Opening 1 / 5

Good evening, everyone. I'm Margaret, and I'm lucky enough to be Tess's stepmother. Thank you for being here. A speech from me may not have been the one anybody expected, and Tess knows that I'm honored and a little terrified.

Part 2 2 / 5

I married Tess's father when she was ten. I never tried to become her mother, because she had one, and she loved her. I drove her to swim practice at five in the morning instead. For the first month, she said nothing at all. She watched the road. Then one morning she put her feet up on the dashboard and handed me the radio dial, as if it were a key. I turned up the music, and neither of us mentioned it.

Part 3 3 / 5

That's how it went with us. No announcements, only small trusts, piling up like snow. Tess never owed me anything, and she gave me a seat at every important table anyway, including this one. I don't take that lightly.

Part 4 4 / 5

Riley, you have always asked how my day was and then waited for the answer. Thank you for treating me as family from the first dinner. You make Tess brave and silly in the right amounts.

Tess, I wish you early mornings that end well, and a hand on the radio dial whenever you need one. I love you. Please join me in raising a glass to Tess and Riley.