

company.

The pages by Lilly O'Brien

Sighing loudly with depression, I wrote endlessly on the only thing that keeps me happy: my diary pages. My face was blood-red from rivers of tears that would flow down my cheeks every time I wrote. The led scratching on the paper was the only sound I could hear over the furious growling thunder and howling wind. I would always think that nobody cared about me at all. As I flicked onto a new page, I realised that the pages after that were already full. Slowly, I glanced around my room. Nobody was there. My only company was the writing of my past. Time passed as I turned each page and remembered more and more. Soon, I found my wedding day one and memories rushed in like a waterfall.

I could see my beautiful wife smiling calmly, I could smell the sweet aroma of the dazzling flowers, I could hear the blissful music dance around me. All the ecstatic guests started cheering and my mouth flickered into a smile. Unfortunately, this lasted only a few short moments. My stomach dropped as dread filled me. A jet-black darkness crept up on me. As my wife faded away, it engulfed me entirely. Everything to be happy about was gone. That day had past. A solemn sigh escaped my mouth. I was alone.

Tears dripped out of my eyes, down my cheek and my lip quivered as I tried to think of a better day. But sadness kept torturing me and bringing back more dreadful memories. Abruptly, a memory popped into my head and tears were wrestling my eyelids. My mind rolled back to when I wrote books as a living. I would work hours and hours a day for weeks. Unfortunately, they never saw a shelf. All of the publishers I spoke to refused to publish them. I hardly had any money. I couldn't pay for treatment when my dog was unwell. One afternoon, he dropped into my arms and whimpered for the last time. I kept telling myself that I would never write again. But here I am.

I let out a cry of anguish as I was empty and had no joy left. I regretted flipping through those pages because my history traumatised me. This was until I found my childhood diary. Weakly, a smile spread across my face. Before long, I found myself drawn to that book and reading every page there. It was then that I found one of the happiest memories of my childhood. My sports day in year 6.

I had been set to do more events than everyone else on that day. I was nervous: my legs were shaking and I kept sweating. When it came to my turn, I got ready and ran. For the rest of the day, I was winning all the events. Everyone was cheering! It came to the end of the day where they announced the winners. My house won! Gradually, my smile widened and I started writing more—in the spare pages—about happiness.

The sound of the pencil scratching on the paper had hypnotised me so much, I hadn't realised that my joyful five-year-old son had entered the room. He grinned and waddled across the room. Ciggling, he grabbed a pen and—in the best handwriting he could do—he completed the last page. The warm feeling of relief surrounded me. I had company after all.