**Sutton Speech [No. 15937]**

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Remarks by Ms. Francesca Sutton on the occasion of her brother, Brian’s 25th birthday celebration.

[after “clanging” the assembled guests to attention, gesturing toward brian] a quarter of a century, man! [beat] a quarter of a damned *century*! that’s how long you’ve been stalking planet earth, my brother — did’ja ever think of it that way — in terms of *centuries*? but here we are.

[to the audience] you know, they say the difference be-tween men and boys is the price of their toys. [over your shoulder to brian] you remember that fancy toy [brand] you used to treasure as a kid? [back to audience] that probably cost [mom and dad] — what? — 75, 80 dol-lars back then? i’m guessing the *real* version of that car sitting in his garage right now runs to somewhere near a thousand times that.

so if that old saying’s true about boys and men, then my brother, brian, is most certainly a man — and a very suc-cessful man, at that. he’s got a real *kop far gesheft*, a real head for business, and he’s absolutely made the most of the gifts god gave him — in just a quarter of a century! but brian’s not only a man; he’s also totaly a *mensch*, in the truest meaning of that word. he’s an enormously caring and kind person, a truly gentle person . . . at least when he wants to be. and he’s not just *com*passionate, but he’s also very *passionate*, as well. brian is one of the most serious and the most driven people i know — sometimes *too* serious and *too* driven for his own good, i think — but a *shnorrer* he’s certainly not!

[beat]

you know, now that brian and i are in our mid- to “upper-“ twenties, i suppose it’s a bit odd for me to keeping think-ing of that [gesturing toward brian] big, tall-dark-and-handsome hunk of manhood over there as my “baby” brother. but as any woman knows who’s ever been protected in her life by a younger brother, the bond between them is both special and enduring.

this doesn’t mean that brian and i always got along, of course. hardly! we’d fight like cats and dogs! mainly and mostly because he’d find some way of annoying me and i’d find some way of getting back at him. i knocked him over the head on more than on occasion, and once cracked one of his teeth in an altercation at a swimming pool . . . [to brian] . . . remember?

and oh yes, and did i mention that my sweet, adorable, fun-loving little brother was a fire-bug in his younger years? Yep, brian sutton was the family pyromaniac. here’s just a partial list of all the things, animate and inanimate, that brian — between ages [no.] and [no.] — attempted to set on fire: [insert list here].

[turning toward your parents] honest to go, i don’t know how you put up with us sometime, mom and dad . . . [back to the audience] that’s our parents, david and mila sutton over there . . . [lead audience if some applause of recognition] . . .and i’m sure there were times — maybe a lot of ‘em — where both of you regretted your decision to forego celibacy and have children.

but you not only gave us life — that was the easy part; you also gave us a full measure of love, support, and gentle guidance. you nurtured us and nourished us and made sure that brian and would turn out to be the kind of offspring you could be proud of. we both love you so very much, and we’re so happy that you could be with us tonight.

so now if i may . . . [raising a glass of whatever] . . . i’d like to propose a toast to my baby brother, brian: may your next quarter-century be as fulfilling as your first . . . may you soon find the woman of your dreams — your beshert . . . and may we all remember this night of fun, family, and friendship in gratitude for and years years to come. *l’chaim!*

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