

The Speech

Comedy · Monologue · 3 min · No gender marker · Adult · Intermediate

MOI

Right. The big day. My brother's wedding. I am the best man. Three hundred people in front of me, a microphone, and one mission: not to be that guy. You know the one, the one people still talk about twenty years later. "Do you remember the best man?"

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I prepared. Oh, I prepared. I have cards. Numbered. A plan: one touching anecdote, one joke, a second joke in case the first one dies, and an ending that makes the aunts cry. Foolproof.

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Card number one. The touching anecdote. "When my brother was six..." And that is when I realise I have absolutely no memory of what he did at six. Six is a black hole. I wrote "touching anecdote" and never filled in the rest.

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Card number two. The joke. I deliver it. Silence. A silence so complete that I can hear the caterer, at the back, set down a fork. One single fork. The loneliest sound in the world.

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So, in the panic, I pick up the wrong card, and I read out loud, to three hundred people and the grandmother: "remember to collect the suit, pay the dry cleaner."

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And then something magical happens. People laugh. They think it is a bit. They find me bold. Modern.

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So I own it. I look at my brother, I put the cards down, and I say the only true thing I had in my head: "I do not know how to make speeches. But I will always know how to be here. At six, at thirty, and at every age where you need somebody to hold the microphone while you get on with your life." And then, only then, the aunts cried. Mission accomplished.

By accident. Like everything I ever get right.

What you can do with it

Original text written for Acto. Read it, print it, work on it in class, perform it at an audition or on a self-tape: that is what it is for, and you need no permission. For a public performance or any commercial use, write to us at contact@acto.re.