

FATHER OF BRIDE SPEECH

Word Count: Approx 900 (excluding beats/scene direction)

Speech Length: Approx 6 minutes

When the kids were young, every night we'd have dinner and talk about our days. On one occasion, I told them that I had given a speech at work. And at seven years old, Lauren asked in a very matter-of-fact way, "Did anybody fall asleep?" (BEAT) I tell ya, **honesty** (nod confidently to audience) is a great quality. (BEAT) I raised her right. That being said, I'd like everyone to keep an eye on Lauren tonight to make sure she doesn't nod off while I'm speaking. (BEAT)

I first heard about Josh when Lauren was in College and she casually mentioned him over the phone. I thought, "Oh." Then, there he was a few months later, and I thought, "Oh." And a few months after that, there he was again, and I thought, "Ooooooooooooooh." (BEAT)

But I wasn't worried. Lauren was the risk assessment officer for her sorority. (pause) So I knew she'd only go out with him if her appraisal deemed him low risk, high reward. (BEAT) The fact that we're all here today confirms this was the case.

When Josh called me to ask for my permission to marry my daughter, I wasn't surprised. I had already been given the heads up thanks to my backchannel, Lauren's sister Julia. (BEAT) He was nervous, so all I said was, "Absolutely not, you cannot marry my daughter." (BEAT) I'm kidding, I would never say that. What I did say was, "You're a great guy and of course you've got my blessing."

There are two reasons I gave Josh my blessing. Number 1: I'm very excited about the height he's going to bring to the Nicholson family. (BEAT) And 2, as a healthcare consultant, I look forward to his recommendation on how to lower our family's premiums. (BEAT) And of course, it didn't hurt that he was a Michigan boy. (BEAT)

But all jokes aside, Josh is a wonderful human being. He is a kind soul with a gentle presence about him. He has integrity, depth, and strength of character. And for me, what clinched it, is that he loves and supports Lauren 100% in whatever she chooses to do. I see the way they look at each other and I know that he'll forever treat my daughter with the love, compassion, respect, and devotion that she deserves.

We couldn't be happier to welcome you into the Nicholson family, just as your father Greg, your grandmother Janet, your sisters Alexis, Alora, Aubrie, and the rest of the Reiss clan have so graciously done for my Lauren.

And now onto the bride. Doesn't she look dazzling everyone? (Cue audience/applause, then cut them off...) Okay, that's enough, she's taken remember? (BEAT)

Lauren has always made things look easy. She played sports and was in competitive cheerleading all through school. She got straight-A's as a student and graduated Valedictorian of her class. She got a full ride to Central Michigan and a scholarship for law school at Michigan State, saving daddy loads of money. (BEAT) And now that she practices employment law, I know who to turn to for my legal troubles. (BEAT)

All of this is in stark contrast to me when I was growing up. I was like Dennis the Menace. I did not do well in school and for fun, my brother and I used to swan dive off the roof of our house into the swimming pool. (BEAT) So sometimes, I just look at Lauren, and think, are we really related? (BEAT)

Lauren might not know this, but one time in high school, all of the photos on her phone were accidentally uploaded to our computer when she used it to charge her phone. (pause, look around knowingly) ALL of her photos. (pause) That's when I found out her and her friends would gather to drink schnapps at our house when we were away. (BEAT) Some fathers might get mad, but I just thought, okay we ARE related. (BEAT)

People have always been drawn to Lauren. I call her the Mayor Of East Lansing, because one time when we went to an MSU football game, about 40 students spotted her across the street and just started yelling, "Lauren! Lauren! Hey Lauren!" (BEAT)

I said she always made things look easy but she is one of the hardest working people I know and can grind with the best of them. All throughout school she worked full time and part time jobs. I am fully confident she can excel at anything she puts her mind to.

As a father, one of the things I am most proud of, is that Lauren has a deep and everlasting relationship with her siblings, Evan, Julia, Jake, and Zach, all of whom are in the wedding party. She is very close with her mother _____ and her husband _____. Her grandparents Chris and Artie, Tom and Carol. And all of the family. These are the people who helped shape her into the beautiful woman you see before you.

Lauren puts family first and would do anything for them, just as I know Josh would for his.

Lauren you are incredible and I am so proud of you. I held you when you were first born and I promise you I'll always be there to hold you.

You are smart, sweet, capable, charming, driven, and any father would be blessed to call you their daughter. I just happen to be the lucky one who is able to call you his. I love you.

Please raise a glass for these two soulmates. May you forever love one another, laugh together, support each other, prosper, and experience the greatest joys life has to offer as husband and wife.

Thank you.