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Thank you all for being here today to remember and celebrate David John Parker — Dave, to almost everyone, and Dad to me and Sophie.

He was born in Leeds on 15 March 1959,
and he left us peacefully on 2 February this year,
aged 65.
Simple facts, but behind them a full, decent life,
lived without fuss and with a great deal of care for others.

Dad grew up in Leeds, the city that shaped his stubborn loyalty to Leeds United and his way of speaking plainly.
He learned a trade the proper way — an electrician’s apprenticeship — and he was proud of that.
Proud, because with your hands and your head you could make something safe, make something work, make a home warm again.

He married Mum, Anne, in 1984.
They moved to York, set up a life that was steady and kind,
and raised two daughters, Emily and Sophie.
He also somehow found time to coach junior football,
teaching a lot of muddy, overexcited children how to pass the ball and shake hands after a match.
There are grown men now who still call him “Coach” when they bump into him at the shops.

Dad founded Parker Electrics and served this community for over thirty years.
If a storm blew through, his van would be out before the rain stopped.
He loved teaching apprentices — showing them the neatest way to do a job and the safest way to leave it.
He believed a tidy fuse box said something about your character.

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He never made a speech about any of that.
He just showed up,
on time,
with the right tools.

At home he had another sanctuary:
the shed.
If you've ever tried to borrow a chisel from him,
you'll know you were given a small lecture on grain, angles, and putting it back in exactly the same place.
Out of that shed came picture frames for family photos,
a wobbly stool he pretended not to be sentimental about,
and a cot that held both Jack and Isla.
He made Sunday roasts that left no one hungry,
and if you praised the gravy he'd act as if it was nothing —
then quietly do the same next week.

He had a dry sense of humour that arrived like a well-timed screwdriver — exactly the right fit, never overdone.
He could be wonderfully steady in a crisis.
If a fuse blew, a pipe burst, or a plan went sideways,
he didn't flap.
He'd say, "Right then,"
and the room would calm down.
I think many of us learned from that tone of voice.

One of my clearest memories is from Rowntree Park.
I was a little girl, terrified of falling,
and Dad ran alongside me as I wobbled on my bike.
He kept one hand on the saddle,
pretending not to.
He said, "Look ahead, Em, not at your feet."
At some point, he let go.
I didn't notice until I'd gone the length of the path.

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When I turned, he was standing there, trying to look casual, out of breath and grinning.
It occurs to me now that much of his parenting was like that —
steady support you didn’t always see,
a gentle lie to give you courage,
and then the quiet pride of watching you find your balance.

He was practical and dependable.
If you needed him, he came.
Neighbours learned that if Dave appeared with his toolbox,
the problem would be sorted and the kettle would end up on.
He believed in honesty, hard work,
keeping your word,
and helping before being asked.
He didn’t make those into slogans.
He simply lived them.
That’s why people trusted him with their homes,
and why we trusted him with our hearts.

He adored his grandchildren, Jack and Isla.
He pretended to be strict and then slipped them roast potatoes before dinner.
He gave them measuring tapes to play with,
and patiently explained, to small people with big questions,
why the lights came on when you pressed a switch.
On the Knavesmire he walked the dog in all weathers,
pockets full of treats, eyes on the sky,
finding the sort of quiet that repairs a person.

He gave his time as a fundraiser for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance,
saying, “One day it’ll be someone you love in that helicopter.”
That was his way —
practical compassion,
money in the tin,
event signed up for,

no applause required.

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We’ll miss his reassuring phone calls,
the ones that began with “You alright, love?” and ended with a plan.
We’ll miss his big laugh that arrived a beat late, like he’d tested the joke for safety.
And we’ll miss that uncanny knack of turning up just when something had broken —
a plug, a hinge, a heart.

He was a brother to Stephen,
a husband to Anne for forty years,
our dad,
and our grandad.
He was also the quietly generous neighbour two doors down,
the coach with pockets full of oranges,
the boss who made sure the apprentice ate lunch.

Dad liked things plain-spoken.
So here it is:
He was a good man.
Not perfect, not trying to be.
Good in the old-fashioned way that holds families and streets together.

There is sadness today, of course.
But there’s also gratitude.
For roast dinners and shed-made shelves.
For dog walks and football touchlines.
For the sound of Here Comes the Sun on a morning when he’d say, “Right, let’s crack on.”

If you want to honour him,
keep your word.
Help your neighbour before they ask.

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Teach someone what you know.
And if you can,
support the British Heart Foundation — we’re welcoming donations in his name instead of flowers.
He would have liked the idea of doing something that quietly helps.

Dad,
thank you for every lift,
every late-night call,
every steady hand on the saddle.
We’ll look ahead, not at our feet,
and we’ll carry you with us —
in the way we work,
the way we look out for each other,
and the way we laugh when the job’s finally done.

Here comes the sun, Dad.
And it’s all right.

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