

## "Short and sincere"

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This one was kindly submitted by one of readers Daniel Butler, thanks Dan.

Good Afternoon.

For those of you who don't know me, I am Dan, one of Paul's friends from University days. We've shared many an adventure together, both on the water and in the mountains. And a fair few in the pub

Before we carry on we'd like to take a moment, as we don't feel it can be said enough, to thank everyone who has worked so hard to ensure that this hugely special day for the Bride and Groom has been so perfect. Special mentions for all those of you who have travelled from overseas to be here today. Your presence means a lot to both Paul and Rachel.

For those who are starting to fidget, you can relax, as we'll be keeping it short. I've heard that that is how the bride likes it.

Rachel, in all seriousness, you look absolutely beautiful today, as do your bridesmaids. Paul is clearly a very lucky man. He has been waiting for this day for as long as I've known him, as even in our first year at university he was certain that he wanted to marry you. I have a clear memory of a walk back from the pub where, in-between staggering into the hedgerows of Penrith, one of our first conversations centred around him knowing that you were the person who he wanted to spend his life with. This conversation has been played out over many years now, in various stages of sobriety, and today I'm so please that the dream has come true.

Now as its traditional to tell an embarrassing story or two from days past I'd like to share with you one of my favourite memories of Paul. I was unsure whether to share the story of the time he set fire to his face with a flaming shot in a pub in Scotland, or show my favourite photo of him, dancing on a minibus roof clad only in a pair of pants and sporting a set of pink earmuffs. I settled on this story as I enjoy the irony of the shoe being on the other foot, with Paul now being responsible for others in this situation. We had a university expedition module, and we'd convinced our lecturers to allow us to go on an overseas kayaking expedition to circumnavigate an island in Greece. Now as you can appreciate, this was a big deal for the university, we were overseas, on their insurance policy, without any supervision, about to kayak around a remote Greek island. This trip had involved in depth risk assessment's, the dean of the school had had to be consulted and it had been emphasised how much responsibility was being placed on us. I can only image our lecturers' faces as the first pre arranged text check in was sent. • Addition to risk assessment: Paul has bought a Harpoon Gun. •

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We are very fortunate to be here today, in this beautiful setting. More fortunate than many of you will know, as when Paul came for his interview for his job here he was sporting a huge shiner of a black eye. Now this obviously isn't the best way to make a first impression, especially if your application form was late. Luckily Paul had sustained this by being hit by a chunk of ice that had fallen when we were ice climbing, and managed to turn what most people would see as a disadvantage into a positive.

This is one of many reasons why I know that you are a lucky lady to have him as your husband. There may be times in the future when this is hard to believe, so I have some advice for you. Rachel remember you have a model husband. If you ever doubt this, just pull out the dictionary and look up the word 'model'. For those of you who don't have a dictionary to hand I have the definition of the word model here as 'a small miniature replica of the real thing'.

Paul's ability to pull off a black eye shows both his optimism and charm. These are just a couple of character traits that I have seen in Paul through our adventures together. There are numerous people here who have shared experiences who I'm sure can relate to what I'm about to say. That when things start to go wrong, and there is potential for things to go very badly wrong, then the true person inside comes out. I have been in enough of these situations with Paul to know that when things aren't running smoothly he is someone who can be relied on 100% to do the right thing, to push himself to the edge for you, and to support you when you're on the edge. I won't give you a list of qualities, but I know, Rachel, that when you need him to be there for you he will be, when you're in need of support he will give you everything that it is in his power to give, and he will go to the ends of the world for you.

On behalf of the entire wedding party I would like to thank you all for sharing in this wonderful occasion

### **Â Toast**

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