Opening 1 / 8

Good evening, everyone, and welcome. I'm Walter, Maya's father, and tonight I get to be the host and the proudest man in the building. Thank you for coming so far, and for loving these two as much as you do. I wrote this down, because if I improvise, I'll cry before the second sentence.

Part 2 2 / 8

When Maya was sixteen, I taught her to drive in the church parking lot on Sunday afternoons. I was calm. I said calm things. I said, take your time, and I said, nobody's in a hurry, and I gripped the door handle so tightly that my knuckles went pale.

Part 2, continued 3 / 8

Maya never raised her voice. She kept her eyes forward and her hands steady, and she parked between the lines on the tenth try. Then she looked over and asked, are you all right, Dad? That's when I understood something.

Part 3 4 / 8

She wasn't nervous about driving. She was worried about me. That's who Maya has always been. She notices who is uneasy, and she turns toward them first. As a little girl, she sat beside the new kid at lunch. As a teenager, she stayed late to help the coach fold the chairs. Now she's a woman who remembers your name and the name of your sister's cat.

Part 4 5 / 8

A few years ago, Maya called and said she was bringing someone to Sunday dinner. I cleaned the garage, which tells you everything about my state of mind.

Part 4, continued 6 / 8

Quinn walked in carrying a pie and a very brave smile, and within ten minutes was standing in the kitchen, drying dishes and listening to Aunt Carol's long story about her tomatoes. Nobody asked Quinn to do that. Quinn wanted to. I looked at Maya, and she was glowing, and I thought, well, that's that.

Part 5 7 / 8

Quinn, I want to say this to you directly. Thank you for being gentle with my daughter's heart, and for being steady when things were hard. You've been part of our family for a while, but today we say it out loud. Welcome.

Closing 8 / 8

Maya, my wish for you is simple. May you always have a seat on the passenger side when you need one, and may Quinn be the one who says, take your time. I'm so proud of you that I can't fit it into a single speech. I love you, sweetheart. Everyone, please raise your glasses to Maya and Quinn.