

Knocked Up by the CEO/

Chapter 5

The elevator doors opened with a soft ding and Kimberly's breath caught in her throat. It was him. The man from yesterday

He walked with purpose, his suit fitting like it was made for him, which, knowing him, it probably was. His dark hair was styled like he didn't need to try too hard but still got it right. The haunted look she'd seen on him yesterday was gone. Today, he looked like a man who ran things and he knew it.

Kimberly straightened automatically, clasping her hands in front of her. "Good morning, Mr. Valor."

He slowed when he reached her desk, eyes narrowing slightly as he took her in. "Are you stalking me now?"

"What? No, sir! I..."

"Twice yesterday," he continued, counting on his fingers. "Collision in the morning, rooftop encounter in the afternoon. And now you're working here." He tilted his head. "That's quite a coincidence, don't you think?"

Kimberly felt heat rise on her cheek. "I swear, Mr. Valor, I didn't know you worked here when you applied. I didn't even know who you were yesterday."

He raised an eyebrow. "Didn't know who I was? Most people in this city know me."

Marshall studied for a moment, then let out a soft chuckle. "No, I guess you're not." He paused, tilting his head slightly. "I think I'd call you... Stormy."

"Stormy?" Kimberly blinked, confused.

"Yeah. You crashed into me, screamed your heart out loud enough to scare birds off a rooftop, and now you're right outside my office."

He gave a slight shrug, eyes never leaving hers. “You show up out of nowhere, shake everything up and then apologize. You try to clean up after yourself...but you still change the weather.”

Kimberly opened her mouth, then closed it. It wasn’t even insulting. Just...weirdly honest. His experience of her

“I’m not always like that,” she muttered, unsure why she felt the need to defend herself.

Marshall’s smile deepened, but not in a mocking way. “That’s the thing. Storms don’t try to be anything. They just show up and do their thing.”

He tapped the edge of her desk. “Own it, Stormy.”

Without waiting for a reply, he turned and started walking toward his office door. Kimberly sat back down, quietly mouthing Stormy and letting out a soft laugh.

Then, he stopped, handed on the doorknob and looked back at her.

She stood up quickly as he walked back to her desk.

“Have we met before?” he asked quietly.

Kimberly blinked, confused. “Yeah, of course. We...”

“Not yesterday,” he said, cutting her off. “Before then.”

She hesitated. “No, Sir. Yesterday was the first time I ever saw you.”

Marshall stared at her like he was trying to figure out something. Under his breath, barely audible, he muttered, “Then why do you feel so familiar?”

“What?” Kimberly leaned forward, confused.

He shook his head and straightened his tie. “Never mind.” Then he turned and said, “Come see me in one hour.”

“Yes, sir,” Kimberly replied.

Marshall sat behind his desk, staring at the wall, but his mind wasn’t really there. Something about her was bugging him. He has spent years building a career

around reading people, spotting details, connecting dots others didn't even see. But this? This feeling like he'd met her before when he hadn't made any sense.

He grabbed his phone and started scrolling through his contacts. Maybe he should have HR run a more thorough background check. Not because he didn't trust her—though the coincidence were strange, but because something felt important in a way he couldn't explain.

His phone buzzed with a text from his mother: “How's the new assistant? And don't forget dinner with Anna tonight at BlueSea. 7:00 p.m. Go with flowers.”

He stared at the message for a second, then let out a soft sigh.” Flowers, huh?” He set the phone down and buried himself at work. After a solid hour, there was a knock on the door.

He looked at his watch, then quickly minimized everything on his screen and pushed back from his desk.

Kimberly stepped inside, hands folded nervously. “Sir?”

Marshall gave a quick glance at the dark screen as if he was caught off guard. “An hour already?” he asked, trying to sound busy.

“Yes, sir.”

He reached down and grabbed a black card from the desk. Spinning it lazily between his fingers like a magician with a playing card.

“Sir?” Kimberly's voice was confused, her eyes fixed on the spinning card.

“Take it,” he said, still not meeting her eyes.

She didn't move. “Sir?”

Marshall finally looked up, one eyebrow raised. “I wasn't aware you had trouble understanding English.”

She blushed. “I... I don't.”

“Then take it.”

Kimberly walked over slowly. When she reached his desk, she hesitantly took the card from his fingers. Their fingers touched for a brief second and Marshall felt a surprising spark.

She stared down at the card. “Do you want me to get something for you?”

“It’s yours for the next twenty-four hours,” Marshall said, leaning back in his chair and watching her reaction carefully.

Her eyes widened. “Mine?”

“Spend as much as you like. There’s no limit.” He tried to sound casual, like handing out unlimited cards was no big deal.

Kimberly shook her head quickly, holding the card out toward him. “I’m sorry, sir. I can’t accept this.”

“Why not?” Marshall tilted his head, genuinely curious. Most people would have snatched that card without a second thought. “It’s something I do for all my assistants on their first day. Get new clothes, whatever you need.”

She bit her lower lip, clearly torn. Marshall found himself staring at that small gesture longer than he should have

“Thank you so much, sir?” she finally whispered, clutching the card to her chest.

“It’s nothing,” he said, though they both knew that wasn’t true. He waved his hand dismissively. “That’s all. You can go back to your desk.”

“Thank you. Thank you so much,” she said, backing toward the door without turning around.

Just as she reached for the handle, Marshall remembered his mother’s text.

“Kimberly.”

She froze, her hand on the door. “Sir?”

“Get me flowers for this evening.” He tried to sound bored, like it was just another mundane task.

“Of course, sir. What kind would you prefer?”

Marshall paused. What kind of flowers did Anna like? Did he even care? “Surprise me.”

“Anything else?”

“That would be all.”

She nodded and walked out of the office, closing the door softly behind her.