

## **Chapter 1: The First Rain**

The first drop of monsoon kissed the dusty windowpane of the café where Aanya sat, twirling her spoon absentmindedly in her coffee. It was the kind of rain that washed away the grime of long summers and brought with it a sense of nostalgia. For Aanya, the rain always reminded her of childhood days spent jumping in puddles, and of the boy who used to wait for her with a broken red umbrella.

That boy was Vihaan.

They hadn't spoken in years. Life had drifted them apart after high school — Aanya pursuing journalism in Mumbai, and Vihaan disappearing into the corridors of IIT Delhi. But something about the rain today pulled at her heartstrings, like an old melody echoing across time.

Just as she was about to leave, the café door jingled. A gust of wind blew in, and with it, Vihaan — older, sharper, but still wearing that crooked smile.

"Aanya?"

She blinked, unsure if the monsoon had conjured a hallucination. "Vihaan? What on earth..."

"I saw your article in *The Morning Chronicle*. About the monsoon festivals. I figured if I wanted to see the rain the right way again, I had to come back."

They laughed — awkwardly, genuinely — and sat across from each other, just like they used to.

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## **Chapter 2: Letters in the Rain**

Over the next few days, the monsoon intensified, and so did their meetings. The small café became their retreat. Vihaan told her about his startup dreams in Bangalore, how he'd sold his first company and was now taking a break. Aanya shared stories of deadlines, crazy editors, and her passion for writing features instead of news.

One day, as they walked through the rain-soaked streets of the old part of town, Aanya paused in front of a postbox.

"You remember how we used to write letters?" she asked.

Vihaan chuckled. "You mean your dramatic monsoon poems? I saved them. Every single one."

She stopped, her breath catching. "You what?"

"You thought I didn't care. But I did. I just didn't know how to say it back then."

The words hung in the air, blending with the rhythm of the falling rain.

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## **Chapter 3: Forgotten Promises**

It was during a local rain festival — with lanterns floating in puddles and paper boats racing down drains — that the past caught up.

Aanya's editor called. She was being offered a permanent post in London, something she had only dreamed of. It meant recognition, travel, and a new life. But it also meant leaving.

Vihaan noticed the silence growing between them.

"You got the offer, didn't you?" he asked, eyes not meeting hers.

"How did you know?"

"Because you stopped smiling when it rained."

They stood on the terrace, the sky dark above, the rain relentless.

"Do you want me to stay?" she asked.

Vihaan hesitated. "I want you to be happy."

She turned away, biting her lip. That wasn't an answer. It never was.

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## Chapter 4: The Farewell

Two weeks later, she was set to leave. Her bags packed, passport ready, and heart aching. She returned to the café one last time, hoping for a sign, a reason to stay.

The rain was heavier than ever.

But Vihaan wasn't there.

She waited. Ten minutes. Twenty. An hour.

Just as she was about to leave, the waitress handed her a letter. It was wet from the rain but still legible.

\*"Dear Aanya,

If you're reading this, you probably think I gave up. But I didn't. I'm running late, not from the café, but from my fears. I loved you when we were sixteen, and I love you now. But if I tell you this to your face, I'm afraid you'll stay for the wrong reasons.

Go, live your dream. If we're meant to be, the rain will bring you back to me.

Yours — always, Vihaan"

\*She boarded the plane with tear-filled eyes and a heart torn in two.

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## Chapter 5: Whispers from Afar

London was everything Aanya imagined — grey, poetic, alive. Her articles flourished. She saw her byline in magazines. She met people from all over the world.

But every time it rained, her thoughts drifted back to a small café, a broken red umbrella, and a boy who believed in timing.

Years passed. She visited India occasionally, but Vihaan never showed up. Neither did she look him up. Something about that letter made her believe in destiny.

Then, one monsoon evening, while attending a journalism conference in Delhi, she found herself wandering through the old streets again. On impulse, she walked to the café.

It was still there.

And so was he.

Sitting in the same corner, older, wiser, but with the same crooked smile.

"You came back," he whispered.

She sat down, eyes glistening. "The rain told me it was time."

They said nothing more.

Because sometimes, love isn't about grand confessions.

Sometimes, it's about waiting — through storms, across cities, and within the quiet whispers of the monsoon.



