**D**ear Peter, this month we celebrate 25 years as husband and wife. I find it hard to believe that we have been married for a quarter of a century – it seems just a few years ago that we said our vows to each other. So much has happened since then.

We met on a blind date arranged by our mutual friend Anne on 1 December 1991. As I was getting ready, I changed my outfit five times – I was that nervous about meeting you. Although there was an immediate attraction between us, I didn’t realise that I had met the man I was going to marry. We started dating on a regular basis and a mere 24 days later, on Christmas Eve, you proposed. It didn’t matter that we had been together for a little more than three weeks, I knew that I loved you and that what we had was special.

We were married 18 months later, on 19 June 1993. We had such plans but, six months later, I fell ill. After a year of treatment, including surgery, we realised that my illness was chronic. Ill health forced me to retire due from a nursing job I truly loved.

I was soon using a wheelchair when out of the house, and our hopes of having three children were put on hold. I became more and more depressed; I hardly left the house and I spent more time in bed.

The one constant in my life through all this was you, my darling Pete. You never wavered in your support and love for me. Nothing was too much trouble and you helped me in any way you could, even helping to do my hair. Your continued love for me got me through the most awful time of my life.

Although I remained ill, I started to live my life within those restrictions. After nine years, our dream came true when I gave birth to our long-awaited child in 2002. Maria brought an extra light into our life. You are a wonderful, loving and caring father.

You work so hard in your factory job, but you never complain. Our home is such a happy place and the three of us laugh together every day. Your name means “rock” and you truly are the rock in my life.

I cherish you and I want to wish you a very happy silver wedding anniversary. Thank you for the past 25 years – you have made me a very happy woman. I don’t know what the next 25 years holds for you, but I know that with you at my side I can face whatever comes.

I love you, Peter.