

leven years ago, as 22-year-old actor Gary Lucy prepared for a boys' night out in London, little did he know he was about to meet the woman of his dreams. From the very first moment he laid eyes on Natasha Gray across a crowded bar, it was love, and the pair have been inseparable eyer since. Natasha tells OKI: 'The moment we met, he saw me, grabbed me and didn't let go!'

Two years on, Natasha, 35, gave birth to their first child, a daughter named india, and six years after that, they welcomed their son, Elvis, into the world. But despite having his perfect family of four, former EastEnders star Gary certainly took his time when it came to proposing to Natasha. And she assumed the chances of getting married were slim, with

Natasha telling us: 'After ten years you think it's never going to happen!'

But then, on Valentine's Day last year – ten years after they first met – Gary surprised his lady with a romantic meal, champagne and roses and finally got

down on one knee. Without a moment's hesitation, Natasha said 'yes' and on Sunday November 16. OK! witnessed their glittering nuptials.

At 3.30pm, we pulled up outside London's Mandarin Oriental Hotel, an iconic venue overlooking the twinkling lights of Knightsbridge and Hyde Park, to find a whole host of stars from stage and screen gathering in the foyer. We chatted with the likes of ex-Girls Aloud star Sarah Harding, Coronation Street's Ryan Thomas, EastEnders' Diane Parish, Footballers Wives' Susie Amy and Gary's former Hollyoaks' co-stars Jorgie Porter, Jeremy Edwards and Nick Pickard – as well as former Loose Woman Lisa Maxwell, Amy Childs and Christopher Biggins.

There may not have been a ray of sunshine in the sky, but there was more than a little magic in the air with the scent of Christmas in the magnificent hotel interior, which cozed old school glamour. The 120 guests, all dressed in

black tie, gathered in the hotel's ballroom foyer for pre-ceremony drinks before the master of ceremonies ushered everyone to take their seats in the impressive Carlyle Room. Inside, a gospel singers the Bespoke Choir beited out songs from Romeo + Juliet as excited chatter filled the room.

Standing at the top of the aiste beside a huge urn bursting with wild roses was a nervous Gary. 32, looking dapper in a midnight-blue three-piece Savile Row suit by Gary Anderson.

At the end of each row stood giant hurricane lanterns filled with candles and rose petals lay scattered along the aisle. When OKI sat down for a pre-wedding chat with Natasha and Gary just before their special day, we asked the bride-to-

> be if she would turn up traditionally late. Natasha told us: 'No, I hate being late. I'm always on time, if anything, i'll be waiting for him!'

And true to form, at 4pm prompt, the Bespoke Choir belted out Christina Perri's A Thousand Years, just as the doors at the

back of the room swung open to reveal Natasha's five bridesmaids, all dressed in nude and rose gold Rebecca Rhoades gowns. Natasha and Gary's nine-yearold daughter India – who was a flower girl – followed with their three-year-old son Elvis, who acted as pageboy dressed in a mini version of Gary's suit and a sign around his neck which read: 'Daddy, wait until you see Mummy!'

Just then, the whole room fell silent as Natasha appeared on the arm of her stepfather, Michael Neiman, dressed in a magnificent handmade nude and champagne creation by Israeli designer Inbal Dror. She also wore a pair of Emmy bridal vintage-inspired stilettos, vintage-inspired jewellery by Anouska London and held a simple posy of country roses made by Laura Kuy. Natasha's make-up had been perfected by Sarah Brock and her veil lay over an elegant up-do styled by Mark Harrington. All in all, her look was sensational.









Gary had joked beforehand:
'I hope I'm not going to be a
blubbering mess and spoil my
make-up! She's my best friend and
I couldn't think of anyone better to
spend the rest of my life with.'

But as Gary's eyes fixed on his soon-to-be wife, any hopes of not crying were shattered as tears almost instantly welled in his eyes. As the couple held hands and exchanged secret smiles, the registrar welcomed guests to share their happiness on their special day.

Whilst reading their heartfelt vows, there was one hairy moment as ring-bearer Elvis didn't have the wedding bands attached to his teddy bear as planned. But after a quick dash up to the bridal suite from make-up artist Sarah Brock, both rings soon appeared and were exchanged without a hitch!

At 4.20pm, Gary and Natasha were pronounced husband and wife and the whole room erupted into cheers and applause.

As the couple signed the register, the choir sang Etta James' At Last before Stevie Wonder's Signed, Sealed, Delivered and Gary and Natasha walked back up the aisle as husband and wife. Guests danced in the aisles and blew champagne foam bubbles – a quirky alternative to confetti – over the newlyweds. With the official part over, it was















Actresses Lisa Maxwell and Diane Parish from EastEnders were among the star guests

time for the party to begin as champagne cocktails appeared on trays. A teary Sarah Harding told us: "I'm an emotional wreck after that. Weddings always do this to me, but I'm so happy for Gary and Natasha."

Single Army Childs was also feeling the love. 'Seeing Gary and Natasha makes me want to find my Mr Right," said the reality star. When asked if she was still seeing footballer Adam Smith, she told us: 'No, we only had a few dates, he lives too far away! I'm single and I'm looking to settle down and meet someone now.

We couldn't resist asking Amy about the recent reports that she thought Ebola was a music band. She retorted: 'Of course I knew what Ebola was! I was totally mugged off on the red carpet at the MOBOs, I couldn't hear what I was being asked. What upset me the most is that Ebola is a serious condition but that whole story was made into a loke."

Magician Oliver B then worked his magic on the guests while the new Mr and Mrs Lucy posed for photographs in the Loggia Room. It was here that Gary revealed: 'My God, that was tough! I was fighting back the tears all the way through and then I was in bits. I have been all morning! Seeing everyone here, especially my nan who hasn't been well, it's just so emotional.

At 6.30pm, the MC rang a bell to usher guests into the ballroom for the wedding breakfast, which was like walking into a scene from Cinderella, with 24-carat gilding, crystal chandellers and floor-to-ceiling windows.

Here, guests sipped fine wines and dired on a mouth-watering starter of goat's cheese tart, with beetroot and red onion confit, rocket salad and shaved Parmesan.

As the speeches began, Natasha's stepfather Michael stood to congratulate the couple and say how proud he was that Natasha had asked him to give her away, before reading a heartfelt poem. about being a stepfather.

it was then Gary's

turn to speak. He began with: 'Tm going to have to read this because I'm not very good at learning my lines!' He then added: 'I'd like to thank everyone for making it the perfect. day,' before complimenting the 'stunning bridesmaids' and his 'best man' - his close female friend Mikyla Dodd. Gary then turned to his new wife and said: 'Thank you to my

beautiful wife Natasha for putting up with me for all these long-suffering years?' Before adding: 'In 11 short years of courting, we have made two gorgeous babies, Elvis and India, adopted two dogs, and during those II years, Natasha has seen me as an ice dancer, a policeman, a footballer, a bi-sexual EastEnder and a stripper - and she still said "yes"!

AND OUT'

Gary then added: 'Natasha, I'm your biggest challenge and there is never a dull moment." Then, "YOU'RE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN INSIDE taking a more serious tone. the proud groom said: 'I'd also like to give a special mention to Natasha's dad who is sadly no longer with us, but who is looking down on you today, incredibly proud of the woman you've become, Natasha, I fell in

love with you the moment I met you. You're the most beautiful woman inside and out. There is no one I would rather spend the rest of my life with than you, I love you. Just then, Elvis interrupted with "I love you, Mummy!" leaving everyone in stitches.

Next on the mic was Mikyla, who met Gary on the set of Hollyoaks back in 2000 and said



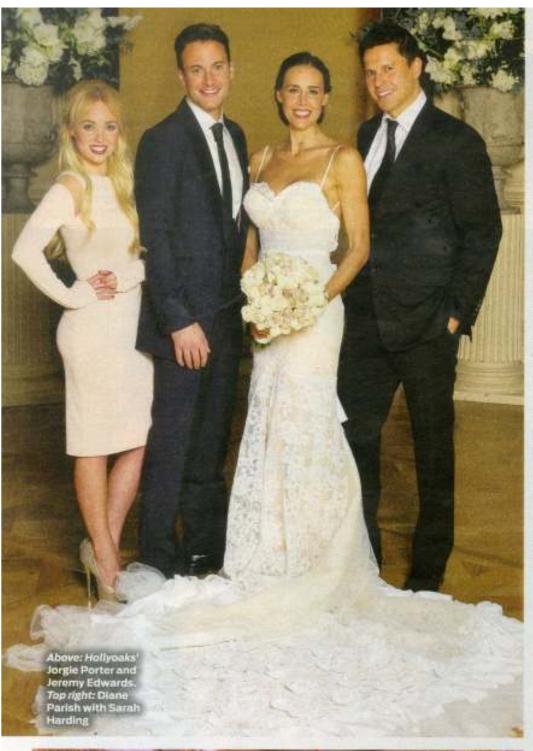
what a 'weird honour and delight' it was to be asked to be best man. She then joked: 'Nothing could have prepared me for Elvis bringing me an empty ring box during the ceremony!' She went on to tales of drinking sessions and antics with the Hollyoaks football team. Describing the bride as 'warm, open, genuine, and loyal' she said she'd gained a 'truly wonderful friend in Natasha'.

A toast was raised to Natasha and Gary before guests enjoyed an impressive main course of miso-marinated black cod with stir-fried noodles and a salad of Asian cress, red cabbage and crispy leeks. This was followed by a decadent chocolate dessert, with waiters on standby behind each guest to pour piping hot chocolate sauce.

During the meal, singer Haifa Jordan belted out a medley of the couple's favourite tracks, and at 8pm the lights dimmed and the stage lit up to reveal Britain's Got Talent streetdancers Lauren and Terrell who worked the dancefloor with attitude and had everyone trying to imitate their moves!

Afterwards, the couple cut into their vintage-inspired, four-tier wedding cake,









before Gary scooped up his bride and swung her around the dancefloor for their first dance, Grow Old With You from The Wedding Singer Then, suddenly, street dance crew IMD were on the floor stealing the newlyweds' thunder and leaving everyone transfixed by their mid-air somersaults and acrobatics!

Natasha changed into another – slightly bohemian – gown by Grace Loves Lace just in time for the next surprise, from Le Voix, aka Chris Dennis. The hilaripus drag act first met Gary after sharing the panto stage with him years ago. Also from Britain's Got Talent, he raised lots of laughs and sung a medley of hits from divas including Shirley Bassey. Tina Turner and Judy Garland.

But Natasha's biggest surprise was yet to come. At 10.30pm, the lights dimmed and from the smoke emerged none other than Gary and his five co-stars from *The Full Monty* (see page 27)! The girls – and guys – in the room erupted into Chippendale-style excitement as Gary and his boys performed *You Can Leave* Your Hat On from the stage production and – yes – Gary had 'Just married' emblazoned in crystal across his pants!

'SHE'S DONE AN AMAZING JOB. IT'S ALL FALLEN INTO PLACE'

At the end, Gary went to kiss a delighted Natasha, prompting everyone to rush onto the dancefloor once again and dance until midnight to music from Totem.

For those with more energy, an after-party was thrown in the Asquith and Balfour Rooms where midnight snacks of salmon bagels were served and more drinks were flowing. But at 3am, as the last few party-goers drifted off into the night, the new Mr and Mrs Lucy held hands and headed up to the Honeymoon Suite to spend their first night as husband and wife.

Just before their wedding, we sat down with Gary, who is currently touring in The Full Monty, and Natasha to find what the big day had in store.

How are you feeling about your wedding? Gary: Excited. I've kind of been out of the loop because I've been on tour so it's been Natasha who has pulled the whole thing together, she's done an amazing job. It's all fallen into place.

Have there been any dramas?

Gary: Not yet! I haven't tried my suit on yet so there might be a drama when that happens.

Natasha: He might turn into Groomzilla!

Gary: My suit is quite special, it's very James

Bond and the lining is pretty out-there. It has pictures of a burlesque woman, in red, it's wicked.

What's the theme for the day?







Natasha: A mix of shabby chic and vintage

Gary: It's an amazing venue so we don't need much of a theme. We looked at a few venues and the Mandarin Oriental blew everything else out of the water.

Natasha: I cried when I saw it because it was everything I could possibly imagine. And it backs on to Hyde Park. It's just amazing.

is it nice to have your two children involved in the day?

Gary: Yes, Elvis calls himself a flower boy, he says it's his wedding and he's getting married to India! I've hired two nannies for the day just for someone to be with them, for them

to have fun really.

How was the stag do? Gary: It

was all very low-key for lbiza! It was a last-minute

thing as well because I was about to start The Full Monty so there was only six of us. We had nice hotel, nice dinners and a boat trip. We saw the other side of the island that I hadn't seen before. It was beautiful.

Natasha: My hen do was wilder. We went to ibiza first, he copied us and our whole itinerary! My best friend lives there, so it was amazing. We went to Amnesia, we charted yachts to Formentera and had lunch at Juan y Andrea.

Gary: Maybe we should have hit it a bit harder like they did!

Will there be any surprises on your big day?

Gary: Oh yes, but Natasha doesn't know any of them!

Have you got any surprises up your sleeve for Gary?

Natasha: No.

"I'D HAVE AS

MANY KIDS

AS WE COULD AFFORD'

Gary: As long as she turns up, that's enough.

Natasha: Of course I will. Gary is one of those people who leaves everything to the last minute, then he's running around like a nutter!

What are you doing the night

before the wedding? Gary: We're staying at the Mandarin but I'm doing The Full Monty so I won't finish until 10pm. Then I'll get in the car, go to

bed, wake up, get married and then go down and do another show on the Monday.

What about your honeymoon?

Gary: I always envisaged the Maldives for a honeymoon, I've never been there but always wanted to. But Natasha says It's too far with the kids. We are tooking at the Mella Dunas resort in Sal Cape Verde. It's brand new and has amazing kids' clubs so that would be perfect.

Will you take the kids with you?

Gary: Definitely: We'd miss them after two days.

Were children more important to you than marriage?

Gary: Yeah, totally.

Natasha: Having a family was much more important than walking down the aisle. And now it's amazing that we are getting married because they can be there to share it with us.

Could there be a honeymoon baby?

Natasha; I'd love another baby,

Gary: Yeah. I'd have as many as we could afford! Definitely a couple more. What women go through being pregnant and the labour and what they give us is an amazing thing.

Natasha: I love babies and I loved being pregnant. Gary is such an amazing dad. His family is the most important thing to him, no one else matters as long as he has his mum and dad plus the three of us. He's good fun and supportive.

Gary: And a pain in the asse.

Natasha: He's my third child, but it just works.

How soon did you know Natasha was the girl for you, Gary?

I was quite young at 22 – she grabbed me very young, I started in Hallyoaks at 16, so had lived a bit and it was time to meet someone and share nice experiences. Natasha was perfect. She's my best friend. There's no one I trust more alongside my parents.

Gary, how are you feeling about your speech?

I haven't even started it, but I don't get nervous. I just don't know whether I'm funny or not. I'll try not to make it too long or to make too many people cry. I'll just say the important things.

Who is your best man?

It's actually a woman, Mikyla, who played Chloe in Hollyoaks. She's been my friend for the last 16 years, She arranged my stag do.

Have you written your vows yet?

Gary: No. I'll get Mikyla to help me. Her speech will be funny, she's been doing her research. No doubt she'll have a few horrible stories. She's funny; I'm actually a bit worried what she might come out with. I might have to rein her in a bit.

Remind us of the proposal...

Gary: It was last Valentine's Day in a restaurant called Sheesh in Chigwell. It was beautiful.

Natasha: He's not selling this at all! Gary planned it all. He went to Hatton Garden to get the ring.









then told India and Eivis and showed them the ring and I was none the wiser. We don't normally go out on Valentine's Day so I thought it was strange that he asked.

Did you have any idea, Natasha?

No, I didn't even dress up and then he appeared all suited and booted! I was like: 'What are you wearing that for?' We got to the restaurant and people are smiling at me funny, then we got to our table and it was covered in rose petals and it looked absolutely amazing. The waiter come over asking if I'd like champagne but I was like: 'No, I've got to work tomorrow!' But he was grinning strangely and staring at Gary – I was wondering what his problem was! Then Gary got down on one knee and I said: 'What are you doing?' So he was like: 'This is what I'm doing!' And produced the ring. It was beautiful.

Had Natasha dropped a lot of hints?

Gary: No. I just thought it was the right time. After II years, I like to think I'm still romantic! Natasha: Yeah, but there are different types of romance. It's not much different to how it was when we first met.

Why did you wait so long to do it?

Gary: It was never top of the priority list. We had two kids, set up a home, and had a beautiful family. We had done all the things we wanted to so now was the best time. Natasha: For me, getting married is amazing but it's never been a priority over having children. I've never been one of those girls who's dreamed about their wedding day, but I'm obviously excited!

Have you been practising your first dance? Gary: We might have but we don't have a song yet! We might get [dancer and choreographer] Kevin Adams to help us if we can fit it in.

Has Dancing On Ice helped your skills on the dancefloor?

Gary: It depends how slippery the dancetloor is, but I don't think 'Ill be busting out any Dancing On ice routines!

Planning a wedding is stressful. Have there been any hiccups?

Natasha: No, everyone keeps asking when I'm going to turn into Bridezilia but there's no point because all our friends and family will be there. Also, there will be plenty of food and drink and whatever else happens will be an added bonus!

Natasha, are you going to become Mrs Lucy? Yes, it's a lovely last name. I'm finally going to be a Lucy!

What do you think will change after the wedding?



Above: 'I'm finally going to be a Lucyl' says Natasha. Below: Dance crew IMD. Bottom: OKI's

Chrissie Reeves and Phil

Gould with the

newtyweds











Gary: Hopefully, nothing. We are a strong, loving family unit, and this is a celebration for everyone. Natasha: It's just an excuse to have a big party to get all our friends and family together. Gary: And to get another ring on your finger. Natasha: Yeah, that tool

What are you most looking forward to about

Natasha: Consolidating what we already have and showing how proud I am of my family. There is nothing else I could want. This is the cherry on

Natasha: Ne, I'm not a big drinker. After two glasses, I'd be crawling down the aisle. Gary: I am. I could drink enough for both of us, but on the day I will curb it.

Are you doing any pre-wedding pampering? Natasha: One of my bridesmaids is doing all the waxing and de-fluffing and I'm having my lashes

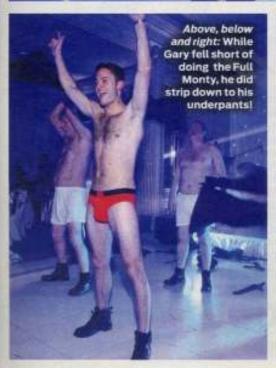


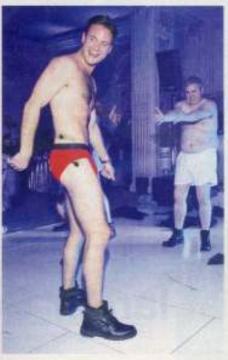














Gary: She's had It all, hair extensions, lip plumping, and I've done nothing.

Have you been going to the gym? Natasha: Yes, I have been recently, not for the wedding, just training in general.

What's your old, blue, borrowed and new?
Natasha: New is my dress. Old and borrowed is my dad's ring attached to my gartesand blue is...
Gary: _rm your blue-eyed boy.
Natasha: Oh, yeah, perfect!

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