

## **The Pembroke Diary**

## Chapter 1: a sorrowful fate.

The sun dipped below the horizon, painting the sky in hues of amber and rose. Wisps of cloud caught the fading light, their edges glowing like molten gold. The landscape stretched out below, a patchwork of rolling fields and meandering hedgerows, now cloaked in the soft embrace of twilight.

Elizabeth Pembroke sat on a weathered stone at the crest of Shotover Hill, her silhouette stark against the vivid evening sky. Her chest heaved as she struggled to quell the tide of emotions rising within her. She clenched her hands in her lap, her knuckles white.

“She’s made me miserable for twenty-two years,” she whispered fiercely to the wind, her voice trembling. “I won’t let her decide the rest of my life.”

Her deep brown eyes, usually so insightful, glistened with unshed tears. She brushed a hand over her elegantly tied-back brown hair, now tousled by the persistent breeze. Elizabeth was a young woman of remarkable intellect and charm. As a Master of Studies candidate in Creative Writing at the University of Oxford, she carried an air of sophistication that often turned heads.

From the outside, she seemed the picture of perfection—a kind, intelligent, and strikingly beautiful woman. It was enough to spark envy in others. How could someone like her not have everything she wanted? And yet, beneath the polished exterior, her turmoil simmered.

Opening her bag, Elizabeth retrieved her phone and swiftly typed a message to Millie Highport before switching it off:

*Wish to see you very soon. Things are getting worse on my side.*

Millie was the one person Elizabeth trusted implicitly. The two had been inseparable since their school days in Oxford, their friendship enduring despite life taking them on different paths. Millie, now a successful estate agent in London, lived with her husband, Daniel Highport. She returned to Oxford occasionally on weekends to visit her family, a time Elizabeth always looked forward to.