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Good morning, everyone.

My name is [your name], and I stand here as Dan’s friend — the friend who met him in Grade 10 in Ottawa and somehow never stopped leaning on him, through every high and every low.

We are here to say goodbye to Daniel Fraser — Dan to almost all of us — born May 3, 1986, and taken from us far too soon on March 28, 2026, at just 39.

But we’re also here to hold up his life to the light and notice how much good it reflected back on the world.

Dan grew up in Ottawa, the kid who played defence in minor hockey because he liked seeing the whole ice and making sure everyone else was covered. Even then, he was loyal and steady, a little shy until his dry joke landed and the whole bench cracked up. That way of watching out for people never left him.

He studied civil engineering at Carleton University — because he cared about how things fit together, and because he believed that if you were going to build something, it should be safe, fair, and stand the test of time. He moved to Calgary to work on bridges and roads, projects that put people in touch with each other and with possibility. He did it the way he did everything: humbly, precisely, with his sleeves rolled up.

He married his college sweetheart, Caitlin, and together they made a home that was exactly them — music drifting from the kitchen, friends never needing an invitation, sawdust in the garage from whatever he was shaping that week, a Jays game murmuring from the radio, a barbecue smoking away even when the weather tried to argue. Their greatest pride is right here: Owen, seven, and Maya, four — kids who already know their dad’s laugh, his patience, and the

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way he kneels to their level when things are hard and says, “Okay. Let’s figure it out.”

He was the cherished son of Ian and Moira, who raised him to keep his promises and tell the truth even when it’s inconvenient. He was the protective brother to Fiona, the one who’d show up with a socket set and a plan, and then stay long after the problem was solved because he liked knowing you were okay.

You could see his values everywhere he showed up. He volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, because decent housing didn’t feel like charity to him — it felt like fairness. He coached minor hockey on weekends, at ease among kids wearing jerseys two sizes too big, showing them how to keep their heads up and their sticks down. He believed community doesn’t just happen; you build it, with both hands, and you don’t clock out when it’s inconvenient.

My favourite memory with Dan is a stormy canoe trip in Algonquin. The wind came at us sideways, the lake got mean, and we realized the map had opinions of its own. While I was debating which way to panic, Dan just tightened his grip on the paddle and said, “We’ll ferry across, keep the bow to the wind, nice and easy.” He navigated us safely to a soggy shore, strung a tarp like a magician, and then — in rain that could have soaked a submarine — produced perfectly toasted marshmallows. I still don’t know how he did it. But that was Dan: calm in the weather, quietly competent, and somehow finding a small, sweet thing to share when everyone else was cold and tired.

His hobbies weren’t for show; they were ways he connected. Canoeing wasn’t just paddling — it was conversation at the pace of water. Pickup hockey was a reason to lace up and laugh with friends. Woodworking in the garage became gifts that had weight and purpose. And if you were at a weekend barbecue at Dan and Caitlin’s, you knew you’d be sent home full, but you’d also leave feeling steadier than when you came.

If you ever got one of his early-morning “you good?” texts, you know what we’ll miss most. That simple question carried the weight of his loyalty. He was the

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first to show up and the last to leave when help was needed. He didn’t make a speech about it. He just picked up the other end and lifted.

And when a bonfire burned down to coals and someone put on The Tragically Hip, that was Dan’s cue. He didn’t belt; he grinned and sang along, a little off-key, completely in it. There’s a kind of joy that doesn’t demand the spotlight; it just draws you closer. That was his.

To Caitlin — you built a warm, generous life together. Your love was ordinary in the best possible way: daily, patient, shared. That’s why it felt extraordinary to the rest of us. To Owen and Maya — your dad’s integrity, his fairness, his way of keeping promises, all of that lives in you already. The projects he managed are out there holding up traffic and weather, but the work he poured into your family is the strongest thing he ever built. To Ian and Moira, and to Fiona — thank you for the roots that made his steadiness possible. He kept those roots close, even out west.

We are grieving a good man — loyal, humble, quick with a dry joke — and that grief is real. But grief is not the last word. The last word is what we choose to carry forward.

So here is what I think Dan would ask of us, in his practical way:

Text first thing in the morning and ask, “You good?” and mean it.

Keep your promises, even the small ones.

If it’s raining, rig the tarp anyway and find a way to toast the marshmallow.

When a job needs doing, be the first to show up and the last to leave.

Sing along to The Hip when the fire gets low.

And keep building — homes, teams, bridges, habits — that make it safer for

others to cross.

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In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that donations be made to the Canadian Mental Health Association. It fits who Dan was: caring for community, quietly and concretely. If you want to honour him, help make sure someone else gets the support they need.

Dan, my go-to person, my friend since we were fifteen and thought blueprints were just doodles and life would go on forever — thank you.

For the steady hand on the gunwales.

For the tools you lent and never asked back for.

For the way you turned problems into plans.

For your easy laugh and those “you good?” texts that arrived right when they were needed.

We will miss you on the water, on the ice, by the grill, in the garage.

But what you built in us is built to last.

We’ll keep an eye on each other.

We’ll look out for Caitlin, for Owen, for Maya.

We’ll carry your steadiness forward, one small, honest act at a time.

Rest easy, Dan.

We’ve got it from here.

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