

Knocked Up by the CEO/

Chapter 4

Kimberly woke up before dawn. She checked on Landon, gently pulled the blanket up around him again and kissed his forehead.

The morning routine was a rushed but efficient shower in the tiny hospital bathroom, hair pulled back in her most professional style, the same interview dress she'd worn yesterday, but with a different scarf to make it look fresh.

She'd learned these tricks from years of making very little go a very long way. As she gathered her things to leave, her phone buzzed with a text message. Probably another spam ad for credit cards she couldn't qualify for. She ignored it and hurried out.

Her first stop was PrintMax, a small shop where she could get her resume reprinted cheaply. The elderly owner, Mr. Adam had been kind to her over the years.

"The usual, Kimberly?" he asked with a sympathetic smile.

"Twenty copies this time, Mr. Adam. I'm casting a wide net today."

As she rummaged through her bag for her USB drive, her phone buzzed again. She almost ignored it like the last one, but something made her check this time. When she saw the name on the screen, her heart skipped.

Valor Group. She blinked hard. For a second, she thought it had to be a mistake. She tapped the message open with trembling fingers

"Good morning, Ms. Newman. Can you come into the office today? We'd like to speak to you as soon as possible."

Kimberly just stood there, frozen in the middle of the shop. What? She read it again, then a third time just to be sure her tired eyes weren't playing tricks on her.

"Everything okay, Kimberly?" Mr. Adam called from the counter.

"I... I think so. I think..." she broke into a breathless laugh. "Mr. Adam, I need to go now. Can you hold my order?"

"Of course, dear. Go."

She flagged down the first taxi she saw, practically jumping in before it even came to a full stop.

"Valor Group, please," she said, breathless. "And if you can get me there fast, I'll forever be grateful."

The driver glanced at her in the rearview mirror. "You got it."

Kimberly didn't care that the ride was going to cost her lunch money for a week or two.

The marble lobby of Valor Groups looked even more intimidating the second time around. Kimberly walked up to the reception desk, feeling both hopeful and terrified.

The same blonde receptionist glanced up, clearly annoyed. "I thought I made it clear to you yesterday that the position was filled."

Kimberly caught her breath. "I know, but... look." She pulled out her phone and showed her the message.

The receptionist's eyebrows lifted as she read. "Oh." She typed quickly for a moment, then looked up. "Conference room B, down the hall. Someone will see you right away."

"Thank you, thank you," Kimberly said, bowing her head like she was praying. Then she practically floated down the hallway, heart pounding

Conference B was all glass and chrome. A middle-aged man in an expensive suit sat at the head of the table, flipping through papers.

“Good morning, sir,” Kimberly said, trying to sound calm.

"Good morning, Ms..." He looked up expectantly.

“Newman, sir. Kimberly Newman."

"Ms. Newman, yes. I see you applied for the role of executive assistant to our CEO."

Kimberly blinked hard. "Sir?" That wasn't right. She'd applied for marketing coordination, not...

"You didn't apply for this position?" His voice sharpened.

"I... yes, sir. I did." What else could she say? This was her miracle. She wasn't about to question it.

"Excellent." He flipped through what looked like her resume. "Your background is impressive, Ms. Newman. But I need to be crystal clear about something – this position requires complete availability. Twenty-four-seven, if necessary. I see you're unmarried, which is actually preferable for this role."

Kimberly nodded.

“Anything else that might stop you from giving this your all?”

Her mind screamed: my son is in a coma and needs surgery I can't afford. But she said, “No, sir. Nothing at all.”

He gave a sharp nod. “Good. Our CEO has zero tolerance for laziness or mistakes. He's a perfectionist who demands excellence in everything. Usually, when it comes to the final shortlist he reviews, there are never any women. But somehow, your resume made it through and he picked you. That makes you his first female assistant.”

Her heart jumped. "He personally picked me," she thought.

"Don't make him regret this decision, Ms. Newman," the man said.

"I promise I won't. I swear I'll give you everything I have."

"I certainly hope so." He stood and gestured toward a new laptop sitting on a side table. "That's yours now. Sarah from HR will show you around and get you oriented. You start immediately."

"Thank you, sir. Thank you so much."

The man left and Kimberly stood alone staring at the reflection on the shiny table. What just happened?

She thought back to yesterday's elevator chaos. His resume must have gotten mixed in with the other women's files.

"Oh, my God," she whispered to the empty room, looking up. "Thank you. Thank you whoever is out there."

She started clapping, then danced quietly, singing under her breath, "It's a good day, I'm blessed, finally."

She was mid-spin when the door opened. "Oh!" She immediately straightened her blazer and tried to look professional.

"Hi there! I'm Sarah from HR." Kimberly's mouth dropped open. It was the same woman from the elevator. "It's you!" Kimberly pointed, then immediately felt embarrassed by her lack of professionalism.

"From the elevator yesterday?" Sarah's face lit up with recognition. "Oh my goodness, yes! What are the chances? I can't believe it."

"Ready for the tour?" Sarah asked, gesturing toward the door.

They walked side by side through the halls, Sarah pointing things out as they went.

“That’s the break room. Restrooms are on either end of the floor. Supply closets through which a door code is taped inside the cabinet. Don’t tell anyone I told you. Security badges work on all floors unless you’ve been flagged, which hopefully never happens.”

Kimberly kept nodding, trying to take everything in. The building felt like a maze—quiet but buzzing underneath. Everyone looked like they had somewhere to be and didn’t have time to explain anything.

Sarah stopped at a clean, modern desk sitting just outside a huge glass office.

“Here we are,” she said, with a hint of a smile. “This is you.”

Kimberly ran her fingers over the edge of the desk. Smooth, sturdy. It’d been over six years since she’d had a desk to herself, yet that one couldn’t hold a candle to this.

“That,” Sarah said, nodding toward the double doors behind the desk, “is the boss’s office.”

Kimberly glanced over. The nameplate on the frosted glass just read: M. VALOR.

“He usually gets here around 10,” Sarah continued. “You’ve got time to get familiar with the basics before he shows.”

Kimberly tried to keep her voice light. “What is he like?”

Sarah paused, titling her head slightly. “Brilliant. Smart as hell. Work comes first, always. Don’t do small talk, barely make eye contact unless there’s a deal on the table. Not rude, just... focused. Don’t take it personally if he doesn’t say much at first.”

“Got it,” Kimberly said, though her stomach tightened anyway.

For the next hour, Sarah ran through everything: how to log into the computer, what system they used for scheduling, how to transfer a call without hanging up on someone by accident. She explained the company's directory, email folders and calendar sharing like she'd done this a hundred times, and maybe she had

Kimberly followed along, writing things down even though she knew there was a real chance she wouldn't even remember she'd written it when she actually needed it.

"Okay," Sarah said finally, glancing at her watch. "That's the basics. The rest you'll pick as you go. Your new-hire folder is in the drawer—handbook, benefits stuff, emergency contacts. Oh, and there's a first aid kit in the bottom cabinet because this place is allergic to accidents."

Kimberly let out a breath and smiled. "Thanks. For everything."

And with that, Sarah turned and walked back the way they'd come, heels clicking down the hall.

Kimberly sat down at her new desk. The chair was soft, the desk solid, the view... unreal. Floor-to-ceiling glass opened onto the city like she was in a movie. Yesterday, she was looking up at these buildings from the street, wondering how she'd ever climb out of the hole she was in. Today, she was sitting on the 40th floor of one of them.

Her phone buzzed. A text from the hospital: The doctor wants to meet this afternoon to discuss the next steps for Landon.

The elevator dinged down the hall. Kimberly quickly put her phone away and stood up from her chair. Her heart kicked a little harder than it should have. It might not be him.