

TABLE 2

ANNETTE EPIFANO - *Annette needs no intro. She is the heart and soul of the Epifano family and singlehandedly raised Melissa and Lindsey. Melissa wouldn't be the woman she is today without her. She's a nurse, holistic health coach, and all around badass and loving empath. She has the best green thumb — something that did not get passed on to Melissa. Oh, and no one's baked goods compare to hers! Her pumpkin bread, ginger snaps, and tropical muffins are fan faves.*

SUANN LOEWEN - *SuAnn is one of Melissa's mom's best friends. As a fellow Capricorn and super spiritually tuned in, Melissa truly looks up to SuAnn and has learned so much about the holistic realm from SuAnn and Annette. SuAnn is endlessly kind, extremely supportive, incredibly stylish, and one of the wisest and most down-to-earth people you'll ever meet.*

DENNIS LOEWEN - *Dennis is SuAnn's husband and is a big fan of racing sports. He's a super well-rounded and talented soul and has the skills to ride street, track, and dirt bikes and ski. He also has a great taste in music and loves alt and tech rock. He's a mechanical engineer and part of a team that's recently won an Archies Award in ergonomics. He also speaks German and has met André the Giant!*

ROBBIE STEEVES - *Uncle Robbie is like a dad to Melissa. He went with her on her first-ever trip out of the country to — fittingly — the UK. She was scared shitless but he had her back while she settled in for an internship. He's the uncle everyone dreams of having in their life and is one of the friendliest, kindest people you'll ever know. He also knows more about wine and antiques than anyone — ask him about both!*

LYNN STEEVES - *Aunt Lynn is one of Melissa's aunts (on her mom's side!). She has been a fashion and art icon for Melissa ever since she was little. She's one of the strongest, bravest, and most loving women you will ever meet and she's whip-smart, too. She was a nurse for 29 years and no one's gardening skills and landscape design expertise compare to hers.*

DANIEL SEMOSKY - *Dan is Michele's husband and the dad of MaryBeth, one of Melissa's childhood friends. He was the person responsible for making Halloween incredibly memorable growing up. He took the kids on a hay bale tractor ride around the neighborhood to trick or treat every year.*

MICHELE SEMOSKY - *Michele is one of Annette's best friends and mom of MaryBeth, one of Melissa's childhood friends. She is a loving, kind, and strong support system, especially while the Epifanos lived in Connecticut, and is the person who convinced Melissa that broccoli actually tastes good (she just had to add cheese).*

JIM THOMAS - *Uncle Jim is Aunt Shell's husband and one of THE funniest and kindest humans on the planet. He gives the best hugs and also happened to screenprint T-shirts for Melissa's 6th grade battle of the books team (they won!) and when Melissa and Lindsey were in a band (don't ask).*

MICHELLE THOMAS - *Aunt Shell is Melissa's mom's best friend, but so much more. She really is an aunt and has been cheering Melissa on since she was in diapers. She has made a point of making it to the most important moments of Melissa's life, whether it's a graduation ceremony or celebrating her shoe launch. She taught Melissa how to play songs on the piano, has a fantastic music taste, and is also a fashion icon.*

TABLE 3

MARK VARLEY – *Mark is a proud Welshman and retired army officer. He is not only Simon's dad but also a passionate birdwatcher and nature lover. You'll often find him with binoculars in hand (much like Melissa), spotting feathered friends and tending to his prized vegetable patch & quarry. If you're looking for a conversation starter, just ask him which of the Varley family children is his favourite and why it's Lucie.*

SUE VARLEY – *Alongside being Simon's mother, Sue has a talent that will make your tastebuds sing. She's a fantastic cook who can whip up mouthwatering dishes that leave everyone wanting seconds. Alongside her culinary prowess, Sue takes pride in her Christian faith, being an active member of the Caerwys Womens Institute and cherishes her role as a dog mom to Pip and Finn.*

LUCIE VARLEY – *Simon's sister, and the mother of young William, Lucie has a long history of friendly squabbles and healthy competition with her brother. Growing up together in Germany, they were each other's partners in mischief up until the stage where it became clear that Lucie was the smarter, more talented, and better looking sibling. Lucie works as a doctor in the NHS and although he doesn't much say it, Simon hugely admires his big sister.*

JOE FITZPATRICK – *Joe is Lucie's husband, and a die-hard Everton football fan. He has an encyclopedic knowledge of the sport and music. He's the go-to person for any discussions on popmaster and pub quizzes. Joe's other hidden talent lies in his piano skills and he shares a deep love for Bruce Springsteen with Simon.*

WILLIAM FITZPATRICK – *William, the little prince, is the son of Lucie and Joe (and is Simon and Melissa's nephew). We know you can't read this yet William but you're our favorite person on the planet and we love you to pieces. You have the coolest parents and we feel really honored to be in your life. William's current loves are cars, reading books, and playing baby soccer (he's too cool).*

MAT BRANTON – *Gill's husband, Mat could give "Ted Lasso" a run for his money. He's an incredibly energetic and positive sports coach, always inspiring those around him to push their limits. Whether it's a game of rugby or a friendly chat about sports, Mat's enthusiasm and encouragement are hard to miss. Catch him whilst you can as you'll often find him out in the countryside on multi day hikes (with a fair few pub stops along the way).*

JOSH BRANTON – *As Gill and Mat's son and Simon's cousin, Josh seems to excel in every sport and subject he tries. Don't be shy to strike up a chat with Josh about almost anything and don't forget to wish him a happy birthday – it was earlier this week!*

OWEN MCCORMACK – *Owen is Gill's eldest son and an electrician by trade. Originally hailing from Liverpool, Owen and his beautiful girlfriend are heading off for a year in Australia in November where they plan to travel and work their way around the country.*

GILL BRANTON – *Simon's auntie and Mark's sister, Gill is a true master when it comes to baking. Beyond her baking skills, Gill has a knack for picking out the perfect presents, making her the go-to person for gift advice in Simon's family. Gill has made it a goal to always visit one more country than her age, so do ask her about the 30+ places that she has visited to date.*

TABLE 4

LINDSEY EPIFANO - Lindsey is Melissa's youngest (and only) sister. She has kept Melissa sane and laughing for the last 26+ years and is the most talented graphic designer, florist, and calligrapher out there. Life is exponentially better when she's in it. Lindsey is much braver (she sat on an alligator once!), smarter, and more stylish than her older sister. She enjoys traveling the world and very recently No one can make Melissa laugh-cry quite like Lindsey and there just aren't enough words here to explain how much she means to her.

TABATHA GEORGE - Tabatha is Melissa's best friend and they secured the deal in 7th grade after a zoo trip. They've swum in Mexico, cave tubed in Belize, and cried in the Taco Bell parking lot together. She just graduated with her Masters, and teaches high school biology/physics. If you want warm and fuzzy support and the best advice, she's the one. She also has the best book recommendations. Congratulate her and Andrew on their anniversary that was earlier this month!

ANDREW GEORGE - Andrew is Tabby's husband who Melissa met in college. He has his doctorate and is one of the few people that understands Melissa's love for Studio Ghibli. He and Tabby have lived and traveled all across the country/world. He's about to start a role as a PT at a school's special education department. Congrats!

EMMA HEESACKER - Emma is Melissa's best friend and they've been inseparable (in spirit) since the third grade. Her talent is immeasurable. She's an incredible actor (Melissa has never sobbed more than at one of Emma's plays) and runs a badass HR operation at an architecture firm in Portland. She's loving, caring, and always provides an ear to listen. She also has the best recommendations for plays, musicals, and Tik Tok vids.

JON RITTER - Jon is Emma's partner and Simon and Melissa are really excited to be spending time with him in Italy. He's an expert on all-things tea and a writer (which is super inspiring to Melissa and she's hoping she can read some of his work eventually).

SHANE KELLER - Shane is Emily's husband and Melissa spent time with the two of them in college, playing board games and running around Eugene and Portland. Shane and Emily travel the world together (and had an enviable honeymoon to Thailand). He is also a gaming master, particularly at DnD and Warhammer 40,000.

EMILY FOSTER - Emily and Melissa met in college and she was one of the best support systems during the tough years of college. She is the best listener and is incredibly thoughtful. She's also pretty brilliant and runs her own design business for wedding vendors. She lives in Oregon with her husband and two cute kitties.

ALANDRA CHAVARRIA - Melissa's best friend and soul sista. They met in college (uni for you Brits :)). Alandra is a brilliant content creator, photographer, artist, florist, and all around multihyphenate. When it comes to holistic wellness, Alandra is your girl. She's a wealth of knowledge and is incredibly kind, empathetic, and a genius at aiding people through their healing journeys. She's currently living in New York and is also a style icon.

LUKE FOLEY - Luke is MaryBeth's boyfriend and came all the way from the East Coast for our wedding. He's into motosports, skiing, and lifting and we're really excited to be spending more time with him!

MARYBETH SEMOSKY - Melissa's longest-standing childhood friend. She is an utter badass. She, Lindsey, and Melissa spent many summers playing Polly Pockets together, singing Cheetah girl covers, and trick or treating on Halloween courtesy of her dad's tractor. MaryBeth is a wildlife expert (which makes Melissa's heart sing) and has traveled around the world, taking some enviable photos of animals and nature.

TABLE 5

GIANA MANGANARO CRONIN – *Giana is one of the bubbliest souls you'll ever meet! She runs an incredible secondhand fashion business that helps brides-to-be. Her and Jay got married earlier this year at what looked like an AMAZING ceremony at Boston Public Library. She is a style icon and constantly inspires Melissa.*

JAY CRONIN – *Jay and Simon first met through work when Jay trusted Simon enough to enter his company into a partnership with Simon's. As fellow Brits in the US, Simon and Jay became friends. They foolishly took on a run from Boston to Cape Cod and then even more foolishly attempted an overnight trail race in Vermont before giving up because of the rain. Ask Jay about the time he spent in the Solomon Islands or the amazing organization he's involved with called Big Brothers Big Sisters.*

JIM ROWLINGS – *Simon met Jim while running the Barcelona Marathon, and they have been running towards friendship ever since. As a passionate cricketer, Jim shares his love for the sport with an infectious spirit, making him a fun and engaging person to be around. Jim used to moonlight as a body double for Sean Lock but sadly work has dried up over the last few years.*

VLADA LEVIT – *Vlada met Simon's groomsmen, Will, while on holiday and she quickly became one of Simon's first true American friends after Will invited her to a rooftop party that Simon was hosting in New York. Vlada & Simon share a history of awesome summers on the beaches & at the bars in New York & New Jersey. Vlada is married to Dave — no one knows why.*

DAVE WATKINS – *Dave and Simon's friendship blossomed while Dave was working for Breast Cancer Now. A credited actor on Netflix and now living in NYC, Dave's charisma and talent have left a lasting impression on all who know him. Simon and Dave shared what will be forever remembered as "The Best American Summer Ever" together! You need to check out his company Sterling Holmes Rings, where he handcrafts nature-inspired rings.*

CHARLES MILTON – *Charles now owns a bar in Edinburgh but in a former life ran an adventure travel company. Simon, Dan, and he set up a marathon tour to North Korea and together they ran the Pyongyang marathon back in 2014.*

PAUL DOUBLEDAY – *Paul has been an influential figure in Simon's life as his first boss and mentor. Their bond strengthened over a beer half marathon that they ran together. Now, Paul is a loving father to little Ethan, embracing the joys of parenthood with the same determination he brings to everything he does.*

ETHAN DOUBLEDAY – *Little Ethan, Paul and Alix's 11-month-old bundle of joy, is the apple of everyone's eye. His infectious laughter and innocent curiosity bring an extra dose of delight to any occasion.*

ALIX DOUBLEDAY – *Alix shines both as a dedicated teacher and former charity worker. Her passion for making a positive impact on others is evident in all she does, making her a role model for many. Alix has won the coveted gold rosette in the Barnack Spring fete for 3 years running for her creative cucumber sculptures. Together with Paul and Ethan, Alix completes a truly admirable family.*

TABLE 6

REDI ABEGAZ – Redi and Simon met in a taxi cab whilst coming home from a night out in New York City. They bonded over the fact that she was dating a fellow Brit, Luke. Redi is exceptionally smart and one of the bubbliest & friendliest people you will ever meet.

LUKE FLETCHER – Luke is Redi's partner and after meeting at the University of Edinburgh he then spent a year living in New York City on the Mountbatten Program. Redi and Luke now live in London with their pet cat!

JACK MCNULTY – The New York Magpies AFL club brought Jack into Simon and Melissa's life. With his experience working at the UN and his charming personality, Jack always has a story to tell especially when it comes to elephant phalluses. Jack and Simon had a joint 30th and leaving party planned together for St. Patricks Day in 2020 before COVID put an end to that... so we can't wait to party with him tonight instead!

LIZ LATHAM – Jack's partner, Liz, has traveled all the way from Perth to join the celebrations today and we're so excited to spend much more time with her. One of the best days of our year so far was when Jack slid into our DM's confirming that Liz and him would be making the journey over!

SEAN HOLMESBY – As Simon's coach at the New York Magpies AFL club, Sean has been a source of guidance and inspiration. Living in Melbourne, he brings a touch of Aussie spirit to the occasion. To see this in action, ask Melissa for the video of him and Simon dueting to "Torn" at a late night karaoke bar. Hot Dub Time Machine, bus trips & apartment quiz nights are just some of the adventures that sparked a friendship between Sean and Simon.

JILL O'HERLIHY – Jill and Simon started within a month of each other at GivePanel. Jill was the 3rd employee and Simon was the 4th. Jill has been an incredible mentor to Simon and currently acts as head of customer success where she has helped raised many millions for nonprofits across the world. Jill lives with her family just outside of Dublin, Ireland and alongside being able to sing some fantastic Irish ballads she also holds two different world records.

LEE SENIOR – Lee also works with Simon.

DAVID HESSEKIEL – David lives in upstate New York with his wife Andi. David runs one of the largest communities of nonprofit and social good professionals in the US and has been a mentor for Simon in learning the ropes of business and nonprofits. David is an expert communicator, but what you'll most likely notice first is his warmth and kindness.

ANDI HESSEKIEL – Andi is David's wife and has made a career as a journalist and writer, something that very much inspires Melissa on her career journey.

LEE SENIOR (AGAIN) – Lee peaked in his high school years when he played Reuben, the oldest son of Jacob, a minor character in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. In this production, he sang the solo number "One More Angel"...a classic song, right?! Alongside this, Lee has recently taken up playing club rugby and is the proud owner of Rufus, a pug who hates being taken on walks. Lee and Simon met through work and in 2022 visited more countries together (including a very memorable trip to Barcelona) than Simon did with Melissa.

TABLE 7

LUCA ILLING - Dr Luca Illing currently works as a scientific project manager in Uppsala, Sweden and completed his Ph.D in Plant Genetics at Warwick University. Away from work, Luca has a passion for nature and specially his two pet swans, a fact he'll happily share with anyone interested. He also has THE best joke that you've ever heard. Ask him about it!

KATIE JOINT - Katie, Luca's partner, is a passionate sportswoman and University of Bath alumni (the city where Simon and Melissa now live). She lives in Sweden with Luca but what really sets Katie apart is her BRILLIANT music taste; from attending multiple Bruce Springsteen concerts to sharing a love for 2010s pop that is echoed by Melissa. Luca and Katie recently hosted Simon & Melissa for Midsummer in Sweden and it was a total blast.

DAN "SPARKLING" PERRY - Dan and Simon's bond strengthened through rugby and an insatiable appetite for pub quizzes. As a key member of the Monday Night Disco crew, Dan knows how to keep the good times rolling. Their shared journey to the Baltics and their duathlon triumph in Wales are just two highlights of their thrilling adventures together.

ERIN MCENERY - Erin is Dan's wife and a proud Kiwi. In her day job, she works at the Natural History Museum (which Melissa finds unbelievably cool) and outside of work, you can find her in a yoga studio, researching sustainable travel or vineyard hopping near Dan and Erin's home in Brighton!

JAMES PILKINGTON - Growing up on the Isle of Wight, Pilky's love for fish knows no bounds. His unique perspective on life and love for pirates make him a fun-loving and adventurous presence at any gathering. Luca and Pilky travelled to Japan together to the 2019 RWC and made it onto TV and this isn't even his best story from that trip...

ÉLÉA FOSTIER - Éléa is originally from France but now lives just down the road from Simon and Melissa in Bristol. Éléa brings a touch of French charm and sophistication to every conversation and, as Pilky's partner, has the patience of a saint. We look forward to spending many more Eurovision parties together in the future!

HUGO MARINO - Hugo thought Simon (and Alex) were chumps when they first met through college rugby but luckily we pulled through and became friends through a long series of Monday night pub quiz victories and the occasional bout of disco dancing. Hugo has just left the army where he served as an officer in the Intelligence Corps and is always keen to give any sport a go, including featuring in a inter university fight night back in York.

STEPH HISLOP - Steph is Hugo's fiancée and an all round action hero. Simon and Melissa haven't taken it personally that although Steph owns a flat in Bath we've never met face to face until this week ;) Steph is planning on taking a year out to take on a journey of health and wellness around the world!

SARAH WESTLAKE - Sarah is the first friend Melissa made in the UK (thanks to Simon who met Sarah in Spain). She's the most supportive and the most brilliant person you'll ever meet and works for the Ministry of Defence, traveling between Italy and Japan. Her sense of style is incomparable and there is no one Melissa would rather shop with, go out for food with, or get her nails done with. She and Bradley have the most perfect home in Frome and dog named Arthur — Melissa is the VERY proud godmother. Ask her for photos!

BRADLEY SPENCE - Bradley hunts submarines from helicopters, and if that's not cool we don't know what is. Believe it or not, he's also a world class singer. In 2004, he got through to the judges house on X Factor before having to withdraw from the show. Definitely don't ask him to sing for you tonight though!

TABLE 8

ADAM HIGHLAND - Adam is a prize-winning history buff. He is also a keen golfer and an award-winning playwright. He and Simon have shared many memorable journeys, including their unforgettable adventures to Romania, Moldova, and Transnistria where they have fond memories arguing with an almost naked train conductor.

KIRSTIE WHITTAM - As Adam's fiancée, Kirstie and Adam may have met through work but their relatively recent engagement was far from the offices of London... Adam proposed to Kirstie on the white sand beaches of Barbados (making the rest of us look bad)! With her intelligence and charm, she is the perfect match for Adam's wit and passion and they are getting married in April 2024 in the beautiful countryside of Scotland.

DANIELLE BAKER - Danielle, Will's fiancée, is a force to be reckoned with and we're super excited for their wedding in September. As with Will, Danielle shares a love for horse racing. As a head of household for esteemed families, she brings a touch of elegance and sophistication to any event and we're super excited to see what her and Will make of their brand new house nestled away in Surrey.

WILLIAM ORCHARD - Will and Simon's friendship began at university, and they later became flatmates during their time together in London. He, like Simon, was a sports rep at uni and played every sport under the sun at a fairly social level. Since 2012, Simon and Will have followed a similar path in increasingly watching more sport than playing it but rest assured that they both will never miss an opportunity to pick up a bat, club, or ball if it's to be followed by an evening experiencing the best of après sport culture.

WARREN ROWE - Warren is Simon's oldest friend and will be delivering tonight's final speech. They first met at military school when they were 12 and Warren has since gone on to serve as an officer in the Royal Marines. He now lives in Bahrain with his wife Louise and little boy Arthur. Alongside becoming a father, Warren has attempted to row the Atlantic and climb Denali within the last 12 months. When they were 18, Simon and Warren hitchhiked 2,420km.

ALEX NICHOLSON - Alex and Simon's friendship goes back to their university days, where they were roommates and partners in crime. They have shared countless adventures, like trying to run around the circumference of London, going on rugby tours in Croatia and Spain, conquering the Three Peaks, and taking trips to DC and NYC. Alex now lives in London with his lovely wife Charlotte and their black lab Bobbie! A particularly memorable experience to ask Alex about was the time that him and Simon found themselves in the back of a police car...

CHARLOTTE BERMAN - Charlotte, Alex's wife, is a passionate Harry Potter fan and has spent over a decade working in advertising, marketing, and TV. Her creativity and enthusiasm inspired this very idea for the guest bios. With her warm and chatty nature, Charlotte makes everyone feel like they belong and we're looking forward to finally challenging Alex and Charlotte to a couple of board games once the autumn comes around!

NEIL CHAUHAN - Neil and Simon's paths crossed at university, where Simon was in his first year, and Neil was on his seventh victory lap. More recently, Simon and Neil both moved to the USA. Neil set up life in Miami where he began to fully adopt the life of an American sports fan whilst Simon was courting Melissa further up North. Neil proposed to his now wife Dina during a visit to Simon and Melissa in NYC. His vibrant spirit, and generous nature are a true inspiration. Simon and Neil were together at a Miami Heat game when Trump banned travel to Europe during COVID-19.

DINA RANCHHOD - Dina is from New Zealand and one of the warmest and kindest people you will ever meet. She is Neil's wife and one of the witnesses that were there for Melissa and Simon at their registry wedding day. A keen traveller, Neil and Dina have just got back from a four-month sabbatical where they travelled around Central and Southern America!

Thank you all so much for being here today!

There aren't enough words to explain just how appreciative we are that you've made the effort to travel here and be with us. Each and every one of you hold such an important place in our hearts, and we would not be the people we are today without you. You are the reason why this weekend feels so immensely special and we're deeply grateful for your support, love, and presence. There wasn't enough space in these captions to really go in depth about all the fun memories we've had with you and how much you mean to us.

We also want to extend a special thanks to all the team at Villa Eva, our wedding planners — Emily, Emanuela, and Rita — who put this event together, the wonderful RGB (The Really Good Band) fronted by the exceptional Alex Alderson and joined by the fantastic David and Jorge, and the incredibly talented Taylor Church for seeing who we are and capturing our special day.

Finally, we would like to thank our parents, Annette, Mark & Sue for their unwavering support, love, patience, and generosity.

With lots of love,

Simon & Melissa Varley

