Good evening everyone, I’m Tom, Daniel’s best man, former workmate, and the only person here who has shared an Excel budget with him and lived to tell the tale.

I met Daniel during a year-end audit that felt like a hostage situation, only with more biscuits and fewer demands. He had that calm, meticulous look about him – as if he could spot a rounding error at 50 paces – and I thought, yes, that’s the sort of man you want on your side when the numbers stop adding up and the printer starts smoking.
We emerged from that audit as comrades, bonded by fluorescent lighting and instant coffee, and we’ve been best mates ever since.

And then there’s Emily.
Before I ever met her, I heard about her ideas – the kind of brilliantly creative, curious brain that can turn a casual question into a spark of something fresh.
When I finally did meet her, I understood why Daniel was smitten: she listens like she’s collecting treasures, she laughs easily, and she makes the room brighter without trying.
They’re chalk and cheese in the best way – meticulous and imaginative, dry humour and warm kindness – and somehow they land in the middle as patient, adventurous, and completely team-minded.

They first met the way many great modern romances do: they ran into each other at a charity 10k in Hyde Park, while not actually running.
Emily was stretching like a sensible athlete.
Daniel was trying to work out his split times on a spreadsheet he’d printed and laminated.
They chatted, ran a bit, pretended not to be out of breath, and by the finish line, they had a shared joke and a plan for coffee.
Eight years later, here we are.

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Their life together has had these clear, understated milestones.
They moved into a cosy flat in Richmond where the neighbour's cat tried to adopt them.
They started marathon training along the Thames, which sounds romantic until you've seen two people politely argue about the optimum pace past Hammersmith Bridge while it's raining sideways.
They fostered a lively spaniel named Bruno, who responds to his name only if you sing it.
They learned quickly that you can do a lot as a couple when one of you is calm and the other has snacks.

One of my favourite snapshots of them as a team is the Sunday roast tradition.
They open their door, friends drift in, there's a small mountain of Yorkshire puddings, and Bruno performing quality checks under the table.
Emily is crafting conversation like it's a tapestry.
Daniel is quietly making sure everyone's glass is full and the potatoes hit the table at exactly the right crisp-to-fluff ratio.
You'd think it was simple hospitality, but actually it's a little masterclass in care: she makes people feel seen, he makes people feel looked after, and together they make you feel at home.

Now, Daniel's love of spreadsheets is famous – or infamous – depending on your stance.
He says it's about clarity, but I've seen the twinkle when a pivot table balances.
You think I'm joking, but he once did a sensitivity analysis on whether to buy a new hoover.
And as for his laminated itineraries, I will never forget the Cornish weekend where he produced a timetable with built-in "admire view" slots.
We were given a five-minute window to feel awe and then a marginal note: "Contingency awe if delayed by sheep."
Reader, there were sheep.
We fell behind schedule.
Emily just tucked the itinerary in her pocket and said, "Let's be late on

purpose.”

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Which brings me to that windswept Cornish sunset when Daniel proposed on the coastal path.
He had planned this perfectly choreographed moment – tide charts checked, weather apps consulted, backup sunset locations noted A through C.
Nature laughed, the wind howled, the sky put on its own timetable, and in the middle of that, he asked, and she said yes.
It wasn’t neat.
It was real.
And I think that’s the heart of them – they prepare, they dream, and then they welcome whatever life brings with a grin and a hand squeeze.

Because they’re not just partners on the good days.
They’re marathon training partners when the long run becomes a trudge and someone’s shoelace breaks at mile 14.
They’re board-game partners when the stakes are absurdly high and someone, not naming names, reads the rules out loud like they’re presenting a legal document.
They’re “What do you need?” people, even when what’s needed is just tea and quiet or a silly story about Bruno chasing his tail into a laundry basket.

Speaking of board games, I saw their competitive side during a weekend away with friends.
Catan was on the table.
Politeness was on the floor.
Emily traded wool with surgical charm.
Daniel was calculating probabilities in his head like Alan Turing on a beach day.
But here’s the thing – they never forgot they were on the same side.
Even while they were trying to crush us.
They’re ruthless and sweet, a devastating combination.

I promised a quick couple quiz, so indulge me for thirty seconds.

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Question one: Who is more likely to cry at the end of a marathon?
Answer: Emily, but only because Daniel is busy congratulating the race marshals on their signage.

Question two: Who starts a DIY project at 9pm on a Tuesday?
Answer: Emily, armed with vision and washi tape.

Question three: Who has a “light packing” list that runs to two pages?
Answer: Daniel, and it includes “spare sense of humour – optional.”

Question four: Who says sorry first?
Answer: Both of them, usually at the same time, which is intensely annoying and deeply admirable.

And finally, who loves Bruno the most?
Answer: Bruno. Bruno loves Bruno the most.

The truth is, every couple builds a language.
Emily and Daniel’s language is a mixture of dry jokes and brave ideas, shared miles along the Thames and a dog who thinks he’s human, late-night pasta and early-morning alarms, colour-coded calendars and spontaneous detours.
They are brilliant on their own, but together you see this extra gear – a steadiness that makes room for adventure, a curiosity that makes room for care.

Emily, you are kind in ways that don’t perform for applause.
You’re curious without being nosy, creative without being precious.
You make people feel like they’re allowed to try.

Daniel, you’re meticulous without being rigid, and your dry humour sneaks up on people like a well-timed footnote.
You are endlessly supportive without keeping score.

Together, you’ve shown us how partnership isn’t a grand speech; it’s the small daily “I’ve got you” whispered over washing up, the “you run, I’ll walk the dog”

on tired mornings, the “we’re late and it’s fine” on cliff tops and in life.
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It’s patience with each other’s quirks, and the wisdom to see those quirks as the map to where the gold is.

Before I wrap up, a quick thank you to everyone who has helped make today so special.
To the venue team for looking after us so beautifully.
To the suppliers – the food, the flowers, the music – you’ve absolutely nailed it and we’re all very grateful.
And to both families, thank you for the kindness and welcome you’ve shown all of us and for raising these two people we get to celebrate.

Emily and Daniel, may your Sundays always smell like roast potatoes.
May your runs along the Thames always have a tail-wind, at least on the way home.
May your board games be fierce but fair, your itineraries laminated but flexible, and your spreadsheets always balance in your favour.

And when life decides to be windswept and unscheduled, may you keep doing what you do best – hold hands, laugh, and keep moving forward together.

Ladies and gentlemen, please raise your glasses.

To Emily and Daniel – to the quiet graft and the loud laughter, to the miles and the meals, to the art of being a team.
To partnership, the best adventure of all. Cheers!

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