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Family, friends, neighbours, thank you for being here to remember and celebrate the life of my dad, Peter Jonathan Clarke — our Pete.

I speak as his daughter, Emma, and as someone who rang him most days, sometimes with news, sometimes with nothing more than the weather and the crossword.
And most Sundays, we shared a roast — his roast potatoes were engineering projects in their own right.
Crisp edges, planned timings, a kind of quiet victory on a plate.

Dad was born on 21 May 1957 and he passed away peacefully aged 68.
He grew up in Manchester, learned early the value of showing up and doing things properly, and took those lessons into engineering apprenticeships that gave him his trade and his pride.
In the 1980s he moved to Leeds, fell in love with my mum, Sarah, and married her in 1984.
They raised two children — me and my brother Daniel — and Dad built a life that was steady, practical and full of care.

He spent forty years in rail maintenance and finished as a supervisor.
If you ever travelled on those lines, you probably never thought of him.
And he would have liked that.
He took pride in the ordinary miracle of things working, in bolts tightened and track checked and people getting home safely because someone had done the night shift in the rain, then checked it all again.
He rarely brought work stories home, but when he did, the message was always the same:
keep your word, do the job well, and look after one another.

At home, he could fix anything with a rattle.

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Sometimes the fix was a proper one, with measurements and diagrams on the back of an envelope.
Sometimes it was a bit of felt, a rubber washer, and a wink.
He loved classic cars — the older and more temperamental the better — and he loved that they needed him.
Their stubbornness met his patience, and he always won in the end, usually with knuckles grazed and a satisfied little “there we are”.

My favourite memory is learning to drive in his old red Mini.
Stalled at the lights, traffic piling up, me panicking, him chuckling softly.
“Breathe, Em,” he said.
“Clutch, bite, breathe. There you go.”
He taught me to drive, but more than that, he taught me a way of meeting a moment:
pause, find the bite point, and try again.

He was quietly funny — the kind of humour that slipped into the room behind you and parked itself with a raised eyebrow.
He’d set the dog’s lead on the table with a solemn “Meeting at ten o’clock on Ilkley Moor; minutes to follow,” and then whistle all the way to the car.
He wore his lucky flat cap to every match at Elland Road, a superstition he denied while refusing to leave the house without it.
He listened to The Kinks on a Saturday morning while the sound of his toolbox drifted up the stairs, and he attacked the Sunday crossword as if it might, with enough patience, reveal how the world worked.

Values weren’t things he announced; they were things he repeated by habit.
Keep your word.
Work hard.
Be kind to neighbours.
Family first.
It showed in how he looked after Mum, how he turned up for me and Dan, and how becoming Grandad to Alfie and Rose made his face light up in a way we’d never seen before.

He was also a loving brother to Michael.
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He didn’t try to be the centre of anything — but he somehow ended up being the steady bit in the middle that held everything together.

What we will miss most are the small certainties he gave us.
His reassuring phone calls — “Just checking in, love.”
The knock and clatter of that toolbox on a Saturday.
The way he’d listen properly and then offer the kind of advice that began with a question: “What do you think you’ll wish you’d done in a week’s time?”
He never told you what to do; he helped you find the calm place where you could decide.

He was also a patient teacher.
Whether it was driving a Mini, bleeding a radiator, or explaining why the dog would always beat us to the best seat, he made learning feel like teamwork.
He let you hold the spanner even if he did the tricky bit.
He let you make mistakes, because that’s how you learn to put things right.

Dad loved a walk on Ilkley Moor with the dog, pockets full of treats he swore weren’t there.
He loved a proper brew, a decent spanner set, and a song he could hum while he worked.
He loved Mum with a depth that didn’t need decoration.
He loved us kids without keeping score.
And he loved the sight of Alfie and Rose running up the path, the kind of love that turns a man into a soft touch and a ready babysitter.

He asked for donations to the RNLI instead of flowers.
That’s very him:
practical help for people who go out in rough weather to bring others home.
If you knew him, that makes sense.

Today we say goodbye to a man who made being dependable look like a gift rather than a duty.

He wasn’t grand.
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He didn’t need to be.
He was there.
Again and again, he was there.
In storms and in the quiet, in the big decisions and the little jobs that make a day go smoothly.

So how do we honour him?
We keep our word.
We do the work.
We stop to help the neighbour with the gate that doesn’t close.
We ring each other, not just when we need something, but because “just checking in” is its own kind of love.
We play The Kinks a bit too loud while the potatoes go crisp.
We wear the flat cap because it makes us smile, even if we pretend it doesn’t matter.

And when the lights change and we stall — as we will, in grief and in life — we hear his voice:
breathe, find the bite point, try again.

Dad, Pete, thank you for every steady, ordinary, extraordinary day.
For the patience, the laughter behind your eyes, the lessons disguised as errands, and the safety you built into our lives without fuss.

We love you.
We will carry you in the things we mend, the promises we keep, and the Sundays we spend around the table.
And we will get each other home, the way you taught us.

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