

Marry My Daddy

Chapter 1

Molly.

I had no idea how much my life would change that day when Logan Baron—billionaire, CEO, absolute playboy—first walked into my classroom.

It happened at the end of the school day, which was also my favorite time of the day.

Not because I wanted to go home—I loved my job—but because it was when I got to see my students in their purest form.

Free from the structure of lessons and quiet whispers, my first-graders laughed, ran, and clung to their parents, eager to tell them about their day.

Spring was settling in, and the golden afternoon sunlight streamed through the tall windows of Primrose Academy. Primrose was one of the most prestigious private schools in New York, catering to the children of CEOs, actors, and politicians, but to me, it was simply where I spent my days doing what I loved—teaching.

I stood by my desk, tidying up worksheets while stealing glances at my students as they reunited with their families.

Ethan practically bounced on his toes as he waved his latest drawing in front of his mother's face, chattering a mile a minute about the spaceship he'd designed. A few feet away, Ava reached for her nanny's hand, still rambling about the caterpillars we had observed that morning, her excitement so contagious that I couldn't help but smile.

As I bent down to help Lucas zip up his jacket, he grinned up at me, his small hands still clumsy with the zipper. "I spelled 'adventure' today, Miss Brooks!" he beamed.

I ruffled his hair. "And you did it perfectly," I said, watching as he ran off toward his waiting father, waving back at me before disappearing into the crowd.

These moments, the small ones filled with laughter and excitement, were what made my job so special. I let out a contented sigh, turning back to my desk—when I felt a small tug on my sleeve.

"Miss Brooks?"

I turned and immediately softened at the sight of Ruby Baron, her big hazel eyes peering up at me, expectant and bright despite the pale exhaustion lining her face.

Ruby was one of those students who got into your heart and built a home there. Sweet, eager to learn, always polite—a teacher's dream. But she was also the student who worried me the most.

She had been sick a lot this year. She'd miss days—sometimes weeks—of school, and when she returned, it would seem like nothing was wrong due to her bubbly nature. The other kids adored her, but I could tell they sensed something fragile about Ruby, something that made them hold back from roughhousing too much or teasing her the way six-year-olds typically teased their friends.

“Hey, sweetheart.” I crouched to her level, brushing a dark curl from her forehead. “What do you need?”

She hesitated, biting her lip like she was working up the courage to say something big. “Can my daddy come to the class today? So you can... So you can meet him?”

I blinked. “Your daddy?”

She nodded, gripping the hem of her uniform. “He's picking me up today. I told him all about you.”

Oh.

I should've expected that. A lot of parents liked to meet me at some point, especially the more involved ones. But from what I understood, Ruby's father was not involved. I had never met him, never even seen him at a school function.

It was always a driver, a nanny, or, once in a blue moon, an assistant who came to collect her. Her nannies were always at events, and even at our last Winter Fall Play, her ever-present nanny, Angela, was the one beaming with pride from the audience.

But no sign of any of her actual parents.

“I don't know, Ruby,” I said gently. “I don't want to keep your daddy waiting.” If he was actually picking her up today, I could only assume he wouldn't stay long.

“Please?” She reached for my hand, squeezing it tight. “I told him you're my favorite person.”

My heart twisted. How could I say no to that?

I sighed but offered her my smile of assurance. “Well, if I'm your favorite person, I guess I can't say no.”

“Yay!” Ruby's face lit up, and she wrapped her arms around my waist in a quick hug. “He's coming soon!”

I smiled as she darted to the window, bouncing on her toes with excitement. I shook my head, amused, and went back to sorting papers. I'd give it five minutes, say a polite hello, and then I'd be on my way.

As the minutes ticked by, the once-busy classroom slowly emptied.

One by one, my students disappeared through the door with their parents and stories, until it was just Ruby and me.

I glanced at the clock, my fingers absently stacking the last of the worksheets. Five minutes had stretched into ten, then fifteen. A small, uneasy pit formed in my stomach. It's not that I was in a rush to leave, but I was worried for Ruby. She had been so excited...

I glanced toward the window, watching Ruby press her tiny hands against the glass, leaving smudges that I didn't have the heart to remind her about. Her excitement was infectious, though a small part of me braced for disappointment.

What if he didn't show?

It had happened before—a late assistant or a nanny scrambling in with an apology, always too flustered to explain why Ruby's father wasn't there. My heart ached for her, not wanting to see that edge of sadness that would usually come on those days when she thought her father would pick her up, only for him not to.

But then, the sound of a car engine outside had Ruby squealing got my attention, as a sleek black town car glided into the parking lot, of which we had a perfect view from our class.

Quickly, I placed the rest of the papers in a binder and dropped them in the drawer. Ruby was the last child left to be picked up, so I would just go home after I finished here.

Ruby gasped. “That's him!”

A driver stepped out first, but I couldn't catch his features from this angle. My stomach twisted as anticipation thickened in the air.

I had pictured someone... different. A man in a sharp suit, maybe with graying hair and a Bluetooth earpiece permanently attached. A no-nonsense corporate type who barely glanced at the school before whisking Ruby away.

But when the door finally opened, the man who stepped out was something else entirely.

He was tall—remarkably so—with broad shoulders that filled the doorway. The crisp, dark suit he wore looked custom-made, fitted to his lean but undeniably powerful frame. His presence was magnetic, the kind of aura that demanded attention without even trying.

I barely registered Ruby bouncing on her toes, whispering, “That's my daddy.”

My heart pounded as I lifted my gaze toward the door just as it swung open, and my breath caught in my throat. I had expected her father to be a doctor or lawyer or company president like most of my students' fathers.

But standing in the doorway, framed by the golden light of the setting sun, was a man I had only seen in magazines and on TV.

Logan Baron. Billionaire. CEO. Absolute playboy.

And he was looking right at me.

