

SPEECH SEVENTEEN

Firstly, on behalf of the bridesmaids, I'd like to thank John for his kind and thoughtful words. I'm sure we all agree that not only do the bridesmaids look fantastic, but they have done a brilliant job today – not the least of which was getting Jane to the church – I understand she put up quite a struggle!

Ladies and gentlemen, if there's anybody here this afternoon who's feeling nervous, apprehensive and queasy at the thought of what lies ahead, it's probably because you have just got married to John.

I'm sure you'll all agree that was a lovely service this afternoon. Very moving. So much so, even the wedding cake's in tiers. Sorry but the jokes don't get any better. For those who don't know me, my name is Paul. I must confess to being a little nervous as I stand before you, as public speaking has never been my thing. This is the sixth time today that I've got up from a warm seat with a few sheets of paper in my hand.

I believe my main responsibilities for today were:

To ensure that the groom arrives on time, sober, and looking good. Well 2 out of 3 isn't bad. After all I'm only the best man, and the raw materials I had and time allowed for 'looking good' was quite a challenge!

I work with John – John and I first met after I engaged head-hunters to find some of the best consultants in the computer business and they came up with John's name. I hounded John for some time to come for an interview and when we finally met I had no doubt in my mind I should have paid for better head-hunters.....

Seriously John is the best in the business and I am honoured to be his best man. I think he asked me to be best man so he could get back at me for hiring him. He has called me an idiot on several occasions ----- and now he wants me to stand here and prove it to everyone today. I'll try not to disappoint him.....

It just occurred to me, as John was making his speech that today must be the first time he has stood up in front of as many people and not sent them to sleep talking about Health and Safety or the benefits and efficiencies a Risk Management System – well done John! Seriously, John is good at his job, so good in fact that we all call him 'God' at work. He got this nick name for 3 reasons.

1. You never see him,
2. He makes his own rules, and
3. If he
does any work, it's a bloody miracle.....

Sorry about that 'bloody' word, I shouldn't swear, you can rest assured that, unlike most traditional best man speeches, which are full of sexual innuendo, I've promised John and Jane that if there is anything slightly risqué in mine, I'll whip it out immediately.....

FORNICATION Sorry ...FOR AN OCCASION such as this traditionally the best man is required to reflect on the Groom's past life experiences and perform a complete character assassination - which is difficult in John's case because he's such a nice bloke. However, although I've only known John for 8 years this speech is co written by John's mum, his sister Janette and brother Phillip so I have all the inside information I need to spill the beans..... John was once described to me as ARROGANT, CONCEITED, INSENSITIVE and SELFISH - it was his mum who said this. Okay so I made that up. I know I would be in a lot of trouble if I didn't mention how supportive John had been to his Mum and his sister throughout the years. Unfortunately John's Dad is no longer with us but I'm sure if he was here today he would be very proud of John and happy for both John and Jane.

John has been there for his Mum and his sister through difficult times and they want everyone here to know how thankful they are and how much they appreciate having John as a son and brother. I am sure his support will continue for both of them - and now of course with Jane by his side.

I'd like to thank John's mum for digging out some old photos of John there was one particularly lovely photo of John at the seaside, sitting on a donkey, face painted like a clown, with an ice cream in one hand, candyfloss in the other, and crying his eyes out. I was going to show you today, but thought it would be a little bit embarrassing – after all, it was taken in January earlier this year when he was in Australia at Bondi beach.

I then asked his mum if she had any embarrassing pictures of John, and she replied 'oh, do you mean the one's where he's showing his willy?' I asked the hotel for a projector but I'm very sorry John – I tried as best I could, but no company in NZ had a projector powerful enough to blow them up so that we could actually see anything.

John made a bit of a fuss about having to wear a pink tie today but I do have photo's of John wearing a pink shirt at school when he was about seven - with a pink tie - and even pink flared trousers on holiday in Fiji when he was a teenager so I think Pink is a bit of a theme colour for John - and he can't really complain today.

What did John get up too during his early years? Well John's mum and dad used be dance instructors and singers and John would help set up the equipment for them. In fact John seems to have been a very helpful and thoughtful young man, helping with the shopping and learning to cook at an early age.

Which is all very wonderful but something changed around the time John went to Wellington University and became a 'Goth' with dyed black hair and drainpipe trousers. It was around this time that John first met Jane and their first fling was flung! – I heard she started a support group for anyone who knew John at that time - I'm not surprised it took another 20 years before Jane had the courage to meet him again and what a surprise it was – the Mohican hair cut was gone in fact quite a bit of the hair cut was gone and black hair had turned to a suave, sophisticated grey. Jane was so shocked and confused I hear she was sick on their first reunion date and had to rush back to Napier for an eye test.

I've never seen John as happy as since he met Jane again. They have been inseparable and make a wonderful couple. Obviously completely in love with each other so I was surprised when I heard they had a bit of a tiff about the seating plan for this reception.

They really couldn't decide who to put where. So as best man, I offered to step in and help work something out. What we finally decided was to use the wedding present list, and put those guests who bought the biggest and most expensive items nearest the front, and work it back from there. This has completely backfired on me because after making my speech my wife and I have been asked to move from the top table to the bench at the back of the car park! We thought the ping balls and Malteasers were a good idea and would have looked good arranged on the mantelpiece, practical as well if you got hungry.... or needed to dash out for a game of table tennis.

I was warned by Jane not to loose or damage John on his Stag night – I had planned to cling film John naked to a lamp post but I had a trial run on myself at home and got so stuck with the damn stuff wrapped around me I had to go to the doctors for some help to get it all off. When the doctor saw me, standing there naked, covered in cling film he said 'I can clearly see your nuts!'

So I gave up that idea. I believe at this point I'm supposed to give John some advice on married life and what lies ahead.

Firstly, set the ground rules and establish who's boss and then do everything that Jane tells you.

Secondly, you don't marry someone because you can live with them, you marry them because you simply cannot live without them ...

And finally, try and get on with your mother in law.

Personally, I haven't spoken to my mother-in-law for 3 years now – I don't like to interrupt her. I know John loves his music so I would like to take a little time to reflect on the music that was top of the charts when our dashing groom was born and took his first breaths in Invercargill in 1964 – These were the No1 hits of that year and I think the titles reflect the events leading up to today, perhaps later tonight and even foreseeable the future.

When John met Jane the No 1 titles were:

"Oh, Pretty Woman" - Roy Orbison "I Get Around" - The Beach Boys For the celebrations later tonight we have:

"Fun Fun Fun" - The Beach Boys "Glad All Over" - Dave Clark Five

When the celebrations are over and John and Jane head for the matrimonial bedroom we have:

"A Hard Day's Night" - The Beatles "Twist and Shout" - The Beatles

To celebrate John and Jane's marriage - the Beatles sang:

"Can't Buy Me Love" - The Beatles

And we all agree with Dusty Springfield when she sang:

"Wishin' and Hopin'" - Dusty Springfield

Here's 'Wishin and Hopin' that John and Jane have the best of times together as Mr and Mrs Smith.

TOASTS

I am sure everyone here today would like to wish the new Mr and Mrs Smith good health, happiness and a wonderful life together, The toast is 'John and Jane'

Good afternoon everyone and thank you for coming to this special occasion, its lovely to see SO MANY FRIENDS and family here.