Hi everyone. I'm Marcus, Ashley's older brother, which means I have thirty three years of material and only three minutes.

When Ashley was nine years old, she wrote our parents a formal complaint about her bedtime. Not a whine. A letter. Two pages, typed on the family computer, with a section at the end listing her sources. She had a bibliography. She was nine.

Mom, Dad, I think we all understood that night what we were dealing with.

She lost the bedtime argument, for the record. But she made them think about it, and honestly that's been the pattern ever since.

We shared a bedroom until she was fourteen, which is how I learned that Ashley does not do anything casually. There was a system for the closet. There was a rule about the desk lamp. There was, at one point, a laminated sign.

Then there was the summer we drove to Florida with no air conditioning, and somewhere in Georgia I looked over and my sister, sweating through her shirt, had a printed itinerary on her lap with the gas stations already marked. We were nineteen and seventeen. She had marked the gas stations.

I still get calls at two in the morning about spreadsheets. Not emergencies. Spreadsheets.

But here's what I actually want to say. Everyone at this table has, at some point, been on the good end of that brain. When our grandmother got sick, Ashley is the one who built the schedule. When my wedding was falling apart eight days out, Ashley is the one who fixed it, and then denied fixing it, badly, because she is a genuinely terrible liar.

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Ash, you're thirty. You've spent your twenties worrying about everything at maximum volume. My wish for this decade is that you keep the planners and lose about forty percent of the panic.

Everyone, to Ashley. Thirty years old, still the most prepared person in any room.

Happy birthday, Ash.

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