Opening 1 / 7

Good evening, everyone. I'm Audrey, Josie's older sister, and tonight I'm her matron of honor. The word matron makes me sound like I run a boarding school. It only means I'm married, and that I stood where Josie is standing about nine years ago, in a dress I could not sit down in.

Part 2 2 / 7

At my wedding, Josie was fourteen and my junior bridesmaid. Her one job was to hold my bouquet during the vows. Halfway through, I heard a small crunch. She was so nervous that she had squeezed the stems until two of the roses snapped, and she spent the rest of the ceremony propping them up against the others so nobody would notice.

Part 3 3 / 7

Nobody did, except me. As we walked back up the aisle, she pressed the broken ones into my hand and whispered, 'I fixed it, mostly.' I kept those two roses. They are pressed between the pages of our wedding album, next to a photo of Josie gripping the bouquet with both fists.

Part 4 4 / 7

That is my sister. When something breaks, she does not panic and she does not hide it. She holds it together until the hard part is over, and then she tells you the truth. She has done that for me in bigger ways since, more times than I can count.

Part 5 5 / 7

Malcolm, you have seen it too. The night your car died on the highway in the rain, Josie did not look up a tow truck first. She called you, said 'Stay put,' and drove out with a thermos and a blanket. You told me later that was the night you knew. I believe you, because that is when I would have known.

Part 6 6 / 7

Nine years in, I'm allowed one piece of advice, so here it is. Some days the flowers snap. Hold them up together, tell each other the truth afterward, and keep the broken pieces somewhere safe. They turn out to be the best part of the album.

Closing 7 / 7

Please raise your glasses with me. To Josie and Malcolm: may you always hold it together for each other, and only ever mostly need fixing. Cheers.