Good evening everyone — friends, family, and anyone who's here for the free curry samples James promised but definitely did not arrange.

I'm Tom, James's best man and former university flatmate, which means I hold a PhD in "Turner Studies", specialising in lost keys, misplaced wallets, and the ancient art of being fifteen minutes late to everything.

I met James eight years ago when he moved into our student house with two suitcases and a kettle he swore was "vital equipment".
Within a week, I'd learned three things: he is the most loyal person you could wish to have on your side, he's quietly dependable in a way that makes chaos calm down around him, and he will turn up late to his own Netflix queue.

Then Sophie arrived on the scene.
We were at a friend's birthday in Shoreditch — you know the kind of night where the music is too loud to think and the coat rack is a pile on the floor.
James started talking to this warm, funny woman with a smile that made him forget his drink, his sentence, and, briefly, his own name.
That was Sophie.
Organised. Thoughtful. And entirely unfazed by a man who owns three alarm clocks and treats them all as suggestions.

Their first date was wandering through Borough Market.
James told me afterwards he had to play it cool while desperately trying not to drip olive oil onto his shirt.
Sophie, somehow, managed to compare cheeses and life plans in one conversation.
They fit. Not in a fireworks-and-fanfare way, but in that steady, this-makes-sense way you only notice when you watch two people make ordinary days better.

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Two years later they moved in together and adopted Pepper, a rescue cat who immediately took charge of the household operations.
Pepper is the only creature on earth who can get James out of bed on time, mainly by sitting on his face at 6am.

Thursday nights became pub quiz nights.
They're the team who breeze through capital cities, then spend ten heated minutes negotiating whether Jaffa Cakes are biscuits.
Sophie brings the spreadsheets, James brings the dubious confidence, and somehow they keep winning.
When they don't, they shrug, order chips, and laugh anyway.

Weekends?
Hiking in the Lakes.
I joined once and discovered their special talent: they are unflappable.
Rain, wind, a map upside down — they still find the view and share the last cereal bar without drama.
James makes the terrible puns. Sophie pretends not to hear them.
That, friends, is love.

Last summer James proposed on a windy Cornish clifftop.
In classic Turner style, the plan ran about twenty-five minutes behind schedule because he'd "just popped back for the ring".
The wind tried to steal the moment — and the ring box — but there they were, hair everywhere, sea roaring, laughing their heads off, and saying yes.
Perfect.

Sophie, you are organised in the way that makes other people breathe easier.
You think ahead, you make room, you notice the tiny things that keep days stitched together.
You've brought out the best in James — not just the on-time version, but the braver one who tries new recipes, new trails, and occasionally coriander.

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James, you're loyal, witty, and the friend who shows up — even if the calendar says the event ended at seven.
You're the person who listens until the buzzing stops, then offers exactly the right one-liner or the lift home.
You chose brilliantly in Sophie, and you've done something smarter still — you've kept choosing her, every day, for seven years.

Together, you're generous in all the ways that matter —
with your time, your table, your last samosa, and your patience when things don't go to plan.
You don't chase perfection.
You build a life that works in the rain, with muddy boots by the door and Pepper pretending she pays rent.

Before we raise a glass, a few thank-yous.
To the staff here today — you've been wonderful, and we're really grateful for everything you've done.
And a moment for absent friends and loved ones who couldn't be here.
We carry them with us — in the stories, in the jokes we still tell, and in the care we show each other.

So, ladies and gents, if you would please raise your glasses.

To Sophie and James —
to a home that smells faintly of cumin and victory after Thursday nights,
to maps that might be upside down but always lead somewhere good,
to the small daily choices that make a big, solid life.

To the unflappable duo — Sophie and James!

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