

Maid of Honor Speech

Ladies and gentlemen,

This wedding has been a wonderful blend of cultures and traditions and therefore I feel it is incumbent on me to uphold the Russian end of things. And if there is one thing that Russians take seriously, it's toasting. Everything must be toasted in proper order, so please make sure that your glasses are full and that the wine bottles are at hand, as I have a few toasts to propose.

The first toast is to friendship. As some of you already know, I am here today because Sasha is one of my oldest friends going back to our time in Exeter. Even though our lives since high school have taken us further and further apart (in fact, over 5,000 miles apart at the last count!) our friendship has held firm.

Friendship is also what brings everyone else in here together today, whether from nearby San Francisco to as far away as Alaska, Florida and New England – Sasha's and Jesse's wedding has given us the opportunity to see old friends and to make new ones. So here's to friendship! [toast]

2. From friends, I now turn to family. As teenagers we all may have spent time trying to get away from, but as we get older, it becomes easier to admit that it is our families that help us most to get to where we are today. So let us now drink a toast to Sasha's family, to those who are here with us today and to those who are here with us in spirit – to the bride's family! [toast]

3. Now I hope you all are able to keep up with me here, or else take a moment to refill your glasses, because I'm going straight to my next toast – to the family of the groom!

4. And now let us turn our attention to the bride and groom. Sasha and Jesse – I have had the pleasure of witnessing your relationship unfold from the very beginning. I am sure that other people in this room that have watched you two over the years will agree with me when I say that we didn't doubt that this day would eventually come, though we were all wondering how long it would take you two to figure it out. You have reminded us all, however, that good things are worth waiting for. So I would like everyone here to raise a glass to Sasha and Jesse – two people coming together to make a new family here today.

A toast to the bride and groom! [toast]

— *Shy Eager*