grandfather’s sisters on my moms side heard about a young man who completed his MBBS and was headed to the states. My Mom was Daddy’s little girl, he wanted her to have the best life in the states and was focused on her marrying a doctor and settling abroad. The “posse” went to visit him and **EVERYONE** was invited to Vijayawada, scene of the “**summit**” where my dad was to meet my Mom. Dad had just returned from Tirupathi, head shaved prior to the Pelli chuppullu. Hindsight says they had a great visit, and, per usual, everything was finalized within 24 hours.  March 14th 1974 was the day set for the Muhurtham. And “Let’s Keep it Simple Dad” wanted just that. No muss. No fuss. Simple. Some things don’t change… For today’s occasion, he didn’t want anyone to give speeches, he didn’t want to make it about him, but my uncles had other ideas and here I am…

Dad took off to the states with a plan for my Mom to join shortly afterwards. He was in Chicago starting his residency. Living in South Chicago in an apartment, he quickly realized the neighborhood might be a little “colorful,” so he wrote mom a letter to join him the following year, and the rest is history.

It’s great to see Sivanna Uncle and Naarayana Reddy Uncle here today. They were Dad’s first roommates … and “Southside survivors…” and, as I grew up, I witnessed firsthand the love and respect they have for each other, Whether small gestures of kindness, shared laughter, or the way you stood by each other during challenging times, you always demonstrated the true meaning of friendship.

Mom, Dad, one of the most remarkable qualities you both possess is your selflessness. Settling down in the United States in the 70’s was not easy. There was no blueprint or road map on how to assimilate in the country, how to raise children. You two did your best to give us what we needed to be successful in life. You have put the needs of our family above your own, always ensuring that we had everything we needed. Your willingness to help and support us has been a cornerstone of our success. Your helping nature extends beyond our immediate family. I've seen how you open your hearts and home to extended family, friends, and even strangers in need. Your kindness and generosity know no bounds; you have taught us the true meaning of community and compassion. I witnessed, first hand, the launch of successful careers and businesses, and I know many of our family had their start at 105 Oakwood Drive, St. Marys, OH. Another of the most amazing qualities my parents share is the ability to connect with all generations. Dad has become close friends with people no matter the age. I just find that amazing.

I’ve been blessed to learn so much from the both of you, and whether it’s spiritualism, finance, or just being healthy, I’m better for all of it. I also know so many benefit from your knowledge of CPR, Nutrition, and general well being.

As we celebrate this golden anniversary, I want to express my deepest gratitude. Your selflessness and helping nature have left a lasting impact on everyone fortunate enough to know you. You've both given us a beautiful example of what a loving marriage and a strong family look like, and for that, we are eternally grateful.

Here's to the remarkable partnership you've had so far and to many more years of happiness, love, and growth together. May your love continue to shine and may you enjoy many more wonderful years to come.

Congratulations, Mom and Dad, on your 50th wedding anniversary.

You are the parents that all children aspire to have, the lovers that all couples aspire to be, and the support that every family aspires to have. Congratulations on your 50th Wedding anniversary. We love you more than words can express. You both are truly **GOLDEN**. Thank you!!