

Best Man's Speech at Juan & Karisa's Wedding

0. Thank You's

Good evening. My name is Will. It's really nice to be here with everyone. A big thank you to Juan and Karisa for having us here tonight. Thank you also for trusting me with a microphone. Buckle your seatbelts... No, I'm just kidding...

We are going to gamify this a little bit. One part of my story tonight is not true. Everything else is. But one part is made up. It's like "two truths, one lie." If you guess correctly which is the lie, you win a prize.

1. How I met Juan

I met Juan nine years ago at a happy hour at a restaurant in East Liberty called Verde that doesn't exist anymore. I think it's a Primanti's now.

Shortly into our conversation, we both realized that we each liked to play soccer and that we both were planning on going to the open tryout for the Pittsburgh Riverhounds, the semi-pro soccer team here in the city, the next day. Juan said that he didn't have a car and asked me for a ride. I said yes. It would be the first of many rides.

2. The First Ride

The car that I was driving at this time in my life was my grandmother's white Ford Crown Victoria, which is the exact make, model, and color of the car that police officers around the United States have driven for years. The exact model is called the Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptor.

I think, now, they are trying to phase out this car in place of the Dodge Charger, but for years this was the most common cop car around the country.

I called Juan to tell him that I had arrived and was waiting outside, but when he stepped out of his apartment and saw my car, I could see his heart sink. He turned and ran.

Because I'm much faster than him, I eventually caught him and convinced him that he could get in the car. It was okay. I told him that I was truly just some random guy he met at the bar the night before driving his grandmother's Crown Vic and was more than happy to take him to the Riverhounds tryout.

3. Juan's Personal Chauffeur

Juan eventually realized how happy he was that he got in the car that day because he now had his own personal driver. For the next year, I drove Juan everywhere—To pick-up soccer, to our soccer games in Cranberry, to North Strabane, around Pittsburgh, to the grocery store—Anywhere you could imagine.

4. Juan's Lowest Moment

Through playing soccer together, I quickly learned that Juan had a unique ability to sustain strange and serious injuries with alarming frequency. One of these injuries was tearing his ACL.

A day after his surgery, I went to his apartment to hang out with and help him since obviously he would be pretty immobile and struggling to get around. Struggling, indeed he was. Juan was not well. At one point he was sitting on the toilet with his pants around his ankles, shitting, and screaming in pain.

Juan later told me that this was one of his lowest moments and how much it meant to him that I was there to help him through it. It was on this day that I stopped being Juan's personal chauffeur and became his trusted friend.

5. Over the Years

Over the years, Juan has become like a brother to me. We have shared so many wonderful memories together. Whether it is playing soccer, traveling and exploring new places, Juan kicking my ass in Jiu Jitsu, making Pepitos on the back porch on a summer night, or listening to Juan tell me about how the world is controlled by mushrooms, I treasure them all.

6. Enter Karisa

The summer of 2018 was a World Cup summer. I would occasionally go over to Juan's house to watch a game here and there. The World Cup was in Russia. They are several time zones ahead of us, so the game days here would start early—maybe something like 6:00 a.m., 9:00, 12:00 noon and 3:00 p.m. on a Saturday, for example.

One morning I walked into Juan's house only to see none other than Karisa sitting in his living room wearing a Venezuela hat and an oversized t-shirt, and acting suspiciously quiet. Neither Juan nor Karisa explained anything to me, but I knew what was going on.

7. Compliments to Karisa

What I didn't know was that Juan and Karisa would date for four years and get married. What a great decision.

Karisa, you are the bomb. You are a talented, kind, fun, and loving person. People love to be around you because you have a vibrant personality, but you are sensitive and compassionate, too. You plan great parties. You also apparently have turned yourself into a tech wiz. Nice.

You bring out the best in Juan. I know that he feels so fortunate to have you in his life and to be marrying you.

8. Restless and Grateful

Let's end on a sentimental note.

One of my personal issues has been that I get restless. It probably has to do with my upbringing—Moving around and changing schools often—I have a bad habit of forgetting to enjoy the present moment and moving on too quickly to the next thing.

Now, Ally and I have a home and a kid, so we're most likely not going anywhere, but for years I would find myself getting sick of Pittsburgh, sick of the cloudy days, sick of the cold, sick of my routine, wondering where I could go, or what new place I could see...

But, in these moments, I would try to slow and calm myself down. I would think about the pros and cons of my situation, where I was, what I could do... One of the biggest positives about my life here in Pittsburgh, I would think, was that I had such a good friend, my best friend, here, right around the corner in Juan. We have a genuine, unique, fulfilling friendship and I cannot explain how much I value it.

9. Wrapping Up

So, in closing, I want to say to Juan and Karisa that I love you both. You both look amazing. I am so happy for both of you. Thank you for having us all here to be a part of your special day.

Cheers.