

The Lighthouse Keeper's Heart

A Romance Novel

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Chapter 1: The Storm's Gift

The storm that swept through Beacon Harbor on that October evening changed everything, though Emma Hartwell didn't know it at the time. She stood at her bedroom window in the old Victorian house she'd inherited from her aunt, watching the lighthouse beam cut through sheets of rain like a sword through silk. The lighthouse had been automated for decades, but somehow its presence still felt protective, a guardian watching over the small coastal town of Maine.

Thunder rolled across the harbor, and Emma pulled her cardigan tighter around her shoulders. Three months ago, she'd been a city librarian in Portland, her life mapped out in neat categories like the books she organized. Now she was the sole proprietor of Hartwell House, a bed and breakfast that hadn't seen guests in two years, trying to figure out how to make a living in a town where everybody knew everybody else's business.