**Dr.** **Tiffany Moat**

 **speaking at: Stephanie’s Wedding**

**Tiffany,…stand, smile, and wait for the room to settle. This is a joyous occasion, and one filled with energized conversation and laughter. They’ll see you standing. Clink a dish, (not glass), that should bring the focus to you**

**Hi Everyone**, my goodness I can truly feel the friendship and love as we celebrate this day with Shane and Stephanie.

For those whom I have not had the pleasure of meeting before today, I am Tiffany Moat, and I am so happy to be able to share a few memories and sentiments regarding the bride, my cousin Stephanie, who is truly my BEST FRIEND.

We all know too well from experience that these talks, these speeches, can at times go on a way, way, too long. So, I will attempt to share my message in a time frame that won’t cause any empty chairs, or heaven forbid, any empty glasses, **(laughter).**

Some of you ladies here today may have been part of a few of Stephanie and my escapades, **(look around the room as if trying to identify a few).** I would never mention any names of course. But if you hear something that might be embarrassing to you, instead of turning red and slumping down in your chair, do what I do. Turn, gasp, look completely shocked at such a thing, and stare at someone a few tables across from you, **(laughter).**

 **\*\*\*\*\* OR \*\*\*\*\***

This is a wonderful venue for such an occasion. Everything is decorated so nicely, the tables are beautiful, the staff very attentive, and I **must say**, our servers are **quite** **impressive**. That being said, our event coordinator asked me to mention to the ladies here today, on your way out certainly feel free to *grab* a centerpiece and take it home with you, but that does **not** apply to the cute waiters, **(laughter).**

 2.

In the society and culture, we live in today, so many words are used too easily, and too frequently. Far too many expressions and terms of endearment and friendship are tossed around without any regard for being genuine. Well, allow me to be as genuine and sincere as possible; Stephanie is my pal, my inspiration, my best friend, my cousin, and at times my cohort. I do not use those terms lightly, and I do not use them with **anyone** else, **period**. (Raise your glass to Stephanie), **I love you Cuz**.

As cousins we have known each other over twenty-five years, and since Stephanie relocated from Las Vegas nine years ago we have become the best of friends. She is an amazing woman and has taught me so much about living life with purpose and determination. And if ever there was anyone who sees the silver lining, it is Stephanie. Her optimistic outlook, her joyous energy, and her perseverance have been inspirational to so many people, and none more so than me.

And,……Stephanie is very savvy, having the keen ability to adjust, to regroup, and to survive. The harshness of life is a reality we all face. Circumstances that disrupt or dissolve a family, unfulfilled expectations, disappointments, or promises broken. Stephanie has endured some of these setbacks, and never once wanted anyone to think she is or was a victim, because she is stronger than that. With no silver spoon, no free ride, and no doors opened except the ones she opened herself, Stephanie has made her way by tenacity and personal strength through some of life’s most formidable obstacles. And through her own ups and downs, she has always exhibited empathy to others and the willingness to help anyone get through their own personal challenges. If ever there is an example, a role model, and a lesson on how to rise from some of life’s darkest moments, it is Stephanie. And she did it without losing any of her optimism, her energy for life, and her enthusiasm for everyone she encounters. If there were more souls with Stephanie’s spirit for life, and concern for other human beings, our world would indeed be a happier and more peaceful place.

If I could put her on a pedestal I would cheerfully lift her up there for all the world to see everything she has taught me. But the last time I put her up on something, a stone wall at grandma’s in Globe some 26 years ago, off she went. The result of which **I** see as a **flattering** beauty mark on her forehead.

 3.

But despite my **training**, Stephanie doesn’t quite share the same sentiment, **(laughter).**

She did though have some wonderful years and experiences in Nevada. I think she may have had a very good gal-pal friend there too, because she is always referring to some nice people in pressed uniforms, who introduced her to someone named; Miranda Rights, **(laughter).**

The emotion of a deep friendship goes right to the soul. It is an unmistakable feeling from inside, a synergy between two people with electricity that stays forever hotwired. It’s the sense of joy at the sound of their voice, or the excitement knowing they are close by. When I picture in my mind the friendship that Stephanie and I share, I see two connected women holding hands while dancing along the streets of life. Twirling, singing, laughing, and crying. As we spin and skip with smiles from ear to ear, we step out into occasional solo performances, then right on cue, as if choreographed, we’re back again hand in hand. That vision, that duet, is what Stephaney and I have shared for over a quarter of a century, and especially the past nine years.

And mercy, have we had some girl-excursions, *Shane cover your ears*. Such as scrambling for bail money, or a day of detox to justify another evening of what sent us to detox in the first place.And, *(Shane now REALLY, cover your* *ears),* on a few rare instances, (sometimes **way** too rare), a few hazy sunrises trying to convince a handsome hunk that we really had to be get going, *(well, sort of, almost, um soon* *please, well OK, I guess I can stay for just a few more minutes !!),* **(laughter).** But whatever the distractions were, we always got on our horse, or *someone’s* horse, and rode off towards the horizon as best friends.

Of course, Stephanie has a special relationship with punctuality. For those who have decided on gifts from a registry such as appliances or household items, that may include a clock, may I make a suggestion; For the sake of everyone with whom Stephanie makes plans, call the registry store and have them set the time 60 minutes ahead, **(laughter).**

 4.

And Shane, may I offer a suggestion to save your household some serious money in the years to come. Try adding four words each morning as you and Stephanie say goodbye for the day. Since she’s heard these words before, it should not come as any surprise. So, in addition to your normal conversation at the front door, such as “be careful”, “have a great day”, and “I love you”,…..turn to Stephanie and say; “License and Registration please”. **(laughter).**

In my words today, I have attempted to combine sincerity and laughter. The reason being there is no one more genuine, more sincere, and with a sense of humor, than Stephanie. She lights up every room and every life she enters. She makes us all laugh and smile. And most of all, Stephanie exemplifies how we should all treat each other as human beings.

 Shane, I am confident you will hold her hand as her partner, her friend, her lover, and her husband. That you’ll put your arm around her shoulder when needed, as she will do the same for you. You will be strong for her, protective of her, share in her joys, and support her through her challenges. I believe you both are the perfect mate for each other, and we all wish you health, happiness, and a life fulfilled.

Stephanie, you have shown me unrequited friendship, as hand in hand we have traveled a long and joyous road. As you embark with Shane into this wonderful part of life, my heart is happy, and you can be assured that I will remain, and forever be, your dearest friend. **I love you CUZ.**

**Be careful out there everyone, and remember if you need a ride we can call Stephanie’s friend,..Miranda Rights. THANKYOU**