## Dating 127

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Chapter 127

"Oh, come on, Ella," Monica pleaded. "Why won't you come out with us?" www.n $\odot$ ve $\ell$ w $\odot$ rM.Com

Knowing that Liam had made it through the first match and won, allowed me to take my first real breath of relief. It was a positive boost that I hadn't realized I needed. Even though it was only the first of three, it was still a good way to start.

On the other hand, I was battling an ongoing nervous flutter in my chest. Yes, I was happy for Liam

and his team, but now I had to find a way to speak to Liam about what Monica had uncovered for me. It was important that he knew I believed him, how foolish I'd been for not seeing it

sooner.

I wanted to speak to him as soon as the match ended but the opportunity was missed when all the players headed directly into the locker rooms to change. Beyond that point, everyone else was eager to leave the stadium and start celebrating the team's win.

such a happy occasion.

But not me. Because of how coldly I'd been treating Liam, it didn't seem right for me to be a part of

I shook my head at my friend and shrugged. "I just don't think it would be right of me to show up. I feel like I've put Liam through hell recently and he deserves to have a good night."

It was sad to think that I wouldn't have any part in it. But, after all, I was

one hellbent on keeping him at a distance.

and Liam okay?" she asked.

Nonetheless, I wasn't budging on my decision. I figured, once the day passed, I would reach out to Liam and tell him everything that I needed to. But until then, I was happy to chill out at home. My mom had just gotten home from work and agreed that we could both use a quiet night in. We

Monica gave me a disappointed look which hurt more than anything she could have said.

settled in the living room and pulled up some of our classic movies that we hadn't seen in a while. About half through the second film, I noticed my mom turn to glance at me. "So are things with you

I adjusted my position and leaned further back into the cushions. "At first they weren't. There was a moment back at the hotel when I misjudged Liam's actions and I ended up walking out before giving anyone a chance to explain themselves. Liam tried to clear things up the other day but I was still

feeling too weary about it." "But now?"

"Well, thanks to Monica and her excessive abilities to dig up information on people, we were able to

come to a peaceful conclusion." I knew what I was telling her was beyond vague. But I really didn't want to make her worry any more

than I had been for the last few days. Thankfully, she hadn't pushed the subject any further than that. I watched her get from the couch to make some popcorn. "Hey, what do you think about ordering a pizza later?" she asked.

"Oh, that's sounds-"

Knock. Knock, Knock.

My head turned in the direction of the front door. My mom and I wore similar looks of uncertainty.

"Ella, were you expecting anyone?"

"No. It's alright, I'll answer it,"

have been standing outside of my house. As soon as I pulled open the door, my brows raised in

surprised and sheepish as I felt.

shock and my heart bounced in my chest. Liam. My lips parted but nothing came out at first. Liam took a step back and looked just about as

I slid up from the couch and padded over toward the door. I didn't have the slightest idea who could

"Liam."

The corner of his mouth curved upward into a small smile. "Hey, I–oof!"

I closed the space between us and unceremoniously threw my arms around him, hugging him close.

Good God, I felt like I'd forgotten what it felt like to be wrapped up in his warmth. 1 felt him go a little stiff around me before loosening up and happily hugging me back. After a long

minute, Liam took a slight step back and I felt my cheeks flush a little with embarrassment. "Sorry, I um..."

Liam gave me a genuine smile that made iny stomach flutter. "Don't be," he said.

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I wrapped my arms around myself. "Shouldn't you be out celebrating with the

team?" www.no $\mathcal{V}$ ë $\cup$ worm.co $\bigcirc$ 

"Yeah, they kept trying to drag me out but I wasn't interested."

"You certainly earned it," she said. "The way you played today...Liam, it was incredible."

"Thanks. But, you know, I actually came by to see how you were doing." My brows drew together in question. "Me?"

His expression grew serious. "What Arthur said to you during the game. He had no right to treat you like some kind of object." I could sense he was trying to hold back the venom in his voice.

"Oh, well...It's alright if anything "o only reinforced my disliking him."

"Still. I don't want you to worry over anything he insinuated."

mom back in the living room.

frustration hit me like a wall.

sudden?"

He raised his brows. "About what?"

fears and insecurities get in the way."

'Whoever wins the majority of these matches, if not all of them, wins endless bragging rights for a year...as well as Ella.

he was genuinely interested in getting know me and next it was treating me like a piece of property. "Do you think Arthur was actually being serious?"

I tried to play it off as though it didn't bother me. In reality, it did. One moment Arthur was acting as if

His eyes darkened. "Knowing him, who the hell knows? He could have just said those things to get under my skin. Then again, I wouldn't put him to take what he said literally."

The very thought sent a shiver down my spine. Ŵww.nov⊚ℓwoRM.ℂℚm

"Liam, would you like to come in? There's something I really need to talk to you about." He nodded his head and graciously followed me inside. I gave a quick glance around to find my

"Hello, Liam," she greeted. "Congratulations on the match." "Thank you." He smiled.

"Mom, I'll be out in a little while," I told her. "There are a few things I need to discuss with Liam." When my bedroom door clicked shut behind us I felt the bone-crushing weight of my guilt and my

"Liam, you were right."

"About everything you said about never having been with Olivia. You were right and I should have believed you when you first explained it."

He fought back a smile. "Not that I'm complaining but...What made you change your mind all of a

to

it past

Another wave of heat touched my cheeks. "Honestly, it was Monica. She helped me dig up a little

someone it's Monica. Well, she didn't. In fact, the only questionable pictures that she dug up were of

more on Olivia when I told her about the trip. You know that if anyone could find information on

her and Arthur at a few social gatherings." Teas were beginning to dot the corners of my eyes.

"Goddamnit, I should have believed you when you first told me. I think I just ended up letting my

Liam came to my side and pulled me into his arms. "It's alright-"

"No, it's not. For Christ's sake, Liam. I was so quick to not believe you and block you out of my life.

He pressed a gentle kiss to my head. "Ella, it's alright. You had every right to be suspicious and upset."

I held onto him tighter. "I want to take back what I said before. I don't want to take things slow. To

answer your question-yes! Yes, I want to start over and make this just about us."

Liam chuckled and pressed a chaste kiss to my lips. "I won't let anything take you away from me."

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I'm so sorry."