Thank you Pramila & Savio (toast masters) for the kind words………….

Ladies & Gentlemen, both Corina and I would love nothing better than to see all of you with all the time that we have left this evening singing, dancing, eating, drinking and having fun celebrating a milestone and one of the happiest occasions in our lives and so if we could have dispensed with this reply altogether, we certainly would, but not only is that not possible, but it would be unfair to say the least, to the people who have been a close and integral part of our lives and without whose love and support, this day would never have come to fruition, and so we request your indulgence as we spend the next few minutes recognizing and acknowledging the people to whom we owe a great deal of gratitude to.

At the outset and above all else we owe our lives and happiness to our God who has been and continues to bless us and who has been more than kind and generous to us. There is no gainsaying that that during very trying and troubling times, during raging storms and we’ve had our fair share of them, it is His invisible hand and presence that has steered us to the shores of safety and tranquility.

Twenty five years ago, on our wedding day, while talking about the pivotal role our parents played in our lives, in a similar reply to the toast, I said this and I quote, “They have been the principal architects of our lives and if we have reached this position today it is only because of their blood, sweat and tears, their love and total dedication to us.” Truly, no amount of words can ever repay the debt of our gratitude for their love, commitment and sacrifices and today we are so thankful and happy that our mum is here to share in our joy while we’re sure that the others are looking down from their heavenly perches with smiles as they celebrate in their celestial abodes. So thank you once again mummy and to our parents who are not here physically this evening, no amount of words can ever describe the depth of our love and gratitude to you.

While we celebrate this milestone, we would like to remember one of the most exciting and happiest moments of our lives, the birth of our son Dayle in 1993. His arrival not only changed the course of our lives for the better, but it added a new dimension, a new meaning, more fun and less time for nitpicking and arguing. Seeing him grow has not only filled our hearts with gladness, but also made us proud of his qualities of hard-work, honesty, commitment to principles and to his family, his faith and his humility and generosity, traits that he has acquired in ample measure from his mother. Thank you Dayle, we love you.

It is also a very happy circumstance and perhaps one that does not occur too often I would imagine that except for two persons we have the entire bridal entourage here with us twenty five years later. Isn’t that amazing and some of them have literally flown across the oceans to be with us this evening. All of them are obviously older now but they still display the same kind of energy and youthfulness that they did 25 years ago. So as I call out the names, may I request them to please rise in their places so that they are seen and acknowledged by all of us. Let me start with youngest, they were our flower girls Kimberley and Madonna. Kim now lives in Mississauga and Madonna has come from India. ………….

We also take this opportunity to thank Corina’s sister Hazel and her husband who have come all the way from India to partake of our celebrations. Thank you Hazel & Agnelo, it means a lot to us.

Now you know friends, an evening like this takes a tremendous amount of planning and preparation as well as a lot of time and hard work. Left to ourselves, this event may perhaps never have materialized but for the constant encouragement and support that we received from some of our closest people. For putting all the bits and pieces of the puzzle together, both literally as in the jigsaw puzzle some of you were handed over at the outset this evening and figuratively for the overall planning, the credit for this goes to our sister-in-law Daphne who has proven herself to be an event manager *par excellence* with her attention to detail and an a can-do attitude. Thank you Daph for being the backbone behind this event. The artistic ability and creative skills that you see so beautifully portrayed against the backdrop is the handiwork of our good friend Christina. Thank you Christina. The lovely cake that you see here was prepared with a lot of love, care and patience by Yolanda. Thank you Yolanda. Thank you to Basil, my classmate from school for preparing the cakes that you will receive as tokens of our appreciation and love. Thank you Bibbs too for your time and efforts. Thank you to all our family members gathered here for standing with us through all of these years of ups and downs, for your love and for the fact that we could always count on you in any situation or need. We love you dearly and you mean the world to us.

And to you friends gathered here, Corina, Dayle and I would like express our deepest gratitude to each one of you for being here today. Truly, we wish we could call each one of you by name, that’s how much you mean to us, but you would rather that we get on with this evening and so it will be our pleasure to personally thank each one of you during the course of this celebration.

If I have missed out on thanking anyone in particular, please forgive me as it will only have been by accident and not by design.

And finally, I wanted to save this bit and the best for the last. Twenty five years ago I asked this woman to marry me and was childishly thrilled to call her my wife for the first time in my life. I can still recall the slightest particulars of that day, up to my astonishment when I saw Corina in the awesome wedding gown going down the aisle. In these years we've done a lot together. We got a house of our own and planted a garden, we as in she; we have shared our house hold chores, she mostly with the laundry & cleaning and cooking and me mostly with the sudoku, crossword puzzles and groceries. But most importantly, we learned to tolerate with each other's habits and traits, to say "sorry" when you are wrong and "I love you" on all other occasions. We learned to cherish every evening spent with the family - We learned being happy with what we have - and we have a family, a son and you, our good old friends.

Now, Corina would like to address you all………………………………………