

Chapter Fifty-Seven

In Chapter Fifty-Seven of *If These Wings Could Fly*, tension escalates as the characters return home to a chaotic environment. Upon arriving late from a trip, Erin and her family find their house in disarray, foretelling an atmosphere fraught with anger. There's no apology from their father as he immediately begins to lash out at Erin, accusing her of embarrassment. The physical state of their home reflects the turmoil within: furniture is disheveled, walls bear evidence of violence, and a cherished homecoming picture is found shattered.

Erin's mother shows a rare glimpse of her own anger, confronting her husband about leaving the family during their outing. He expresses deep frustration about his failures and the burdens of their small town, exclaiming that he cannot escape his past or find work. His emotional outburst drives him to violence as he kicks over a chair, causing debris to rain down. The escalating conflict culminates when Erin's mother takes a stand, telling him he needs to leave, inciting disbelief and aggression from him.

As the confrontation intensifies, the father traps the mother against the wall, displaying a threatening demeanor. In a panic, Erin retreats upstairs but remains in a position to observe. The father seizes the car keys, taunting the mother to retrieve them, reinforcing his control over the situation. This act marks a turning point, as Erin's mother stands in silence, feeling powerless in the face of her husband's turmoil.

The chapter ends poignantly with a shared silence as Erin, her siblings, and their mother end the day huddled in bed, fostering a moment of quiet unity against the chaos. This chapter underscores themes of domestic strife, emotional conflict, and the challenges of familial loyalty in a toxic environment.