

The father of the bride, Mr. Erik Hellqvist's speech to the married couple, 13 June 2015

(The spoken version shall take precedence)

Your Majesties,

Your Royal Highnesses,

Guests,

The bride and groom, Sofia and Carl Philip.

—

My wife Marie and I have always said we feel like the richest people in the world, because we've been blessed with three wonderful daughters.

And we couldn't be prouder.

—

Today is an important day for many; a day when families merge and grow.

Dear Sofia and Carl Philip, I am delighted that it is your love for each other that has brought us all together here today.

—

Sofia, you have always been a strong and bold person, who has chosen her own path.

You have often chosen the path less travelled.

Sometimes it has been difficult and sometimes you've had a fair wind. But you've never given up.

—

Which reminds me, one of my clearest memories of you Sofia is from the summers we spent sailing in the Stockholm archipelago.

You would stand right at the prow, the wind blowing in your hair, and stretch up your arms with just the vast blue sea before you.

It is that sense of freedom, belonging and the feeling that anything is possible that I hope you will take with you on your journey through life.

—

Another memory I have from those sailing trips is the lack of breakfast in the mornings.

You used to give all the bread to the hungry swans.

And it is these very qualities that have developed over the years into a genuine commitment to vulnerable people who find themselves in challenging life situations.

I greatly admire that.

—

However, when you were younger and you set off into the unknown and travelled to far off places, I admit that as a father I wanted to hold you back.

But it's not my place to do that, and neither is that the kind of person you are.

It's important for a child to feel that sense of security and inner confidence to allow them to venture out into the world and explore new places.

But it works both ways.

Both your mother and I have great trust in you Sofia, as well as in your choice of husband.

—

Dear Carl Philip,

I remember one of our first meetings.

It was when Marie and I were on a motorcycling holiday and you were competing in motor racing.

We were immediately struck by your extremely friendly and easy-going personality, and most importantly, that you had Sofia's best interests at heart.

—

I sometimes worry now when you're racing, and for Sofia's sake maybe I wish you'd slow down at times.

But having sat in the passenger seat once I now understand just what a skilled driver you are.

And my confidence in you has grown even stronger.

—

And you're not just good at motor racing, you are also a talented artist and you've proved your worth in both design and photography.

Although we would certainly have become friends anyway, it's great to share your interest in both motoring and art.

—

The fact that you and Sofia are motivated by living an active and creative life together, constantly moving forwards and your shared quest for a sense of freedom, these are the things that I believe make you such a strong partnership.

In you, Sofia has found an extremely kind, respectful and supportive partner to share her life with.

—

Carl Philip,

I won't ask you to look after my daughter.

She has always managed that fine herself.

But I do ask you both to continue to take good care of each other.

—

I would also like to thank The King and Queen, who from the very first moment treated us with warmth and as equal parents-in-law.

A huge thank-you also to the rest of the Royal Family, who have welcomed Sofia with a natural friendliness.

Finally, the warmest thanks on behalf of myself and all our guests go to our generous hosts for allowing us to share this beautiful day together, with delicious food, drink and music.

Please raise your glasses and toast the bride and groom, Princess Sofia and Prince Carl Philip.