Hello everyone.

I’m Sophie, and today I get to call myself Daniel’s wife. That sentence has been rehearsing itself in my heart for eight years, and yet saying it now feels brand new.

We met in the most glamorous way imaginable: a charity quiz night in Manchester, fluorescent lighting, lukewarm chips, and a table full of colleagues who took team names far too seriously. Daniel swapped tables to join ours and, like some kind of quiz-night hero, arrived carrying extra pens as if he knew I always lose mine. He smiled, said something gentle and silly, and I remember thinking, “Oh. You. Yes.”

A week later we had our second date at the art gallery. I pretended to know a lot about brushwork and French impressionism; Daniel pretended not to notice that I was mostly watching his reflection in the glass. We walked slowly, talking about nothing and everything, finding out the small truths that make two people brave enough to keep going: how he makes tea far too strong and calls it “proper”, how I start sketching at the worst possible moments—bus stops, damp parks, pub corners—because something catches my eye and won’t let me go. We discovered that we both love the quiet kind of adventure: getting up early to chase a view, finding a bruise-coloured sky at the top of a hill, and letting the wind do all the talking.

We thought we understood resilience, but we really learned it when we moved in together during lockdown. There we were—two people, one flat, one sourdough starter that refused to rise, and a thousand tiny choices about kindness every day. We found a rhythm in the small things: who cooks, who opens the windows, who holds the silence when the world feels heavy. Daniel, you were generous in the ways nobody applauds—doing the washing up when it

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wasn’t your turn, asking how I was and really waiting for the answer, giving up the desk so I could sketch by the window. Quietly brave, you always stepped in when anyone needed help, even when no one was watching. That’s who you are. That’s why I fell in love with you, and why I keep falling.

We’ve collected our favourite places the way some people collect stamps. The North Coast 500, with its honest roads and sudden light, where we pulled over so often to take photographs that I’m pretty sure the sheep started recognising us. You with your camera, me with a pencil that smudged as fast as the weather changed. Those days taught me that happiness can be a flask of coffee, a damp map, and a person who knows how to laugh when the rain goes sideways.

And then Arthur’s Seat—sunrise, the city holding its breath, and you, trying to pretend you weren’t nervous while I pretended not to see the shape of a ring box in your pocket. You asked a simple question, and every answer in me said yes. I looked at the horizon and thought: this is what devotion looks like—showing up, holding on, choosing each other again and again, even when the climb is steep.

To our families, thank you. Sunday brunch is our favourite ritual because it’s home with a side of toast. You’ve given us a community that makes the ordinary feel like a celebration—eggs, laughter, too many opinions about which jam is best, arms that open wide whether we arrive triumphant or tired. You’ve taught us that love is not only a feeling, it’s a practice: lay the table, pass the tea, make room for each other.

Daniel, there are so many things I adore about you. Your generosity, which appears in gestures big and small. Your courage, which often looks like listening. The way you steady me when I’m determined, and cheer for that determination even when it’s inconvenient. When I’m warm to the world, you notice who might still be cold and nudge me gently so we can bring them in. You are my safest place and my favourite adventure. I love how we hike: you checking the map, me pointing at a ridge line and saying, “Let’s see what’s there.” Somehow, together, we always find our way.

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People say that love is a grand story, but to me it has always felt like a series of honest moments. Extra pens at a quiz. A second date in a quiet gallery. Moving in when the world closed down. A sunrise on a hill where the city turned gold. Boots muddy at the door. Sketches curling on the windowsill. Photographs drying along the radiator. Sunday afternoons where nothing spectacular happens and yet everything important does.

Eight years in, I've learned that resilience isn't stiff or stubborn—it's tender. It bends so it doesn't break. It says, "We'll try again tomorrow." And devotion isn't dramatic—it's daily. It asks, "How can I love you better today?" That's what I promise you, Daniel. To love you bravely in the small ways, to choose the kind word when it would be easier to be clever, to hold your hand when the weather turns, to make space for your dreams in our living room and in our life. To keep sketching what I see in you, to keep taking the long route if it leads us somewhere beautiful, and to keep finding the light with you, even on ordinary mornings.

To our friends who introduced us at that quiz night—thank you for seating plans and second chances. To everyone here today—thank you for witnessing our yes, for travelling, for cheering, for reminding us that we are never alone. Your presence is a gift we will never take for granted.

Daniel, my love, let's keep doing what we do best—walk towards the horizon, take a picture or a pencil when the view insists on being remembered, and come home for brunch on Sunday. Let's keep being the people we promised to be today: warm and determined, generous and quietly brave, resilient and devoted.

Here we are, in this room, making a vow that is both simple and immense.

My heart is steady.

My answer is still yes.

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