

The Lady of the Paddock By Sloane Duffy.

There is a particular kind of quiet you only find in a stable yard at dawn.

Before the brewery fires are lit. Before the kettle steam rises above the courtyard walls. Before the day demands anything of anyone.

It is just you, the horse, and the sound of hooves on cobblestone.

My father taught me to ride before he taught me the business. He said the two were the same thing. *"A good horse and a good brew,"* he would say, *"both take patience, both take trust, and both will carry you further than you expect if you treat them right."*

I never argued with him.

Our trotter — Burton calls him *The Chairman* — is stabled at the eastern paddock, behind the hop yard.

Most mornings you will find me there before seven. It is not exercise. It is not sport. It is something closer to conversation.

The brewery can wait twenty minutes.

The Chairman never can.

Sloane Duffy is a fictional character and co-founder of the Duffy & Ward brand universe, created by Sloane Duffy Media LLC. She rides every morning, manages the books every afternoon, and has never once missed a brew day. © 2026 Sloane Duffy Media LLC.

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