Good evening, everyone.

I’m Sophie’s dad, and I’ll be honest, there’s a lump in my throat the size of Somerset tonight.

Sophie, my girl, you have always been warm to the core, the one who remembers every birthday, every detail, every list, and every person. Organised, yes – fiercely loyal, absolutely. You’re the person people lean on, because you never let go.

And James – from the first Sunday lunch when you turned up early with flowers for Sophie and a bottle for me, I thought, “This young man knows what he’s doing.” Then I watched you for a while. Thoughtful. Calm. Quietly funny – the sort of humour that sneaks up on you and then stays. I saw how you looked at my daughter. I saw how safe she felt beside you. And that’s when I knew.

Seven years. It’s a fair old road. It began at a summer music festival in Somerset – of all the places to find a lifetime – somewhere between muddy boots and a good song. Then that first date in a cosy pub in Bath, where, I’m told, the conversation just… didn’t stop. After two years, you moved in together in Bristol, and the place quickly filled with books, board games, and the kind of laughter that drifts down the hallway. Then came Poppy, the spaniel with the softest ears and the kind of eyes that make even organised people rearrange their weekend plans. And of course, that clifftop walk in Cornwall – the wind trying its best to steal the moment and failing spectacularly – where you asked, James, and Sophie said yes, with the sea cheering you on.

That’s the story so far. But what I’ve loved about watching you two is the everyday part. The way you love coastal walks, the kind that quieten the mind and set the world right. The Sunday roasts with family, where the table is full

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and the gravy never quite goes as far as you think it will. The board games on rainy evenings, where Sophie hovers like a general and James smiles like he knows a secret strategy he'll reveal only in the last move. It's in those ordinary moments that love becomes a life.

Sophie, I've watched you become yourself in this love – warmer still, braver, softer and stronger at once. And James, you make space for her light. You've got that calm that steadies a room, and that kindness that doesn't shout about itself. You are, both of you, exactly what you claim to be – and even better together.

There's a look you share – you had it when you told us about Poppy; you had it in Bristol decorating your first Christmas tree; you had it on that cliff in Cornwall. It's a look that says: here we are, fully present, fully in. That's what marriage needs. Not perfect people, but two people who keep choosing each other in the middle of it all – the sunshine and the Somerset mud alike.

As a father, I've hoped for many things for my daughter. That she would know her worth. That someone would see it too. That she'd never have to shrink to fit anyone's idea of love. James, you've never once asked her to be smaller. You've simply stood next to her and matched her stride. For that, and a hundred other reasons, I'm proud to call you my son-in-law.

To both families – it's a good day when two kitchens of Sunday roast recipes join forces. Thank you for welcoming each other so openly. And to their friends from university days to now – thank you for holding their story with such joy.

Sophie and James, my wish for you is simple. Keep walking the coastlines together – in sunshine and drizzle. Keep gathering people at your table. Keep laughing on rainy evenings when the power flickers and the dogs steal the good seat. Keep being exactly who you promised to be today: warm, loyal, thoughtful, calm – and always, always on the same team.

All right, before I turn into even more of a puddle, I'd like to ask everyone to

raise your glasses.Create your own personalised speech at weddingtoasts.co.uk

To Sophie and James – may your love be steady as the tide, surprising as a festival encore, and homely as a Sunday roast. May you never run out of cliffs to climb, games to play, or reasons to look at each other the way you did today.

To the bride and groom!

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