



An Opening Chapter

SOMETIMES IT NEVER GOES

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The couple at the door brought Carly out of her reverie.

'Is it still raining out there?' she asked them.

'It comes and it goes,' said the woman.

'Sometimes it comes and it never goes,' said Carly, as she showed them to a table, 'You learn to deal with the rain if you live here.'

But the famous Cumbrian rain hadn't doused the flames that destroyed Penhurst Grange.

She'd been shocked to see the photograph on the front page of the *Westmorland Gazette*: the gothic silhouette of the Grange picked out against sheets of orange flame.

It wasn't that she'd never wished to see the old place destroyed, but she'd worked hard to put those disturbing memories behind her. The picture brought them all flooding back and now they wouldn't leave her.

'Sometimes it comes and it never goes.'

Gauzy streaks of rain hung over the lake, floating down from the craggy vale beyond.

Eric prided himself on finding even the most remote of farms without the aid of a sat nav but even he was struggling with Far Ings. As he drove along the narrow lane in the glowering light, the drystone walls loomed so close that it felt like one of the all-too-familiar corridors of Penhurst Grange.

He'd tried to put the place out of his mind. He'd got back on track at last and proved himself reliable and efficient at his new job with the mobile tyre-fitting service. But now he was lost.

He pulled into the next passing place, by the gates of a Victorian shooting lodge, Crossghyll, sheltered amongst tall, dark firs and lush hollies. He took out his phone to open the app.

No signal. Hardly surprising in this remote valley, ringed around by rugged fells.

Then he saw it. He could hardly forget that cerise Range Rover: he'd fitted it with a set of Pirellis just three weeks ago.

Boynton Doyle - the property developer who'd taken on the Penhurst Grange project - but what was he doing here?