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Friends, family, neighbours—thank you for coming together today to remember Siobhán Murphy, our Shiv.

I'm here as her school friend from Loreto in Kilkenny, her confidante and partner-in-mischief for over thirty years.

It feels strange to stand here without the late-night text she would have sent me beforehand:

“Say what’s true. And breathe.”

Shiv was born on 22 September 1975, and left us far too suddenly at 48.

A Kilkenny native to her bones, she trained as a nurse at Trinity, found her calling with the children in Crumlin, and then settled in Galway to raise her family.

Declan, Orla, and Fionn—she adored you beyond measure.

To Bríd and Colm, and to Aisling and Pádraig—she was so proud to be your daughter and sister, and she said it often, not just on birthdays.

In the hospital, Shiv was fierce in the best way.

She stood her ground for the small and the scared.

She mentored new nurses with the same steadiness she brought to night shifts, and when no one was looking she knitted tiny hats for premature babies, one careful loop after another.

She rattled buckets and ran raffles for children’s wards like it was a sport.

She believed fairness wasn’t a theory—it was a daily practice.

Outside the ward, she baked brown bread that made the whole house sound warmer, whether you were hungry or just needed a chat.

She sang at choir rehearsals with that half-smile she wore when the altos went rogue.

She swam at Salthill in weather that would frighten a seal, and came home

pink-cheeked and laughing.

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She knew the stallholders at the farmers' market by name and asked after their mothers.

Nothing fancy—just attention, given freely.

My favourite memory is an unglamorous one: Electric Picnic, the year the tent leaked like a sieve.

Our wellies filled with muck, the sleeping bags were a write-off, and Shiv kept us singing anyway, passing around a torch and a packet of Tayto like they were sacred objects.

By sunrise we were hoarse and happy, and she said, "We'll be grand—joy doesn't mind a bit of rain."

That was her: quick-witted, brave, endlessly kind, and absolutely unstoppable when there was a person to be minded.

What we'll miss most are the small, sure things.

The late-night text that said exactly the right thing, when you didn't know what you needed until she named it.

Her kettle, always on, like a promise.

The way she made space for you to arrive exactly as you were.

Today we're wearing a splash of colour because Shiv liked life to have brightness in it, even on heavy days.

And later we'll hear a line from Seamus Heaney she loved—she had a knack for finding the one line that could hold a room steady.

If you're looking for a way to honour her—and I know many of us are—her family asks that, in lieu of flowers, we support the paediatric unit that meant so much to her.

She'd have liked that: help the living, mind the small ones.

Shiv taught us that kindness is a muscle, fairness a habit, and joy something you can find in ordinary moments if you keep your eyes open.

So let's keep our eyes open.

Let's send the late-night text.

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Let's put the kettle on.

And let's stand up—calmly, bravely—when a voice is needed.

Thank you, Shiv, for the laughter in the rain, for the hats and the songs, for the courage you made look ordinary.

We'll carry you with us, every day, in ways you'd recognise.

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