

Chapter 47

Chapter 47 begins with Leighton settling into a quiet Friday evening at Liam's home, enjoying the calm and simplicity of the moment. The atmosphere is peaceful, providing a contrast to the tension she's felt in recent days. After a brief but helpful shower tutorial from Liam, she borrows one of his old football shirts to wear, feeling a sense of comfort in the ordinary. As she explores the house, her fingers lightly graze the picture frames that line the walls, each one holding memories that seem to tell a story of their own. She becomes momentarily lost in these reflections, considering the significance of each photograph and the way they represent moments frozen in time. The familiar and safe environment offers a temporary escape, allowing Leighton to momentarily set aside the weight of her emotional turmoil.

Liam, with a casual ease, prepares dinner for the two of them. His choice of a playful spread of peanut butter sandwiches sparks laughter from Leighton, the absurdity of it making her smile. Their time together feels light-hearted, as they settle into the family room to watch superhero movies. The simplicity of the evening offers a sense of ease, allowing the two of them to enjoy each other's company without the distractions of the outside world. In an amusing yet rebellious moment, Liam breaks the rules of his household by eating on the couch, something his family typically forbids. This small act of defiance leads to a discussion about their evening, about how it's unfolding in ways they hadn't expected but are enjoying nonetheless. It's moments like these that highlight the comfort they share, despite the complexities they both carry.

As the evening progresses, their physical affection grows more intense, deepening the connection they've been nurturing. However, when Liam's hand brushes against Leighton's breast, he pulls away suddenly, his concern about moving too quickly coming to the forefront. Leighton, frustrated by the situation, feels that her father's past mistakes are clouding their present moment. She wishes for their relationship to

evolve based on mutual desire and trust, rather than being dictated by the emotional baggage she carries from her past. To her, it's important that their connection remains genuine, not influenced by external fears or past trauma, particularly from her father's actions. She is insistent that any intimate step forward should come from their shared connection, not out of obligation or past mistakes.

The conversation shifts, with Leighton revealing that she is on birth control, signaling to Liam that she has thoughtfully considered her decisions regarding sexual intimacy. This revelation reassures Liam, alleviating some of his concerns and allowing them to explore their feelings further. In turn, Liam surprises her with a heartfelt confession, admitting that he's falling for her. The weight of the word "love" hangs in the air, and Leighton feels a mix of surprise and uncertainty. She wasn't expecting such strong feelings to surface so soon, and the idea of love carries significant implications that she isn't sure she's ready to navigate. Despite the uncertainty, they both agree that they should take things one step at a time, with no pressure or expectations for the future. The connection they share is meaningful, and they both want to explore it, but without rushing into anything that might complicate things.

As the chapter reaches its conclusion, the evening ends with a sense of emotional honesty between them. Their light-hearted moments and playful exchanges give way to deeper discussions about their feelings and what the future might hold. Leighton, though still processing the emotional complexity of the situation, feels content in this moment of shared understanding. The evening serves as a way to help her process the overwhelming emotions that have been building up over the past day. The bond between them, though still developing, feels like a source of comfort and relief. There is a sense of mutual respect and understanding, as they agree not to rush into anything and to take the time to truly understand each other. Despite the uncertainties that lie ahead, this night offers a moment of peace, helping Leighton to confront her emotions and move forward without the pressure of immediate answers.