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Friends, family, everyone who loved Jon, thank you for being here today.

My name is Emily, and for 18 years I had the privilege of being married to Jonathan Peter Clarke — Jon to almost everyone who knew him. He was my husband, my best friend, and my true partner in every part of life.

Jon was born on 22 March 1979, and we had to say goodbye far, far too soon, on 4 September 2025, at just 46. It still doesn't feel real to say those words out loud. But even in this heartbreak, I want to talk about the fullness of his life, because his life was full — of love, of purpose, of quietly brilliant things.

He grew up in Bristol, curious and kind from the start, the sort of boy who asked how things worked and then took them apart to find out. He studied mechanical engineering at the University of Bath, which surprised no one who had seen him with a screwdriver and a determined look. He moved to Manchester for work, and somewhere between train platforms, second-hand bike shops and the wind that never seems to stop in this city, he built a life he truly loved.

He married me in 2007. We meant our vows — not just on the day but in the hundreds of ordinary days that followed. We learned that partnership is in the quiet acts: the first coffee placed beside your book, the late-night lift from the station, the shoulder that knows when to hold and when to steady. We were a team. We still are, even now.

He became a father, and that's when Jon shone with a light I'd never seen before. Sophie and Max, your dad adored you. He was the one who could fix anything — the wonky shelf, the scraped knee, the long division. He taught you the joy of sunrise cycling, the patience of tinkering until something runs sweetly, and the secret to perfect Saturday morning pancakes. He would stand at the hob with you, sleeves rolled up, flipping pancakes with that little smile he had

when he was proud but pretending not to be

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Jon loved making things. If it had gears, he wanted to understand it. If it was broken, he wanted to mend it. He kept a shed that somehow contained both chaos and order — a place where wood shavings curled like ribbons and where, if you listened closely, you could hear him humming to himself. He'd come back in with a cut on his knuckle and a solution in his pocket.

In his work, Jon fed his mind and his conscience at the same time. He was a senior engineer in renewable energy, passionate about sustainable design long before it was fashionable to be. He believed that engineering could and should make the world kinder on the places we call home. Mentoring young engineers was one of his quiet joys — he never made a fuss about it, but I'd see the emails and hear the stories. He lifted people up, passed the torch, and made sure it burned a little brighter in someone else's hands.

He gave himself to our community too, turning up without fuss to help, mend, plant, cheer, teach. He didn't do it for thanks — in fact, he'd blush if you tried. He simply believed in leaving places better than he found them. He believed in doing the right thing even when no one was watching. He believed that kindness comes first.

And he was funny — quietly witty in the way that sneaks up on you. At the end of a hard day, he was the one who could tilt the room with a dry remark and suddenly everything felt bearable again. He was gentle, dependable, patient and unfailingly generous with his time. That steady presence is what we will miss most. The world feels a size too big without him in it.

I keep thinking about a windswept holiday in Cornwall. The sky was as grey as the sea, and the sea was as cold as the sky, and still Jon stayed out there for hours, teaching the kids to bodyboard. He was a human buoy — calm, laughing, sturdy against the waves. He stayed long after everyone else was cold, because the shrieks of Sophie and Max catching a wave lit him up from the inside. That's who he was: the one who would stay in the water, making sure you caught your

wave.

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To Peter and Diane, thank you for raising a son who knew how to love well and live well. To Laura, you were not just his sister but one of the few who could match him for dry humour — he treasured you. To everyone who worked with him, rode with him at dawn, shared a shed project, or had a pancake at our table — you were part of the fabric of his good life.

To Sophie and Max: your dad is in everything steady and everything kind. He's in early mornings when the sky is pink. He's in the satisfying click when something you've built fits just right. He's in the choice to help when no one is watching. Keep those bits of him close. They're yours forever.

What am I grateful for? For his unwavering love. For the family we built together — messy, noisy, happy. For the everyday joy he brought into our home. For the way he made breakfast feel like a celebration and Sundays feel like a soft landing. For how he believed in me, always.

Grief is love with nowhere to go, and yet somehow Jon has shown us exactly where to put it. In the bike we fix for a neighbour. In the time we take to teach someone younger. In the care we show for this earth and for one another. In a patient joke at the end of a hard day. In pancakes on a Saturday.

Today, we say goodbye, but we also say thank you. Thank you, Jon, for the 46 years you walked this world, and the 18 years you walked beside me. Thank you for choosing kindness first. For doing the right thing quietly. For leaving every place, every project, and every person a little better than you found them.

We will carry your values forward — your gentle courage, your dry wit, your steady hands. We will keep the shed humming, the bikes running, the batter smooth and the griddle warm. We will look for the waves and stay in the water a little longer.

Rest easy, my love. We've got it from here. And if something breaks, we'll hear

your voice in our heads saying: "Right. Let's see how this is put together." Then we'll roll up our sleeves, and we'll begin.

Thank you.

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