

## Chapter 34 Is This An Invitation To Touch

Chris walked beside Kimberly, holding the handle of a large black umbrella that was more than enough to cover both of them. Yet, he subtly angled it over Kimberly to ensure she stayed dry, while his own shoulder was already getting wet from the rain.

Behind them followed twenty well-trained bodyguards, including the driver. The captain of the bodyguards watched the rain soak Chris' shoulder, ready to step forward with an umbrella for him, but the driver held him back.

The captain looked at the driver, confused, silently asking, "Why?"

The driver rolled his eyes and conveyed with a look. "I suggest you leave it alone!"

Reluctantly, the captain decided to follow the driver's silent advice.

As the group approached the luxurious cruise ship, Felix, standing on the deck with an umbrella, caught sight of them. He teased, whistling, "Well, well, Mr. Howard has brought a lady tonight! It's rare to see you with a plus-one, Chris. Quite the first, isn't it?"

Chris, leading Kimberly onto the cruise, glanced back at Felix with annoyance and couldn't help but said, "Ignorant fool."

Felix, having been friends with Chris for over twenty years, wasn't offended by the comment. He laughed. "You're right. I am clueless—especially since I've never seen you bring a date to any event!"

He playfully nudged Chris' shoulder, smiling warmly at Kimberly. "Ms. Holden, you might not be aware, but with Chris' good looks, he's particularly popular among men abroad. Ever wonder why it's men and not women who are drawn to him?"



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Kimberly, despite suspecting Felix was stirring trouble, was intrigued.

Could Chris actually prefer men?

Ignoring Chris' furious glare, Felix continued with a mischievous chuckle, "Because... Chris never brings a woman to events, and all his secretaries are male. No woman ever gets close to him at these gatherings!

Overseas, people probably think he's not interested in women, maybe even gay, which makes him quite popular with men. There was even a business partner who confessed his feelings with a thousand roses in the company lobby! I've never seen Chris so annoyed. It was hilarious."

Felix's detailed description created a picture in Kimberly's mind. She couldn't help but steal a glance at Chris, whose expression had darkened. He gripped the umbrella handle so tightly that veins were visible on his hand.

It was the first time Kimberly had seen Chris so unprepared, and she couldn't help but find it amusing, her eyes gleaming with joy.

"And then? Did Mr. Howard accept the confession?" Kimberly asked.

Felix grinned mischievously. "That guy was the dominant type. Even if Chris swung that way, with his six-foot-three frame and muscles, he would definitely be the one in charge. No chance he'd accept! He was so outraged he ended the partnership and blacklisted the guy forever."

Hearing this, Kimberly glanced at Chris, intrigued to discover that his slender appearance concealed a well-built physique.

Unable to resist, Chris looked down at her, seemingly aware of the doubt in her eyes. He took her hand and gently placed it on his arm, allowing her to feel the firmness of his biceps through the fabric of his shirt.

"I also have an eight-pack. Care to check that out too, Ms. Holden?" he joked.

Kimberly gasped.

Was he actually inviting her to touch him?

With the crowd watching, Kimberly quickly withdrew her hand, clearing her throat. "No, that won't be necessary."

Felix caught off guard, clicked his tongue in amazement.

Felix could hardly believe his eyes.

Chris was openly flirting with a woman—and had initiated physical contact!

Could this really be the same introverted Chris he knew?

Chris must be truly taken with her to behave so uncharacteristically!

Suddenly, a harsh voice interrupted, "Kimberly, what the hell are you doing here?!"

Recognizing the voice immediately, Kimberly's expression cooled, her smile disappearing. She knew Declan's voice all too well.

She slowly turned to see Declan in a wheelchair, with Bryce holding an umbrella over him and Valerie, Bryce's suit completely soaked.

Declan had thought Kimberly looked familiar from a distance, but seeing her face up close left him both shocked and furious, especially when he noticed Chris holding an umbrella over her.

Chris, a man of significant status, holding an umbrella for a woman—Kimberly, no less—clearly suggested something significant.

Declan's eyes reddened with rage, torn between anger at his wife being with another man and suspicion that Kimberly was attempting to attract investment for the Holden Group by getting close to Chris.

Either way, he was furious. "What the hell are you doing here?! This isn't a place for someone like you! Go home and stop making a fool of yourself!"

A sharp glint appeared in Kimberly's eyes as she smirked, her gaze dropping to the blanket covering his lower half body. "Didn't Bryce mention you were in the hospital again? What are you doing here now?"



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"Hospitalized?" Felix pretended to be puzzled, barely suppressing a laugh. "What's happened to Mr. Walsh? Why does he need a wheelchair?"

Kimberly's smile grew as she saw through Felix's act. She replied cheerfully, "Oh, it's nothing too grave—just some troubles 'down there,' if you know what I mean."

Felix kept up his act of curiosity. "Troubles 'down there'? So, what hospital is Mr. Walsh at? Ms. Holden, please share. My family is deeply connected in the medical community; I might know a few specialists who could consult."

Kimberly's grin widened. "How convenient! He's actually at one of your




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family's facilities—a andrology clinic. Perhaps you can recommend a specialist, Mr. White!"

"A andrology clinic?" Felix responded with mock surprise. "So, Mr. Walsh is... impotent?"



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