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Your Help Planning Sonia's 40th Birthday Would Make My Heart So Happy



Emily Schleiger

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Dear Fellow Friends of Sonia,

I'm emailing you for some assistance. As you may know, Sonia's 40th birthday is four months away, and, per her 5 a.m. text to me, the time to start



planning her celebration is now. As designated party organizer and Sonia's most obsequious sidekick since 8th grade, I want to acknowledge the tardiness of my request for planning help. I've been distracted by some recent cardiac health issues.

With Sonia soon facing the date she describes as "one step closer to death," she has grown concerned about my ability to facilitate its proper observance. I'll admit my heart attack was inconvenient, particularly for my children and husband, but also for Sonia. My cardiologist is advising lowering my stress to protect my heart, while Sonia is worried about choosing a party venue ASAP to protect it from being "stolen" by the brides of fall wedding season. I'd still like to ensure Sonia has a special day, not only because I remain, after more than two decades, charmed by her empty compliments, er, I mean, steady companionship, but also because she is greatly deserving of celebration.*

I'm hopeful that by creating several planning committees, I'll make it easy for you to get involved, and show support for Sonia for the upcoming "devastating" milestone:

Venue Committee: A date must be determined for the celebration of Sonia's life. Sonia has offered that while she hates being the center of attention, she would not be *offended* if friends *preferred* her birthday be a multiple-week affair. Booking a large venue for either one night, or one night per year of her life, is priority. Unfortunately, due to my 8 week stay in the cardiac unit, I'm unable to vet these locations in person.

Invitation Committee: After a date has been set, correspondence must be planned quickly: first, Save the Date coasters that say, "It's hard to absorb, but Sonia's 30's will soon be laid to rest," and then, a brief "obituary-inspired" invitation, summarizing Sonia's life and accomplishments to date. Just

seconds before before my heart event, Sonia also told me that a youthful photo should adorn the invitation as well, so that she “be remembered in her healthier and more youthful years.”

Catering Committee: A bakery should be contracted to create a “somber-toned” cake. Preferably the icing should spell out “Too young to die” in whimsical font. The catering committee will also need to schedule menu tastings, but I regret that my new heart-healthy dietary restrictions forbid me from sampling foods high in fat or refined carbs.

Gift Committee: Sonia has said that her birthday gift is truly just the presence of her friends at her “neosacramental event” because “this celebration is really about friends,” and she might genuinely mean that. However, I’m sure you’ve heard her mention frequently that she’d love to sail around the world one more time while she “still has the strength,” so I’ve set up a GoFundMe account to accept financial contributions. Management and publicizing of this site would be most helpful, as I’m currently managing my own GoFundMe page to help defray my piling hospital bills, cardiac rehab costs, and life-long prescription copays.

Keepsake Committee: Our guest of honor would love a keepsake of this occasion to look back on as she begins “the final chapter of her life.” Perhaps when signing in to the guest book, attendees might jot down what they’ll most miss about Sonia’s 30’s. Or, someone might record videos of friends telling stories of how Sonia has impacted their lives. For example, how she taught them about selflessness, humility, perspective and wisdom. I’d like to volunteer my own story about how she makes me laugh until I cry. Like when she sent flowers to me in cardiac recovery with a card stating, “Good luck with the chemo.” (Did you know that too much laughter can actually be problematic for a weak heart?)

Thanks so much for your involvement supporting Sonia in “this difficult time of loss.” After all, you can’t imagine what I’m, er, she’s going through. Expect a follow-up phone call from me, or my cardiologist (or husband or one of several worried family members) in the next few days, as I’m sure you’re as excited as I am to get this party completed — I mean, started.

One last note: Please keep these email details to yourself, because Sonia wants this party to be a SURPRISE.

*And also dating my boss, who controls my salary and health insurance.

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Written by Emily Schleiger


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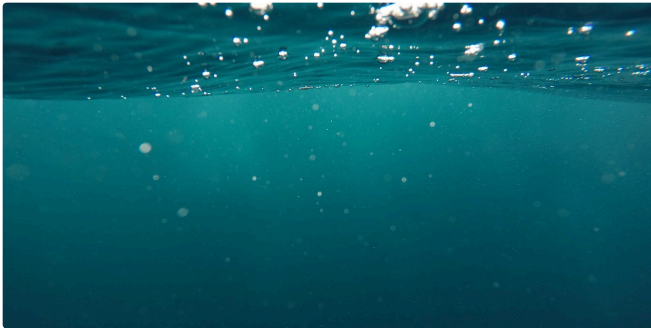
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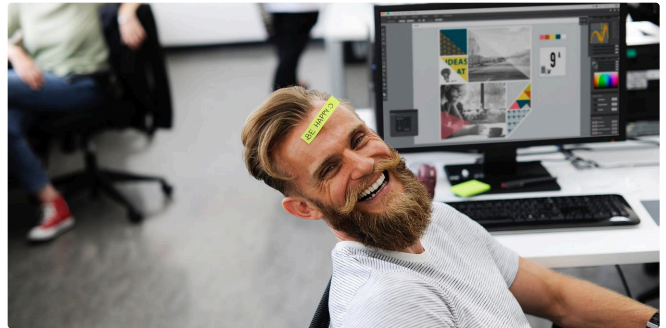
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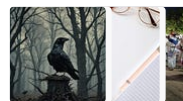
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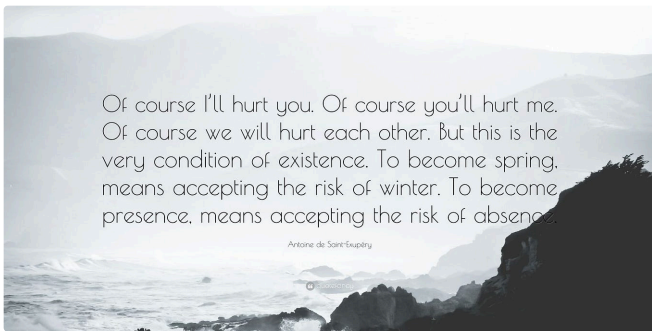
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