Good evening everyone

I’m Tom, Oliver’s best man and former uni flatmate, which means I’ve seen things no letting agent would ever believe

First, a quick thank you to the parents of the bride and groom for raising two cracking human beings, to the brilliant bridal party for doing the heavy lifting today while pretending it was effortless, and to the bar staff for keeping us all cheerful and hydrated – you are the unsung heroes of romance

I met Oliver when we were thrown together in a student flat that had exactly two settings: freezing, or suspiciously damp He was loyal from day one, endlessly optimistic that the heating would “kick in any minute”, and delightfully stubborn about everything from how to load a dishwasher to the precise minute he believed a 9am seminar actually started Spoiler: it wasn’t 9am

His timekeeping hasn’t so much improved as gained character Oliver measures time the way others measure distance – vaguely, with confidence He once told me he’d be “five minutes away” when he was still in the shower If you’re wondering why the ceremony started on time today, that was Amelia’s influence She owns both a calendar and the moral courage to use it

Then came the barbecue in Clapham A mutual friend introduced Oliver to Amelia, and I watched something rare happen: Oliver went quiet He was completely taken Amelia was warm, razor-sharp, and organised enough to remember where she’d put her drink Oliver, who’d been holding a paper plate like a shield, tried to seem sophisticated by praising the char on some aubergines He later admitted he didn’t know aubergines could be charred without being a serious incident

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Their first date was a meander through Borough Market – exactly the sort of date where you learn whether you're compatible on the big questions: olives or no olives; coriander – friend or foe; is walking-and-grazing an acceptable lunch strategy Amelia asked thoughtful questions about cheese provenance; Oliver asked whether the free samples counted as a full meal This, somehow, was the spark

Seven years later, we've all seen how that spark has looked in real life – not grand gestures, but the daily habit of looking after each other They adopted Pickles the rescue cat, who quickly made it clear that they live in her house now They've spent weekends in the Lake District getting rained on from all directions, with Oliver insisting the summit is "definitely just over this next bit", and Amelia quietly producing a laminated map and a cereal bar as if she'd planned the weather herself They've taken part in competitive pub quizzes where Amelia answers three questions in a row with terrifying accuracy while Oliver guesses "The Suez Canal" with such optimism that occasionally it's right

At home they bake sourdough that annexes the kitchen The starter has its own shelf and, I suspect, voting rights If you ever need to know the exact hydration percentage of dough, ask Oliver He has a spreadsheet He also has another spreadsheet for his fantasy football team, which I mention for Amelia's benefit because it explains both the late-night muttering and the wild swings in Saturday mood To his credit, he still believes this is the year he'll win the league; to hers, she still believes there's space in the fridge for actual food, not just a jar labelled "Bubbles – Do Not Anger"

What makes them work is simple and rare Amelia brings clarity, care and one of those minds that can organise chaos into colour-coded calm She has a kindness that isn't soft – it's practical It turns up on time with plasters and a plan Oliver brings loyalty in the truest sense – he shows up He backs his people, he listens, and when the clouds gather he's the one saying, "We'll be fine" And he means it Together, they're generous and down-to-earth They host the kind of evenings where you leave with leftovers and a better opinion of mankind

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I’ll never forget a rainy weekend in Edinburgh when Oliver messaged our group chat “Just popping up Calton Hill – back in ten” Two hours later, soaked but buzzing, he told us he’d asked and she’d said yes He could barely type for the rain on his phone or the shaking in his hands You don’t need sunshine for perfect; you need the right person on the hill with you

To Amelia – thank you for loving our mate in the way that brings out his best, for tolerating his notion that “kick-off is basically the same as the ceremony time”, and for winning enough quiz rounds to fund snacks for the table To Oliver – you’ve chosen brilliantly, which is the single most important decision your fantasy team will never influence

To both of you – keep doing the small things The hand on the back when crossing the road The split bag of chips after a long walk The extra slice of toast when the starter has staged a coup If you carry on looking after each other in a hundred unshowy ways, the big stuff looks after itself

Now, everyone, if you would please raise your glasses

To love that’s warm and grounded, to laughter that lasts longer than the rain, and to Amelia and Oliver – and yes, Pickles – may your hikes be mostly downhill, your quizzes mostly victorious, and your sourdough mostly under control

To Amelia and Oliver

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