Good evening, everyone.

I’m Charlotte’s father, and tonight, standing here at this rehearsal dinner, I feel an equal measure of gratitude and awe. Gratitude for the people in this room who helped raise, befriend, and cheer on these two; awe for the simple, extraordinary fact that tomorrow we send Charlotte and Andrew into a new chapter that has been quietly writing itself for eight years.

I’d like to begin with a small memory from the start, because beginnings are never as flashy as endings, but they’re where all the truth lives. I first met Andrew after a campus recital of Charlotte’s. He walked up, gave me a firm handshake, looked me square in the eye, and introduced himself. He didn’t speak too much, but what he did say was sincere. He was the quiet young man carrying her books after class. That detail stuck with me—how natural it seemed to him to make himself useful, to show up with kindness rather than noise.

Charlotte used to come home from that college biology course talking about a certain lab partner. The stories weren’t dramatic—no fireworks or operatic gestures—just reliable moments: notes compared, experiments cleaned up late, data checked twice. It wasn’t long before those moments connected themselves into something sturdier than a crush. To me, that was the first sign. Love doesn’t always start with a bang. Sometimes it starts with a pipette, a lab bench, and two people willing to share a notebook.

A few months later, they took a road trip up the East Coast—one of those pilgrimages every young couple should make at least once. They came back with stories about getting lost down a side street for the best clam chowder they’d ever had, arguing good-naturedly over who had the better playlist, and pulling over to watch the tide come in when they could have kept driving. The way they told it, they made a rhythm out of detours. That’s not just a travel skill;

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that’s a life skill. Most of marriage is detours. The joy is in how you navigate them together.

Then came the move. Cross-country, for work. I will not pretend that as a father, watching my daughter pack boxes and say goodbye to familiar streets didn’t tug at the anchor in my chest. But Charlotte was meticulous even in her leaving—every box labeled, every plant strapped in for the ride like a first-class passenger. And Andrew was patient through all of it, the late nights, the second-guessing. He was principled when the easy thing would’ve been to cut a corner. Resilient is a word that gets used too often, but with these two, it fits. They made new friends, found new coffeeshops, learned new bike routes. They built a home from scratch in a place where their mailbox didn’t yet know their names. And they did it without losing the particulars of who they were.

Speaking of particulars, let me tell you about a typical Saturday for them. If you want to see Charlotte and Andrew at their best, find them early at the farmers’ market. Charlotte inspects produce like she’s auditioning it for a role—meticulous, asking the right questions, giving everyone the benefit of her careful eye. Andrew is right next to her, patient, principled, but also ready to taste a sample of anything on a toothpick. They chat with the growers, remember names and stories, carry too many peaches because they intend to bake something and then volunteer somewhere, and then go for a long bike ride that I would not, under any circumstances, attempt to keep up with. This is their joy: simple rituals done with care. Gentle routines that amount to a life.

And then there’s the shelter. If you want to measure the character of a couple, look at how they show up when they get nothing in return. Charlotte and Andrew have spent countless hours at the local shelter, walking dogs that pull like small tractors, coaxing shy animals out of corners, cleaning and feeding and staying late when siblings or parents would have already headed home. The words that come to mind are generous and kind. Those aren’t adjectives you pin to your coat for special occasions; those are habits. And habits form a marriage.

I have watched them take long bike rides on days when they had every excuse

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not to. I have seen them return windblown, a little sunburned, laughing the sort of laugh that means, well, we did it our way today. And I have heard the way they talk to each other—Charlotte, precise and warm; Andrew, steady and thoughtful. Together, they are resilient and kind. That combination, friends, is a rare alloy. It holds up in storms.

If you ask me to pick a favorite milestone, I'll admit I have a soft spot for the engagement. They went back to their alma mater, to the quad where so many beginnings began—where lab partners became friends, and friends became something more. There's a symmetry to that choice. To kneel on the ground where you first stood together is to say: we remember how this started, and we choose it again. When Charlotte called to tell me, I could hear the smile in her voice, the careful joy, like holding a new ring up to the light and discovering it shines in more than one direction.

As a father, I have watched Charlotte grow into herself like a tree finds its shape. She has always been meticulous—she organizes, she plans, she follows through—but if you look closer, what stands out is her generosity. It's in the way she brings an extra sweater because someone will forget one, the way she notices the quiet person in the room, the way she makes space for others to step forward. She is the person you want on your side when details matter and when feelings matter. Both are safe with her.

And Andrew—patient, principled Andrew. I saw it right away, but eight years have only confirmed it. You don't waver on what's right. You treat people with a courtesy that doesn't ask for applause. You show up. You carry the heavy things without complaint. You steady the day. There's an old saying that character is what you do when no one's watching; I would add that character is how you love when the world is ordinary. And in the ordinary hours, you love my daughter with a constancy that humbles me.

Together, you two are a lesson in quiet courage. You moved across the map for work and built a home. You've found joy in little rituals—farmers' market mornings, shelter afternoons, long rides that stretch the day. You took a road

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trip up the East Coast and found that the route is less important than the person in the passenger seat. You returned to the quad, to the place where this began, and said yes to a future that looks both familiar and brand new.

People will give you advice in the days ahead. Some of it will be good. Some of it will be… creative. If I may offer just a little from a father's heart: keep building your life out of small, dependable kindnesses. Be meticulous about the details that honor each other's dignity. Be patient when you can't be perfect. Be principled when the world asks you to cut corners. And when the detour comes—and it will—remember the road trip, remember the cross-country move, remember every long ride where the wind met you in the face and you pedaled anyway, together.

There will be mornings when the peaches bruise, the dog at the shelter won't come out, the bike tire flattens, the plan is a mess. Those are the days when your resilience is a gift to each other. Those are the days when you'll say, let's try again. Those are the days when you'll remember what you practiced for eight years: showing up, choosing, staying kind.

Charlotte, my meticulous, generous daughter, I have loved you since the first moment I held you. You have always had a way of turning lists into welcome, schedules into care, and houses into homes. Tomorrow I do not give you away; I simply acknowledge what has been true for a long time: you and Andrew have chosen each other, and our family grows not by losing anything, but by growing room in our hearts.

Andrew, the quiet young man who carried her books after class, the one who introduced himself to me with a firm handshake and sincere eye contact—thank you for the way you love her. Thank you for your patience and your principles, for your steady presence, and for the courage to build a life that looks like the two of you. I am proud to call you my son-in-law.

To both of you, let the next chapter be written the way you wrote the first—one careful, generous line at a time. Keep wandering the market, keep volunteering

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when it would be easier to stay home, keep riding farther than you think you can, and keep returning, again and again, to the quad at the center of your life—the place inside you where you first recognized each other.

Tomorrow, we will celebrate with all the ceremony and joy you deserve. Tonight, among the people who have loved you into being, I just want to say this: your story already proves that love is not just a feeling; it’s a practice. It’s not just a promise; it’s a pattern. And that pattern—meticulous, patient, principled, resilient, kind—is beautiful.

We’re all so happy for you. We’re all so proud of you. And we can’t wait to see where the road bends next.

Congratulations, Charlotte and Andrew. May your home always be a good map, may your table always have room for one more, and may your days together be long and full of light.

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