

Tim: What a venue for a wedding reception! Ladies and Gentlemen, what better place to write history than a museum, right? And what other wedding you've been to had a gift shop? When Sean asked us to be his best men, I remember looking over at Rhys and knowing that we were thinking exactly the same thing.

Rhys: 'What, Us?'

Tim: You know I'm the guy that choked during his last best man speech, right?

Rhys: And even my brother who asked me as his best man didn't trust me enough to let me take the mic at his wedding.

Tim: Well, if you're sure! For you, anything.

Rhys: So let's talk about soul mates. Two people with such common interests and shared values. Two people who are almost destined to find each other. Sean and his soul mate had been in the same school for several years and must have passed each other in corridors who knows how many times before they realised. It was only a matter of time until he found his one true soulmate... me.

Tim: Everyone here can probably guess that we're good friends with Sean, but many of you might not know that we are also good friends with Rachel. They have been a couple for so long that we can hardly remember a time when they weren't. I can't remember ever thinking that Rachel wasn't perfect for Sean.

Rhys: Rach is fun, passionate, hardworking, and is happy to help her friends when they need some encouragement. Just recently, as Sean's younger brother Liam was working towards his final year dissertation, Rachel played a key supporting role in its completion.

Hearing how Liam was having difficulty with the process, Rachel - out of the kindness of her heart - offered her time to help him schedule his work and organise his ideas, continuing to motivate and encourage him throughout. Liam has made it clear to us that Rachel's selfless generosity and encouragement was pivotal in the timely completion of his dissertation.

Tim: I think we can all agree that Rachel looks incredible and that she and everyone involved have done a marvelous job organising everything today.

Rhys: And may I add what a great choice of bridesmaids! Ladies, you all look tremendous! Although I bet you didn't take half as long as Sean did getting ready this morning.

Tim: <to sean> dw man you look just as good ;D

Rhys: So. Sean. What can we say about Sean? He's done so many good things over the years, we couldn't possibly begin to list them all.

Tim: Although he did ask us to try. And we'll get to that, but first we thought it might be good to give a little explanation to those who don't know him so well. I understand that some of Rachel's family have come from as far as New Zealand to celebrate...no pressure, Rhys.

Rhys: He's a man with a giving nature. One of the things that Sean was known for during his days at University was baking Welsh cakes for his friends.

But his cooking skills weren't always up to scratch. We recently spoke to some of Sean's University housemates about one 'incident'...where Sean needed to defrost some frozen chili.

Dave? What's the best way to do this?... Leave it out overnight? maybe using a microwave? But rather than conventional methods Sean decided that it would be more efficient to suspend the chilly, in a carrier bag ,above pan of boiling water..

Ha!

But we are informed the Welsh cakes were actually quite delicious.

Tim: There was also the time when Sean ‘generously’ shared with us a drop or two of his father’s super-hot ‘Dave’s Insanity Sauce’ on our burgers. Let me tell you, he wasn’t so generous after we ate them when we were all fighting for the cold water tap.

...but...

Whether it’s food-related or not, he’s quick to learn from his mistakes.

Rhys: Essential skills for a good husband.

Tim: Although it is quite annoying when you play as many competitive games against him as we do. He was never content to give less than 100%. Liam can attest from growing up with Sean that he wasn’t one to pull punches during these games. From an outside perspective, you might think that he was trying to nurture and grow his little brother.

Rhys: I think he just enjoyed winning.

Tim: And now he’s beaten both of us to the altar...showoff.

Rhys: One thing that Sean enjoys as much as gaming is the written word.

Tim: Especially if he's the one who wrote it.

Rhys: One of the forms that he particularly enjoys is the classic superhero comic. If there's anything you want to find out about a superhero, Sean's your man. Sean can talk for hours about comic book events as if they were history.

Tim: Trust us, we know...

Rhys: Sean, we know that you're also a fan of poetry. Earlier on today, we asked each table to write a small limerick about the bride and groom. We thought we'd share with you a number of our favourites.

Tim: I liked <limerick>

Rhys: Whereas my favourite was <limerick>

Tim: Of course, Rachel is just as keen a reader. After all, having visited the Gray family home we know that she grew up in a house with more books in it than bricks. And this is just one common interest that they share.

Rhys: Like any great couple, Sean and Rachel have had some trials to overcome. Not least of which was the long distance relationship that they maintained throughout university. Over the years their educations would lead them from Cardiff, to Bangor and Bath and even as far as Sweden. This was also a trial for their wallets.

Tim: Some of the friends they have made throughout this time, along with some family members couldn't be here today but have supplied some messages for the happy couple.

Rachel's French cousin Eilwen and her boyfriend Loic are sorry that they couldn't make it.

Despite living so far away, Eilwen was very happy to have been able to spend time with you when growing up.

Eilwen fondly mentioned hot summers together in France, playing cards with you in the back of the van.

As well as cold summers together in Britain, playing with you on the beach.

Eilwen wishes you and Sean a lovely wedding, honeymoon, and a very happy life together.

And Loic says:

Pardon the French,

"Vive les Maries"

Lots of love,

Eilwen and Loic

And Minah, a Korean national who lived and studied with Sean in Sweden, remembers how Sean would go 'Grocery' shopping and come back with nothing but frozen Pizza.

She also remembers Sean's ugly, but delicious, welsh cakes and how he was always making chances to bring everyone together.

She finishes by saying:

"I will never forget you Sean, you were always kind, funny, friendly, and considerate. I remember when you once told us about your ideal woman and effectively described Rachel. I am so happy to hear that you two are getting married.

Congratulations and a huge hug from Korea.

With love

Your best Asian Friend.

Minah.

Rhys:

I can personally testify to Sean's generous and caring nature.

In 2008, when Sean was yet to begin his degree studies and I was at university in Bath.

I made some poor choices on a drunken night out (I won't bore you with the details) I wound up in hospital, injured and unconscious for several weeks. My parents have since told me of the first time Sean visited, having heard the news {via Rachel's parents I think}. He got on a train as soon as he could and appeared in the corridor of Bristol's intensive care unit late one evening. My mum had to persuade the nurses to let him into the ward.

He visited as often as he was allowed to, and would sit beside my bed and talk to me about various films, and games which would be released soon. And I may have never really said this Sean but I'm incredibly grateful that you were there for me. It really means a lot to me.

Tim: Many best men in our position might be concerned that they were losing a friend.

Rhys: Many best men right now would say that they're gaining a friend.

Tim: Neither is true for us, we are fortunate enough to have been given the opportunity to share in the happiness of two of our closest friends as they celebrate their love.

Rhys: I hope you all agree with us when we say that Sean is a great guy. What's more remarkable is that he is made all the better with Rachel by his side. Please join us in standing and raising a glass one final time to the bride and groom.

From Minah :

Whenever Sean goes for grocery shopping, he didn't actually do the 'grocery' shopping since all he bought was frozen pizza. But there was one occasion that Sean spent his time at kitchen. He sometimes baked Welsh cake for all the corridormates. It was ugly to be honest (Sorry Sean), but delicious. I once asked him why he baked welsh cake, then he said "I just wanted to share it with all of you."

To pick the sentence he said the most frequently, it was "I can't be bothered.", I would say. But he always tried to make chances to mingle with us, making funny dance moves every time we go out, buying new card games that we can play together.

I will never forget Sean who was always kind, funny, friendly and considerate. Sean once told us about his 'ideal woman' and that pretty much matched with Rachael. :) I am so happy for you to hear that you are getting married with her! Congrats and huge hug from Korea!

With love,
Your best asian friend, Minha.

From Eilwen

I am so sorry that Loic and I cannot be with you and Sean to celebrate your wedding . We were really looking forward to it.

As you and I have grown up we have been able to spend time together even though we live in different countries and I'm very happy about that.

I have many memories of you when we were children, but the clearest is when you and your mum and dad came to stay with us in France,one extremely hot summer.

My parents borrowed a friend's van so we could all drive around together. Us kids had such fun playing cards in the van in the evenings and I think we might even have slept in the van.

Another memory is a cold one!!!!!! remember we all ran into the sea at Southerndown, and it was freezing. I fell and cut my knee on the way out.

I remember going for a walk with you and some calves licked our hands in the field below the village. It was so sweet.

So, Rachel I wish you and Sean a lovely wedding and honeymoon and a very happy life together.

Loic says "vive les mariés"

lots of love Eilwen