

Rose Pemberton

Saturday, 29th

Dear Mrs Bowen,

May I welcome you to Sandhythe and hope you enjoy your stay in the Beach View Hotel?

I believe this is your first visit to Sandhythe. I once stayed here many years ago and I loved the place very much. I hope you like it just as much.

I'm sorry your husband is not with you but I know he's busy at the moment.

Yours sincerely,

Rose Pemberton

Sandhythe,
Saturday. 29th

Dear Mabel,

Had a pleasant journey down to Sandhythe with the Farrells. We got here in the early afternoon. I have a lovely room overlooking the bay. Jim and Marge's room is just along the corridor and also has a view of the bay.

But I found a strange letter waiting for me at the hotel; it was from a Rose Pemberton who says she stayed in Sandhythe several years ago and she hopes I will enjoy my stay here. It's all very nice, but I don't know any Rose Pemberton. Why would she write to me?

The weird thing is, she knows Bob is not with me. Is this Rose someone he's having an affair with, I wonder? You know what I've had to put up with from Bob in the past. But he told me that that was all over. Has he started his philandering again? Is this Rose teasing me?

Well, I'm not going to let it spoil my holiday here.

Yours,

Pam.

Halchester,
Tuesday 1st Aug.

Dear Pam,

Nice to hear from you. Glad the journey to Sandhythe was pleasant and that you and Jim & Marge have good rooms in the hotel.

Yes, that letter is weird, isn't it? I've never heard of a Rose Pemberton before. I wonder who she is and how she knows about you and Bob? Where does she live? Did she give an address?

Well, I'm sorry to say your Bob has gone back to his philandering, as you put it. You were quite right to be suspicious about that sudden 'business trip' he had to do. But it's not any Rose he's taken up with - it's that young floosie, Sharon, he took on as his secretary in March. If you ask me, she's no better than him - just using him to worm her way more into the company. You mark my words, she's got eyes on bigger fish than him.

I'm sorry to say this, Pam, but they deserve each other. He certainly doesn't deserve you. My Harry - God rest his soul - always reckoned your Bob was a bad lot. But I won't keep on about that - you're a saint, the way you've put up with that man.

You just enjoy yourself down at Sandhythe and forget things for a while. Jim and Marge are great company; they should take your mind off things.

Yours,

Mabel.

Sandhythe
Thursday, 3rd

Dear Mabel,

Thank you for your letter. I can't say that what you wrote about Bob surprised me. But I'm not going to let it spoil my holiday.

No, that Rose Pemberton didn't give an address. But I've heard no more from her. Yet it was strange; I have an odd feeling about it – I don't know why.

Yes, the Farrells are great company. We had a quiet Sunday; we went to church in the morning and took a walk along the promenade afterwards. In the afternoon, we drove over to Marge's sister in Senthorpe and stayed for afternoon tea.

This week we've been to the theatre twice, dancing in the ballroom on the pier in the evenings and, of course, enjoying the famous golf course here. I'm not up to Jim and Marge's standard, of course, but they are very forebearing and it's all great fun.

Yours,
Pam

Thursday, 3rd

Dear Mrs Bowen,

I am glad you are enjoying your holiday here with your friends and you're not letting that awful husband of yours spoil things.

Have you been to the Rose & Crown? They do a wonderful lunch there. If you do go, please remember me to the Landlord and his wife.

Yours sincerely,
Rose Pemberton

Sandhythe
Saturday 5th

Dear Mabel,

Something strange has happened. The same day I wrote to you, that Rose Pemberton wrote to me again; I got the letter on Friday. Once again she gave no address but she did say that the Rose & Crown did a wonderful lunch

Jim and Marge thought it peculiar but were intrigued, so we all went there for lunch yesterday. The Landlord remembered Rose; she worked there as a barmaid in the summer about ten years ago. She seemed to like it and they were expecting her to stay until she went back to college at the end of September; but one day in late August she just disappeared. No one knew why; they assumed she must have heard something from home and gone back. He wondered what had happened to her and asked for her address so he could write.

I had to tell him I did not have her address, but as she seemed to know about me and my good-for-nothing husband, I supposed she must live somewhere in Halchester. We all agreed it was a bit strange.

Yours,
Pam

Halchester
Tuesday 8th

Dear Pam,

How very odd all this is. I've certainly never heard of a Rose Pemberton in Halchester, and I've lived here all my life. But then, I suppose, Halchester is a big place and I don't know everyone.

I hope all this Rose Pemberton business is not upsetting your holiday.

I saw your Bob last Monday, but not to speak to. There was that young floosie on his arm. I know, being a Catholic, you won't divorce him, but you must press for a legal separation. I wouldn't keep him in my house one minute longer, if he were mine.

Get rid of him and then perhaps we'll go on that cruise we've been talking about.

Yours,
Mabel

Tuesday, 8th

Dear Mrs Bowen,

Could you meet me tomorrow, please? I'll be waiting for you in the wood beside the seventh green on the golf course. Bring your friends with you if you like.

Yours sincerely,
Rose Pemberton

Sandhythe
Thursday 10th

Dear Mabel,

I expect you have read in this morning's paper about the remains we found in the wood by the golf course. Pam had been told she would meet Rose Pemberton there, so Jim and I went along with her. Well, you know by now that we did meet Rose there; only she was nothing but bones that some animal, probably a fox or badger, had disturbed. It gave us all quite a turn, I can tell you.

Of course we didn't know then that it was Rose Pemberton, but the police told us later that day they were sure it was from some other articles they found there. They are now checking dental records.

As you can imagine, Pam has been quite upset. She thinks she's been getting messages from a ghost; but I think someone - perhaps the murderer - is playing a horrible trick on her. Whichever way you look it, it's not nice.

Anyway, I've moved in with her to keep her company at nights and we'll be coming home in the next day or two.

Yours,
Marge.

Thursday 10th

Dear Mrs Bowen,

Thank you for meeting me yesterday; I am sorry it was not as you expected.

It was there ten years ago that your husband asked to meet me; that meeting was also not what I had expected, as you saw.

Don't worry, Mrs Bowen, the dental records will confirm that it is me and, althought the police do not know it yet, they will soon discover who murdered me and the hangman will make sure that at last you are rid of that dreadful husband of yours.

Good-bye, Mrs Bowen. I shall not write to you again. I hope you enjoy your cruise next year with your friend Mabel. Heaven knows, you deserve it!

Yours eternally,
Rose Pemberton.