

FRANK 4

From *Before Oz* by Lauren Grove

Frank, 40s, celebrates his wife as he dedicates his book to their love.

FRANK: *(He looks at his watch)* Three minutes to midnight... *(He looks around the room.)* Can I have your attention, everyone? I'd like to make a toast. You all know why we're here tonight, and it's not just to celebrate the new year. I invited you all here to celebrate someone very special. You see, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is not my greatest success. It's my marriage. *(He turns to Maud)* Maud, you are my best friend. I know I always like to say "there's no place like home" with each new place we moved, but the truth is, we found home in each other.

I am a man of words, and yet when I try to describe our love, I find myself at a loss for them. How can I possibly put into words the infinite love I have for you? It would be as impossible as riding a cyclone to a magic land beyond the rainbows. But I thought dedicating the book to you would be a start... *(He pulls out the Oz book.)* Here, on the first page. "This book is dedicated to my good friend and comrade, my wife." It seemed fitting. Without you, there would be no Emerald City. There would be no book. Ladies and gentlemen, a toast to my wife, Maud Elizabeth Baum! The one critic I always fear and long to please. I care little for what the world thinks as long as she is proud of me.