

Chapter 3: Harriet's Struggle with Unresolved Emotions

In Chapter 3, titled "*REAL LIFE: Monday*," the protagonist, Harriet, finds herself caught in a whirlwind of emotions as she unexpectedly comes face to face with her ex-fiancé, Wyn Connor, during a gathering held by their mutual friends. The realization that Wyn has arrived, a surprise to everyone, sends Harriet into a state of panic and confusion, triggering a flood of conflicting feelings. Though months have passed since their breakup, Harriet struggles to control the emotional stirrings that Wyn's presence brings back to the surface. The evening quickly becomes a tense, emotionally charged event, filled with awkward interactions and moments that force Harriet to confront what she has been trying to avoid: the unresolved feelings for the man she once loved.

As the evening unfolds, Wyn's uninvited kiss exacerbates the strain between them. This kiss, far from being intimate or passionate, serves as a painful reminder of their fractured relationship. It symbolizes the gulf between who they were as a couple and the distance that now separates them. Harriet feels physically repulsed yet emotionally conflicted, unable to deny the lingering affection that has not completely faded despite the hurt. The painful reality of their situation settles in—no matter how much Harriet wants to move forward, Wyn still occupies an emotional space in her heart. It's an uncomfortable reminder that they are caught in the limbo between the past they shared and the painful present they must navigate together.

As the night continues, the group of friends reminisces about the past with lighthearted conversations and playful teasing. But for Harriet, this cheerful atmosphere becomes increasingly difficult to engage with. The group's easy camaraderie only serves to highlight her sense of isolation, as her unresolved feelings for Wyn create a rift between her and her friends. She finds herself lost in memories of what she and Wyn had, replaying moments that were once joyful, but now hold a bittersweet sting. With the upcoming sale of the house, which had been a sanctuary for their friendships and shared experiences, Harriet feels like she's losing more than just a physical space. The house, once a symbol of safety and unity, now represents the fleeting nature of their shared past—a reality that is no longer within reach.

Sabrina's unexpected announcement of her engagement to Parth shocks Harriet and the group, stirring up emotions Harriet wasn't prepared for. The news catches her off guard, and it further complicates her internal turmoil. As Sabrina shares her joy and excitement about the future, Harriet feels a pang of jealousy mixed with confusion. She is still processing her own complex feelings for Wyn, making it difficult for her to fully embrace the happiness of others. The contrast between Sabrina's commitment and Harriet's unresolved emotions only intensifies her sense of being stuck in the past, unable to fully let go of her relationship with Wyn.

The more Sabrina shares about her engagement, the more Harriet is forced to confront her own emotional baggage. Sabrina's excitement becomes a painful reminder of the commitment that Harriet never had with Wyn, leaving her questioning her own desires and the path she's on. The group's easy acceptance of Sabrina's decision to move forward highlights the growing tension between the past and the future, as Harriet wonders if she'll ever be able to move on from her feelings for Wyn. Should she speak up and reveal the truth to their friends, or continue playing along with the illusion of moving on? This dilemma consumes Harriet as she tries to navigate her feelings without disrupting the group dynamic.

As the night progresses, Harriet is left to face her internal conflict. She is torn between the desire to preserve the friendships that mean so much to her and the overwhelming need to address the feelings for Wyn that continue to haunt her. The emotional weight of the night lingers long after the gathering has ended, leaving Harriet grappling with the consequences of her actions and the emotional scars that remain. The house sale,

the engagements, and the conversations are all reminders of how much things have changed—and how much she has yet to accept.

The chapter ends with Harriet still wrestling with her past and present. The unresolved tension between her and Wyn, paired with the deep sense of loss she feels regarding their relationship and the changes in the group, leaves her with a heavy heart. As she faces the reality of moving on, the complexities of friendship, love, and personal growth are brought into sharp focus. Harriet's journey through the evening reflects a broader truth: moving forward isn't always about leaving the past behind but learning to navigate its impact while embracing the uncertainty of what lies ahead.