

DOWN HOME Two memories to last a lifetime

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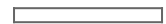
DOWN HOME: Two memories to last a lifetime

For a few minutes, I felt like the most handsome guy on the planet.

Call it good-looks-by-association. I was still the same me, just dressed up in a tuxedo. But I had the most beautiful bride-our oldest daughter, Lindsay-on my left arm.

We stood at the back of our church, waiting for her wedding to begin. Those were golden moments-the serene calm in the middle of an enormously hectic day.

Lindsay and I had time to talk. I won't tell you exactly what we said. That's daughter-daddy confidential information. But I will tell you I'll hold that conversation in my heart all the days of my life.



Then, the music started, and I walked Lindsay down the aisle to take the arm of Aaron Kahler, the love of her life.

Almost any father of the bride will acknowledge an open secret: No guy in the world is worthy of his daughter. But I was compelled to make an exception for Aaron.

When I asked Lindsay why she wanted to marry him, she said he loves God

more than anything. He's her best friend. He accepts her as she is, takes care of her, tells her he loves her and thinks she's beautiful. And he makes her laugh—a trait her mama, Joanna, and I always advised her to seek in a mate.

So, I walked Lindsay down the aisle with clear-eyed confidence. And with gratitude to God—for a darling daughter and for the man whose life God had braided with hers.

While I doubt any money actually changed hands, my friends who would have bet I'd cry all the way through the marriage ceremony looked shocked afterward.

Lindsay and Aaron asked me to perform the wedding. And since my friends know I can cry over a good commercial, they just knew I'd blubber through this wedding.

Truth is, Lindsay, Joanna and I did our crying a few nights earlier. The wedding was on Saturday, and on Wednesday, Jo, Lindsay, her sister, Molly, and I had time alone together.

We ate a home-cooked meal around our dinner table, just as we had done countless evenings before. Dinner at home always has been my favorite parenting time. Just the four of us, enjoying good food, each other's company, and laughter and stories from our day. So, naturally, I cried as I tried to say the blessing. They gave me a hard time, but we all felt the sense of the occasion—our last dinner at home, just the four of us.

Then, as Lindsay and I had promised for years, we drove to the video store to rent *Father of the Bride*. “You know you need to cry it out,” Lindsay told me. “So, *Father of the Bride* is just what you need.” She was right. Lindsay, Jo and I laughed and cried our way through the movie.

The best part of the evening happened when Lindsay gave us a handwritten

book of her favorite memories-132 experiences of her growing-up years that shaped her life and brought her joy. Jo, Lindsay and I sat on our bed reading and laughing and crying.

That evening and at her wedding, we made two more memories I'll always treasure. One stained with tears; one-contrary to popular expectation-not.

-Marv Knox

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