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Tēnā koutou katoa, family, friends, colleagues, neighbours—thank you for being here today as we remember and honour my brother, Oliver Matthew Sinclair, our Ollie.

I’m Charlotte, his sister.
For as long as I can remember, he was my steady compass—true in rough weather, quiet in fair winds, pointing, gently, towards the right thing to do.

Ollie was born in Wellington on 5 November 1975.
He died on 10 April this year, aged 50.
Dates mark a beginning and an end, but it’s what he filled the line between them with that brings us together today.

He grew up among the hills and southerlies of Wellington, with our parents, Janet and Robert, guiding us three—Ollie, me, and our younger brother Patrick—through the ordinary dramas of childhood.
He was the kid who read the instructions first, who sharpened the pencils, who checked the map before we set off.
Not fussy, just prepared.
It made him the calmest person in any room long before life started testing that calm.

A scholarship took him to Victoria University.
He wore that achievement lightly.
It wasn’t about prestige for him; it was about the privilege of learning and the responsibility that comes with it.
He liked to say that discipline was just a series of small, honest choices.
That became a thread that ran through his life—work done properly, promises kept, people treated fairly.

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Ollie built a career in IT project management and, later, senior leadership.
He never confused volume with influence.
Where others raised their voices, he lowered his—and somehow the room settled.
Colleagues will remember him as meticulous, fair, and unflappable.
He could translate between worlds—engineers, clients, executives—without drama, just clarity.
He mentored graduates not by telling them what to think, but by asking the question that helped them find the answer.
If you were one of those graduates, you'll know that his dry sense of humour snuck in precisely when tension peaked.
A single eyebrow, a quietly delivered one-liner, and suddenly the impossible felt manageable.

He later settled in Tauranga with Emma, the love of his life, and together they made a home that balanced capability with warmth.
Ollie was a devoted husband to Emma, and a proud, deeply attentive dad to Liam, 15, and Sophie, 12.
The measure of a life shows, I think, in the daily rhythm people build.
In their house, you saw it everywhere:
a cricket bat propped by the door,
a proofing basket on the bench,
book spines on New Zealand history worn soft from use,
sailing charts folded to just the right crease.

Weekends often meant Tauranga Harbour.
He loved the tidy mathematics of the wind and tide, but more than that, he loved the conversation that comes when you're side by side on a boat, looking out in the same direction.
Coaching junior cricket brought him similar joy.
He kept things simple—hold your shape, back your mates, learn from every ball.
He didn't chase wins; he cultivated character.
And he turned up.
Punctually, predictably, prepared—because to him, being on time was a form of

respect.

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Service to community was not a slogan for Ollie; it was a timetable entry.
He raised funds for KidsCan because the idea that children might start behind their peers lit a fire in him.
He believed we look after our own and our neighbours, and that those circles are bigger than we think.

At home, he had the steady rituals that made him, him.
He baked sourdough as if conducting a quiet experiment—notes in the margin, temperatures logged, the patient satisfaction of an even crumb.
On Saturday mornings he checked in—on Mum and Dad, on me, on Patrick, on friends who might need a nudge or a lift.
He never arrived empty-handed—if not bread, then a socket set, or a spare charger, or the name of a reliable tradie.
It wasn’t grand.
It was reliable.
And it meant everything.

There are two memories I carry like bright beacons.

One is the summer we built a tree hut in Newlands.
Ollie insisted we measure twice and cut once.
I was impatient and dramatic; he was precise and encouraging.
He sketched the angles in pencil on a scrap of cardboard; he let me hammer the nails even though I bent the first three.
When the platform held, he didn’t cheer—he just gave that quiet nod that meant we’d done a good job.
We strung up a sign—no parents, no shoes—and then he climbed down and called out for Mum to come see.
He always made room for everyone.

The other is the night my first car died at midnight, hazard lights growing feeble on a dark street.

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I rang him, certain I'd get voicemail.
He answered on the second ring.
Twenty minutes later he arrived with a torch, a toolkit, and that same cardboard confidence.
He tightened something, bridged something else, and the engine woke.
No lecture, no eye-roll.
Just, "Let's get you home," and a dry aside about my talent for breaking things only when the shops were closed.
He had a knack for quietly fixing what felt impossible—objects, yes, but also tangled days and troubled minds.

That knack came from his values.
Integrity—do the right thing even when no one is watching.
Fairness—assume good faith until you can't.
Punctuality—respecting other people's time is a form of kindness.
Service—if you can help, you should.
And a simple rule he lived by: look after your own and your neighbours.
He modelled these not just for us, but for Liam and Sophie, who have learned from their dad a sturdier version of compassion—the sort that shows up, sweeps the shed, packs the gear, and sits with you until the storm passes.

We will miss his thoughtful advice that never pretended to be infallible.
We will miss the Saturday morning ring that began with, "Got five minutes?" and ended, somehow, with you feeling taller.
We will miss that dry humour that cut the heat without cutting the person.
We will miss the way a room calmed when he stepped in.

To Emma—
you were his anchor and his favourite place.
The way you and Ollie partnered—practical, loyal, wise—has taught our family as much about love as any speech ever could.
To Liam and Sophie—
your dad's steadiness is in you.
It's in your way with people, your quiet courage, your willingness to listen first.

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He is not only part of your past; he is part of your future, in the choices you will make and the care you will give.

To Mum and Dad—
you raised a son whose life reflected yours: duty carried with grace, humour that sneaks up, humility that doesn't announce itself.
To Patrick—
you and I know that what we've lost cannot be replaced, but we also know what we've been given.
Our task now is simple and hard—keep his standard in our everyday acts, keep his voice nearby.

There are many people to thank, and I want to do so clearly.
We are profoundly grateful to the St John paramedics whose professionalism and compassion steadied a terrible day, and to the staff of Tauranga Hospital who cared for Ollie and for us with skill and humanity.
Your work matters, and we will carry our gratitude forward.

In lieu of flowers, we ask that donations be made to Coastguard New Zealand.
Ollie believed in the people who keep others safe on the water he loved; supporting them would honour him well.

It's tempting, at this point, to reach for big words.
Ollie would resist that.
He preferred the exact word to the impressive one.
So let me be exact.

He was thoughtful.
He was meticulous.
He was fair.
He was calm under pressure.
He was funny in a way that left people dignified.
He led without theatre.
He served without announcement.

He loved without keeping score.

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He built things that last:
teams that functioned,
kids who knew they mattered,
friendships that could carry weight,
a marriage of substance,
a family that understands what reliability feels like.

And he leaves us a clear way to keep going.
Measure twice—think before you speak.
Cut once—mean what you say, follow through.
Turn up—on time, prepared, with what you promised.
Look after your own and your neighbours—because community is built, not found.
When the wind changes, adjust your sails—don’t blame the tide.

This is a memorial service, so we do the work of grieving.
But Ollie would want us to remember that grief has companions—gratitude, affection, even laughter that slips through because he planted so many quiet joys.
We can honour him by becoming a little more like him in the places that count most, the places where no one is taking notes.

If you would like details about donating to Coastguard New Zealand or a copy of these words, please contact cto@kuchventures.com, and we will make sure they reach you.

Ollie—
thank you for the tree hut that still stands in my mind,
for the midnight rescue,
for the questions that helped rather than cornered,
for the bread that made a house smell like welcome,
for the Saturdays that steadied us,

for the example that will outlive this day.

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We will keep your bearings.
We will mind the wind.
We will look after our own and our neighbours.

Go well, dear brother.
We have the watch.

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