

Richie: Good evening ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, friends, relations,

Michael: And anyone else who may not fit any of those categories.

Richie: For those of you who do not already know us, my name is Richie,

Michael: And I am Michael, and together we are . . .

Both: The Best Man.

Richie: Now, having two people acting in the role of Best Man may be a little unusual, but we are honoured to have been asked to perform this solemn role here today, and so far at least, we think we have made a pretty good job of it.

Michael: Although after this speech, some opinions may change. But why should we have been chosen to be the Best man? Well, it is of course due to our status in Gary's life as his sons-in-law.

Richie: I, being the eldest - the senior son-in-law if you will - have been with Gary's daughter Lianne for something like six-and-a-half years now, whereas Michael here . . .

*(turn to Michael directly)*

How long have you been married to Emma now, Michael?

Michael: Five days.

Richie: Five days, eh? How the time flies.

Michael: I have known Emma for more than four years though . . .

Richie: . . . And still together after all this time. Isn't that heart-warming, ladies and gentlemen? *(if there is applause - milk it!)*

Michael: Donations in lieu of wedding gifts to Emma and myself are still being gratefully accepted.

Richie: Now, when Michael and I first got together to compile today's speech, we thought; "What can we say about Gary that has not already been featured in *Golf Magazine*, or in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*?" But when we sat down to consider the question, it quickly became obvious which aspects of this man's character were best highlighted by ourselves here today.

Michael: Gary is of course a long time member of the Newcastle United Golf Club. Now, those of you not familiar with this illustrious club may - due to the name - be thinking that it is in some way connected to our beloved football club . . . but you'd be wrong. The Newcastle United Golf Club was actually formed way back before Newcastle's two independent football teams became 'united' to form the club we know and love today. The fact that the Golf club has flourished since 1892 is a credit to the likes of Gary and other founder members, whose dedication to the game has been an inspiration to others. Keen to share his love of the sport, Gary took his bride-to-be to play around on the course.

Richie: To say that Angela took to the game like a duck to water would be an exaggeration, as she is more of a stay-at-home-in-front-of-the-telly kind of girl. However, she gave it her best for Gary's sake, and after a few minutes instruction from her intended - including how to carry on in the rough - she set off on her first round of golf,  
*(pause and look at the audience)* and . . .

Michael: Well - she beat him! Much to Gary's amazement, Angela finished the game with a record-breaking score. Now, whether or not this included getting a hole-in-one, we will probably never know. Sadly, this marked the end of their golfing partnership, for the time being at least. However, the lure of next year's mixed doubles competition may well tempt them out of retirement. Stay tuned to BBC Sport for more news.

Richie: Our father-in-law is a proud man - a down-to-Earth character, honest, trustworthy and always careful with his money. Not a penny-pincher . . . *(turn to Michael for confirmation)*

Michael: No - never tight-fisted; but would all guests please note that Gary has put a charge of £5 per head on tonight's festivities, so if you could just pay what you owe at the door on your way out later, he would be much obliged . . . And of course, drinks from the bar are counted as extra.

Richie: Now of course, this pursuit of money is in no way an obsession, but it has to be eared somehow, and Gary makes a good living in the sticky business of chocolate-making.

Richie: His skills in this area are known the length and breadth of the Nestle-Rowntree's, factory where he toils daily producing every Rolo, Kit-Kat and Caramac ever sold! Over the years, Gary has fought off many requests from management for him to join them in the board room. He is proud to be a working man, happy on the production line - the cocoa-bean king - providing for his family as they grew up.

Michael: And the family is here for him today. Apart from Richie and myself there are our darling wives - Gary's daughters Lianne and Emma, who have also been bridesmaids for the happy couple today. His grandchildren, Jack the pageboy and Katie as another of the bridesmaids who together carried the rings, and young Mathew. Also here are Gary's parents Audrey and Tommy. Some of you may remember Tommy from his days as a singer in the clubs, and as a stunt double for the great Tom Jones!

Richie: And on Angela's side, her own daughters and bridesmaids, Carly and Rebecca, with the men in their lives, Daniel and Tom. Special thanks go to Angela's sister-in-law, Michelle, for acting as her Maid of Honour. Angela's parents Val and Alf are also here today; as well as her nieces Caitlin and Lauren whom she would like us to thank for the wonderful poetry readings they gave us today; along with Angela's good friend Katherine who gave us the reading. All very beautiful, and a credit to the happy couple on their big day.

Michael: Does that include us?

Richie: Naturally!

Michael: Thank you to everyone who has come here to celebrate with Angela and Gary today, but we would hate you to go away tonight having got the wrong impression of Gary from anything Richie or I may have said. He may prefer people not to know that he secretly shares Angela's passion for soaps on T.V., which he records religiously, then watches when he is home alone, his marigold gloves on to protect his hands from dishwasher; but both Richie and I can genuinely claim that - to us, Gary seems more of a good mate than a father-in-law. He hates to be the centre of attention, and would honestly do anything for anyone - even though he does his best to wind up the kids whenever possible! He's doing OK for a 70 year old, don't you think?

Richie: One of the best indications of this man's caring nature was the fact that when Angela was very ill during the summer, Gary was visiting the hospital as often as possible, making sure that she was being cared for in the best way possible. I am sure that his presence during those difficult weeks was a comfort to Angela, and her family, knowing that he was putting her needs very clearly ahead of his own.

Michael: And what of Angela herself? She will not be a 'kept woman', as she is independently wealthy in her own right. A valued employee of Asda . .

*(both turn backsides to audience and do the Asda 'slap')*

This attractive woman unbelievably has to seek constant reassurance from her nearest and dearest that she looks alright, before hitting the town for a wild night out. She is caring, confident and very friendly, and her family and friends love her very much.

Richie: Before we finish, I would just like to point out something which may have caused some confusion for those wishing to drop off gifts for the happy couple, and have been unable to work out where to leave them. Angela's house in Woodside Way has been sold, and she moved in with Gary at Holyfields. However, they cannot now be found at either location, as Gary has now sold his house as well, and they are renting a property in Wansford Way, before eventually moving into their own home which will be in Bede Close.

Michael: If it will make things easier, any late wedding presents can now be dropped off at the West Allotment Club any Sunday night, prior to the 'pingo'!

Richie: *(to Michael directly)* I think we've said enough, don't you think so Michael?

Michael: Job just about done I would say, Richie.

Richie: Ladies and Gentlemen, would you please raise your glasses and join us, in a toast to the happy couple.

Michael: Angela and Gary.

Both: The Bride and Groom! *(the Toast)*

Richie: Thank you for listening, and enjoy the rest of the night.

Michael: TO THE BAR!!!