Chapter Thirteen

*The Moment of Truth*

“Thank you for coming to get me from Jasmine’s house, Cameron.” I said as he pulled out of her driveway.

“It’s my pleasure.”

“Where are you taking me?”

“It’s a surprise.”  
“I also want to apologize for everything Michael said to you earlier today.”  
“Don’t worry about it.”  
“I feel horrible and really embarrassed.”

“Diana, it’s fine. The fact that you agreed to go out with me again is all I need from you.”

“Thanks for understanding. As you know he’s not exactly like everyone else in the world.”  
“This I definitely DO know.”

“I hope this won’t affect our potential business relationship.”  
“Not at all. Let’s just leave it in the past, shall we?”  
“Deal. Thanks.”

“Thank you for coming to see me, Rick.” Michael said as the two gentlemen sat in the Pop star’s office. “There are a few things I need to discuss with you.”  
“What’s on your mind, Mr. Jackson?” Rick asked taking a seat across from his former legal associate.

“I went to see Cameron Garivey earlier today.”  
“And?”  
“I tested him a few times and he walked right through each trap.”  
“What do you mean?”  
“He confessed to me that he knows my fiancé’s secret and that you aided him in obtaining that information. I need to know if that’s true or not and why you would agree to expose Diana that way.

Rick explained to Michael that Cameron tricked the legal advisor in the beginning by telling him he was interested in merging TSG and Capital Records together and that he and Diana had already met and agreed to do so. When Diana’s background check was given to the CEO, Rick discovered after it was too late that an initial meeting had not yet taken place and once the meet and greet had been established, Rick then provided his associate with Diana’s ‘other’ background check which is a critical requirement in order to merge any sort of business corporation with another.

“So Cameron really DOES know Diana’s secret?”  
“It’s possible.” Rick explained. “When I provided him with your fiancé’s classified information, several items on the document had been blacked out due to hers and Ms. Averson’s request to not have certain facts disclosed without their consent. As far as I know, Cameron is aware of the fact that Ms. Dean and Mrs. Averson have classified information in the government system and he may or may not know the details of what it is.”

Michael sighed in relief. He knew he could easily call Cameron’s bluff if he ever needed to in the future and made sure Rick knew what the CEO was up to. To no surprise, Rick informed Michael that he too is fully aware of the CEO’S intention to lure Diana away from Michael and said he’d be more than willing to help the Pop star save his faltering relationship if necessary.

“I apologize for my critical error, Mr. Jackson.” Rick said. “I honestly did not realize until it was too late the extent Cameron was willing to go to in order to make his dream of becoming the biggest musical corporation CEO in the world come true.”  
“It’s fine.” Michael said twirling his thumbs while seated at his office desk. “He won’t get away with it. Thank you again for coming to see me.”

“Since we weren’t able to get any information from Capital and find out what happened, do you think we should try and ask Michael about it?” Marie asked Jasmine while the two carpooled to work.

“I think we need to leave things the way they are for now, M.” Jasmine said while driving. “We just need to keep our eyes and ears open. Cameron is definitely up to something and Diana is getting dangerously too close to him.”  
“Why didn’t you tell her that earlier today?”  
“She’s not listening to her own fiancé, what makes you think she’ll listen to either one of us? Besides, the more she keeps in contact with him the faster she’ll find out that he’s got an ulterior motive.”

“I guess you’re right.” Marie said while eating a banana and drinking a glass of chocolate milk.

“Do you have an extra banana for me?”  
“Sorry. You won’t believe this but Bubbles actually packed this for me.”  
“BUBBLES? THE CHIMP?”

“No, Bubbles the porn star!”  
“Well, how did he do that?”

“He just grabbed a banana from the kitchen, opened my bag and stuffed it in there. He’s a smart little monkey.”  
“Just like you, Marie.”  
“Aww, thanks.”

“By the way, I’m sorry I didn’t tell you about Diana. I really think that’s something she should tell you when the time comes.”  
“Is that going to be anytime soon?  
“Sooner than you think.” Jasmine replied while driving into the TSG facility parking lot. “It’s time she tells you and Michael the truth…before I do.”

Cameron took me to El Matador State beach, a beautiful sandy beach in upper Los Angeles with crystal blue waters, gorgeous antique looking cliffs and a breathtaking view of the entire horizon.



“Have you been here before?” He asked helping me out of his vehicle.

“Never, but I certainly am glad I’m dressed for it.”  
“Oh yes, your dress is lovely. Forgive me for not complimenting you earlier.”

“You don’t have to.” I replied as we both walked towards the shoreline. “You flatter me enough as it is.”  
“I always speak the truth, Diana.”

“I can tell.”

The two of us continued walking, talking, ate ice cream and shared a few laughs together. It seemed like the perfect friendly yet strictly platonic ‘date’ for two future business partners. As always, Cameron was being a gentlemen and Diana adored his company. The handsome and overly clever businessman’s plan was starting to slowly work in his favor and the beautiful CEO of TSG had no idea what she was setting herself up for.

**LATER THAT DAY**

“Michael, it’s Jas.” She said approaching his studio door. “Can I come in?”  
“Sure, tea flower.”

He opened the door for her and let her sit inside his booth. Since Marie had already been there twice, it was only fair that his fiancé’s other best friend be given the same opportunity.

“I just came to check on you.” She said while sitting next to the Pop star. “You’ve been spending an awful lot of time in here.”  
“Music is my life.” Michael said. “What else would I be doing?”  
“Spending time with your future wife.”  
“She’s out with you know who again.”

“Michael, you need to fight for her.”  
“I shouldn’t have to, Jasmine.” Michael explained. “No one is worth chasing. If Diana doesn’t want to spend time with me, I can’t force her to.”  
“This is YOU we’re talking about.” Jasmine explained. “She’s not only your fiancé but the mother of your child. Why would you let her just walk into the arms of another man?”  
“Because that’s the only way she’ll learn.” Michael said. “I went to see Cameron and told him to stay away from her yet she’s still associating with him. He even admitted that he’s trying to take her away from me.”  
“ARE YOU SERIOUS?” Jasmine yelled.

“Yes. But Diana doesn’t want to hear me out about him. I didn’t tell her that part because I know she won’t believe me. The best way for her to realize he’s a monster is for him to actually do something and prove to her on his own that he is a manipulative snake.”

“I had no idea things were THIS bad.” Jasmine explained. “If I had, I never would have let her walk out the door with him today. He came and got her from my house because they both knew you wouldn’t want him coming here to get her.”

Michael explained to Diana’s assistant in confidence that they both sleep in separate bedrooms and rarely speak to each other. He also mentioned the entire ugly episode at Cameron’s office in detail and how he obtained background checks on all of the girls through Rick. Jasmine was furious. If it wasn’t for Michael asking her not to get involved, she would have found the CEO of Capital Records and given him a piece of her mind and her fist.

“Are you thinking about leaving her, Michael?”  
“No, of course not.” He said. “I love her to death. She’s my everything.”  
“Then tell her that.”  
“She knows Jasmine but Cameron has opened a new window for her. She likes the fact that she can go out in public with him and not worry about stupid reporters and media in her face. That’s something she’ll always be deprived of with me.”  
“Diana was aware of that a long time ago.” Jasmine explained. “She does not care about those things anymore. Marie and I both told her that it would be difficult at first but if it meant happiness for the both of you then that crap shouldn’t matter.”

Michael closed his eyes and became silent for a few seconds. He then sang a verse from one of his most famous songs snapping his fingers and making Jasmine smile taking her by surprise.

**“People always told me be careful what you do. Don’t go around breaking young girl’s hearts and mother always told me be careful who you love, be careful what you do, ‘cuz the lie becomes the truth…”**

“I love that song, Michael.”  
“I didn’t realize how true it was until now.”  
“She still loves you, Michael. It’s not a lie.”  
“I know. I just wish she could see that guy for the weasel he really is.”  
“Like you said, let Diana find out on her own.” Jasmine said rubbing the Pop star’s shoulder affectionately. “The more we confront her about Cameron, the more we are driving her closer towards him.”

“You’re right. I just really miss her.”  
“I know you do.”

Jasmine stood up from her chair and gave her friend a hug and Michael asked if she would stay with him in the studio for a little while. She happily agreed and the Pop star showed her the same lyrics that he previously showed Marie and let her listen to the same unreleased song. Michael’s beloved tea flower convinced him not to give up on his fiancé and to keep fighting for what he believed in – something the King of Pop did since he was a little boy. Michael thanked his friend and like Marie, asked her not to disclose any of his material that she read and listened to before she left his studio allowing the Gloved One to finish his wonderful craft.

**THREE MONTHS LATER**

**APRIL 3, 1998**

Diana and Cameron were spending almost every day together. The two of them went on a few casual outings but most of their meetings were strictly business related. Facts and figures were heavily discussed between the two CEO’s and after endless nights of preparing reports, attending never ending meetings with their attorneys, financial advisors and double checking all of the fine print, Diana actually agreed to accept Cameron’s business proposal and merge TSG with Capital Records. The girls thought she was being completely impulsive and hated their boss’s recent decision but Diana was adamant on making the merge happen.

In addition to further enhancing her career, Diana was now eight and a half months pregnant and just two weeks away from giving birth. Knowing this, her OB GYN insisted that the beautiful CEO stay at Neverland and away from all major business matters until her daughter was born. Jasmine and Marie both worked excessively around the clock making sure every aspect of their boss’s business was properly taken care of and that no matter was left unfinished.

Diana’s baby shower was a success and Katherine lovingly hosted the event in her home. To everyone’s surprise, Katherine gave her future daughter in law the dress she wore to her own baby shower when she was pregnant with Michael. Diana did not wear the dress but saved it saying she did not want to ruin something so beautiful, historic and sacred.

Christmas and New Year’s came and went for the entire gang. Due to Michael’s upbringing, his mother’s religious beliefs, Diana being pregnant, busy with her career and not on speaking terms with her fiancé, everyone decided to keep the holiday season simple and not do anything big or fancy at Neverland especially since they had a huge gathering for Halloween. They all agreed on celebrating and doing something special next year for the new little Jackson’s first Christmas.

Michael spent all of his free time working on his new project and visiting children at several local hospitals and orphanages. After much negotiation, he was granted a music contract with Sony thanks to the miracle work of his attorney and Mr. Mottola. In 1991, Michael had negotiated a contract with Sony for his Dangerous album for a record breaking $65 million dollars. Wanting to make his next project even more thrilling than the last, Michael settled a new contract with the music publishing company worth $120 million dollars – the biggest recording contract ever to be generated in music history.

With his career taking a new turn and a daughter on the way, Michael finally felt in control about certain aspects in his life. Of course, the one thing that mattered most to him was still out of his reach – his relationship with his bride to be. The Pop star tried his best to sneer her away from Cameron but Diana was convinced now more than ever that her fiancé was extremely jealous, envious and spiteful of her future business partner due to him having a ‘normal life’ and no ridiculous rumors in the tabloids.

As a last resort, Michael finally told his significant other that Cameron admitted to liking his future bride and wanted to take her away from him. To no surprise, Diana called Michael a liar and said that her business partner would never do or say anything of the sort. After spending so much time together and getting to know each other on a business and personal level, Cameron thought his plan to be the biggest global music producer with the world’s most beautiful woman by his side was just around the corner. However, Cameron also has a secret – one that nobody knew about except his previous ‘clients’.

“Jeez, Ana!” Marie said seeing her friend waddle her way down the grand staircase. “You’re huge!”  
“Thanks a lot, Marie!”  
“She means that in a good way, Diana.” Jasmine said. “Little cupcake looks fully formed and ready to come out and be with us. I can’t believe you’re only just a few weeks away.”  
“I sure can!” I said sitting on the couch. “I don’t know how much more of this I can take. I feel like a huge whale and I’m peeing every two seconds like a race horse. My ankles look like bloated water balloons and I’m eating everything I can get my hands on. Not to mention my nice clothes and shoes don’t fit me anymore. I really miss being a size five.”

“It’s all part of the beauty of pregnancy my dear.” Liz said as she and Katherine made their way into the living room. “We’ve all been there.”

“I know I have multiple times.” Katherine said rubbing my back gently. “It’s almost over, dear.”

“I know, I know.”

“Thank you so much for being here with us, Ms. Taylor.” Jasmine said. “We knew you’d fly in for Diana’s baby shower but weren’t sure how long you’d be able to stay with us.”  
“Don’t be ridiculous.” Liz said touching her black pearl necklace draped across her smooth skinned collarbone. “Diana is like family to me. I promised I’d be here and I am.”

“What was it like giving birth to Michael, Mrs. J?” Marie asked.

“Oh Lord please don’t remind me…” She said making everyone laugh. “That boy’s head was the size of a grapefruit. I was pushing as hard as I could but he was very stubborn and big headed from the very beginning. He just didn’t want to come out.”

“That explains A LOT.” I said adding humor to the story.

Katherine told us she had gestational diabetes while carrying her seventh child. Her weight gain was not excessive but she retained a lot of water and Michael was actually born a few days early. Joseph was out of town and left his pregnant wife in her mother Martha’s care when Katherine felt strong contractions and her water break the day after Joe left. Katherine’s mother took her to the hospital with all of the other children and after finally get in touch with Joe, he immediately returned to Indiana to be by his wife’s side wanting to catch a glimpse of her and his newborn son.

“How many hours was it?” Marie asked.   
“I think it was about 18 to be exact.”  
“You sure had it easier than me, Katherine.” Liz said. “When I was in labor with Christopher it took 22 hours to get him out. I had him on my 23rd birthday.”  
“Really?” I asked. “What a great birthday present.”  
“Indeed it was and every year we celebrate together.”  
“Mrs. J, would you mind if Michael and Diana celebrated cupcake’s birthday?” Jasmine asked.   
“I don’t think so.” Katherine replied. “I just want my family to be happy. Michael is a grown man and Diana is his soon to be wife. I wish nothing but happiness and smiles for them and each of you.”

The girls hugged the matriarch and asked her to tell more stories about her family and children. Being born and raised in Alabama, Katherine had a very strict upbringing. Like her husband, she too came from a broken home of divorced parents and told everyone her story about how she met Joseph in 1947 after moving to East Chicago, Indiana with her family. Joseph was already married to another woman at the time but had their courtship annulled before marrying Katherine in November of 1949.

After listening to Katherine’s incredible life story, the girls asked Liz to talk about hers and she gladly obliged. The legendary Hollywood star discussed her multiple marriages, difficult childhood, the birth of her four children and the depression she went through during a pivotal time in her life. After receiving treatment and a lot of love and support from her family and Michael, Liz said she eventually pulled through and made a full recovery.

“Your stories are so inspirational.” Marie said. “I hope one day we can share stories like yours with our children.”  
“I’m sure you will.” Katherine said. “The universe has a very interesting way of working things out for the best.”

“Mr. Garivey, your final disclosure documents are ready.” Erica said as she walked into her boss’s office. “Your attorney has signed and approved them and the escrow documents have also been included.”  
“Thank you, Erica. That will be all.”

The beautiful young girl left Cameron’s office and the handsome CEO reviewed and signed each deed with pride. His dream was about to come true and after months of groveling, pampering and endless negotiation Diana Dean was finally going to join forces with him and give Cameron Garivey the success he’s been desperately eager to taste. Unknown to Diana and for obvious reasons, Cameron’s trick to lure his business partner away from her fiancé was just moments away from taking place. He smirked as he stood in front of his office bay window overlooking the entire city including the TSG building.

**Finally***.* Cameron thought to himself. **She and her business are both going to be mine.**

“Congratulations, Michael.”  
“For what?”  
“Your new deal with Sony and your soon to be born baby girl.”  
“Thank you, Dita.”  
“You will never forget her, will you?”  
“No way. Dita is a good friend of mine.”  
“I’m glad you are so fond of her.”  
“I think she really likes me.”  
“She does indeed.”

“If only I were single…”

“Dita does not care about relationship statuses, Mr. Moonwalker.”

“You know I’m kidding, M.”  
“I do. I’m sorry I couldn’t attend Diana’s baby shower.”  
“It’s ok. You were better off not being there anyway. They had it at Havenhurst.”  
“I hope our get together at your place didn’t cause any tension between you two.”  
“It did at first but I think Diana’s always going to be a little uncomfortable with our friendship.”  
“I am planning on visiting you two once ‘Ray of Light’ is finished production. Maybe after she meets me in person she won’t feel that way anymore.”

“I’m really looking forward to it.”  
“How are you doing health wise?”  
“The same.”  
“You need to eat and sleep regularly, Michael.”  
“I know, M. I just can’t stand Diana being with that CEO all the time.”  
“Have faith in your relationship.” The female Pop legend said. “Diana is just going through a business phase right now. Once everything is said and done you two will be able to focus on each other again, especially after the baby is born.”  
“I hope so.” Michael said trying to hold back tears. “I hate wearing an emotional mask all the time in front of people, M. It’s bad enough that I have to wear a real one whenever I’m out in public. Diana’s really hurting me and she doesn’t even care.”  
“I’m sure she does. She’s just really into her work right now. She’s a business woman engaged to you and having your firstborn child, Michael. The world is watching her every move. She’s never had this type of opportunity before and the pressure is probably taking a large toll on her. Diana just needs time to take it all in. Don’t give up on her. I can tell she means the world to you.”

Michael listened to his friend’s words and thanked her for being so kind and supportive. As he sat in his office chair seeking guidance from an old friend he pondered about his future wondering if he and Diana would ever be able to move past the hurdle they were facing. Michael’s love for his future wife never decreased and he refused to believe that she would leave him once Cameron’s business merged with hers. Madonna offered to speak to the future Mrs. Jackson on Michael’s behalf but the King of Pop politely refused saying it was a step he needed to take on his own in order to make things work.

“I must go now, Michael. Lourdes is getting cranky.”  
“She’ll have a play date in no time.”  
“Yes, she will. You have no idea how excited I am to see you become a father.”  
“Thank you, M.”  
“Keep me posted on things.”  
“I will. Bye Dita.”

“Bye, Mikey.”

Katherine took Liz to Havenhurst and Marie went back to the office to catch up on some paperwork and return phone calls on Diana’s behalf. Michael went to the studio to record a few tracks and Jasmine stayed at Neverland with her best friend wanting to speak to her about her recent business decision and her declining relationship with her Pop star fiancé.

“I have to get to Cameron’s office.” I said as Jasmine helped me to the master bedroom and sat me down on my vanity seat. “Today is the day we make things official.”

“Are you sure you want to do this?”

“Of course. We’ve been working on this for months. Our attorneys have looked everything over and escrow is still holding onto Cameron’s business deed. Once we sign the papers, TSG will become Capital TSG Records.”

“Diana, can I give you some advice? Woman to woman?”  
“Sure.”

“You’re about to have a baby and haven’t really spoken to your fiancé in three months. Don’t you think you should try and work out your problems with Michael first?”  
“The problem IS Michael.” I explained. “He doesn’t get the fact that I am a businesswoman. That is who I was when he first saw me again at TSG and that is who I’ll always be. Whenever Michael wants to write a new song or come up with a new dance routine, he pushes EVERYONE away and isolates himself until he gets it right. Why is everything ok for him and not me?”

“I’m not saying his way of doing things is right and yours isn’t.” Jasmine said. “What I’m saying is, you two have a serious problem with communication and it should be resolved before you close the deal with Cameron and give birth to your child.”

“Jas, Michael knows I still love him but he hasn’t made any effort to try and work things out with me in the past three months. I don’t have the energy to always be the one to make the first move.”  
“Diana, he’s tried talking to you but you always put him off.”  
“Obviously he hasn’t tried hard enough otherwise things would be perfectly fine between us.”

Jasmine was starting to get irritated. She knew Diana’s hormones were talking and not her brain but her blindness towards Cameron was starting to become outrageous.

“It’s your life.” Jasmine said helping me put my black and yellow striped dress on. “I just want you both to be happy and work things out.”  
“If it meant to happen, it will.” I said pinning up my hair and putting gloss on my lips.

“Diana, we need to talk.” Michael said as he returned from his studio.

“Not now, Michael, I have a very important business meeting.”  
“Please? Just listen to me.”

“Fine. Make it quick.”

Michael poured his heart out to his beloved fiancé and apologized to her for anything and everything he may have said and done to upset her. Diana being the mule head she was accepted her future husband’s apology but refused to admit she was wrong and informed the Pop star that her business deal with Cameron was about to be finalized.

“Diana, please don’t leave me.”  
“Oh my god, Michael. Stop being so dramatic.”  
“I’m not trying to be. I just don’t want to lose you.”  
“If I wanted to leave you, I would have by now.”  
“Then why are you still treating me like a stranger and pushing me out of your life?”  
“I’m not.” I explained. “You just don’t see eye to eye with me when it comes to my career and until you do, this is how it’s going to be.”

As uncertain as Michael felt about her new business decision, he accepted defeat to his future wife and offered her his full support by congratulating the beautiful CEO on her new venture. Knowing Cameron had a hidden agenda and Diana would never believe it if she was told, he kept silent and watched his future bride leave the main house and exit the gates with Jasmine in her car.

Michael closed the door and went to his study. He placed his head down on his desk and cried tears of sorrow wondering what he had to do or say to make his fiancé see the truth. Just then, a familiar voiced phantom wind howled in his ears:

“Follow her, Michael.” It said startling the Pop star to death. “Diana is in danger.”

“Who are you?” He asked feeling terrified.

“You know who I am…do not be afraid. Follow her.”

“But I don’t know where she’s going.”  
“Capital…” It whispered again. “She must be saved. Go now.”

Michael jumped out of his seat and called Javon to take him to Cameron’s building. With the help of an unknown source, the Pop star had no idea what was about to happen but knew he could not ignore the voice of the strong phantom wind.

“Diana, please come in.” Cameron said as he greeted Jasmine and I in front of his office elevator. “Mrs. Averson, how nice to see you again.”  
“You as well, Cameron.”

“Jas, I’ll call you later.”

“Are you sure you’ll be ok alone?”  
“Positive. See you back at the house.”

Jasmine left in the elevator and Cameron escorted me to his office closing the doors behind him.

“How are you feeling?”

“A little fat.”

Cameron laughed.

“Well, you look lovely as always.”  
“Thank you. Is everything ready?”  
“It is. I just need you to sign your shares over to me and we’ll both sign the escrow papers together in front of our legal advisor.”  
“Is that person coming here?”  
“No, we will be going to their office. They need to make sure we physically make an appearance for security purposes.”  
“I understand. I had to do the same thing when I signed the deed to TSG.”

Cameron handed his soon to be business partner a pen and told her where to sign. Hoping she would without reading all of the material, Cameron sat in his office chair waiting nervously for Diana to endorse each document making everything legal and official.

“Wait…” I said looking up at his now sweat infused face. “Are you alright Cameron?”  
“Yes, of course.” He said wiping his brow and forehead. “Do you have a question?”  
“I do. We’ve been spending a lot of time together these past few months…”  
“Yeah…”  
“You’ve taken me to some beautiful places and never asked for anything in return. I must admit - Cameron Garivey definitely knows how to schmooze people.”

“I appreciate the compliment, Diana.” Cameron said looking down at the documents placed on his desk directly in front of me. “Is there anything else?”  
“We’ve talked about this deal quite extensively. All facts and figures have been put out in the open but one important matter still remains a mystery.”

“And that is?”  
“What is your secret, Cameron?”

The handsome CEO smiled and bit his bottom lip.

“Diana…that’s something I wish to disclose in the near future.”  
“Why is that?”  
“Given your condition, I do not feel it is appropriate for you to know at this time.”

“So in other words, your secret will be kept hidden from me until I give birth?”  
“Exactly.”

I placed the pen down on his desk and stood up from his office chair.

“In that case, I will sign the deeds when I know what it is.”  
“YOU CAN’T BE SERIOUS!” Cameron yelled also standing from his chair.   
“I beg your pardon?”  
“Ahem, I apologize.” He said fixing his silk red tie. “I didn’t think you would want to know just yet, Diana.”  
“Why wouldn’t I?”  
“I must say I am concerned about how you will react.”

“Cameron, this is me you’re talking to. I think we’ve established a very open relationship. Don’t you agree?”  
“You have no idea how glad I am to hear you say that, Diana.”

“So, are you going to tell me what it is?”  
“How about I show you instead?”  
“Ok, when?”  
“Come with me.”

Cameron walked me out of his office and into his car. We drove out of the Capital Records facility parking lot and he headed towards the freeway smiling as he shifted each gear with ease in his black Audi sports vehicle. I had no idea where the CEO was going to take me but had a feeling it would be someplace I’ve never been before.

Jasmine and Marie were working hard at TSG trying to get as many assignments done as possible so they could take a few weeks off to spend with their best friend after her baby was born. Marie made sure the phone calls were taken care of and Jasmine did her share of going to meetings, signing papers and making sure no new acts were being booked for the next year. While being on maternity leave, Diana decided not to work and spend the first year of her life as a new mother dedicating all of her time to her daughter.

The office phone rang and Marie heard Erica’s voice on the other end.

“I’m looking for my boss. Is he there with Ms. Dean?”  
“No, he isn’t. Diana was supposed to meet him at his office.”  
“She did but they both left and I can’t get a hold of either one of them.”

Marie panicked. **What happened to them?**

“You called their cell phones?”  
“Yes and both went to voicemail which means Mr. Garivey doesn’t want to be disturbed by anyone.”  
“Diana never really turns her phone off. Maybe her battery is low?”  
“Oh god…” Erica said. “I hope she’s alright.”

“What are you talking about?” Marie asked. “Why wouldn’t she be?”

“Nevermind. I’m sure she’s fine. If you hear from her or my boss please call and let me know?”  
“I will. Thanks for calling.”

Marie marched into the boardroom and interrupted Jasmine’s meeting. She pulled her out of the room and explained Erica’s highly questionable phone call and within seconds, Jasmine called off her meeting with Diana’s clients and closed the office for the day. The other co-workers agreed to lock up and take care of things while the girls quickly grabbed their coats and purses and headed out the door.

“Call Michael, Marie.” Jasmine ordered as she turned on her ignition. “He needs to know about this.”  
“What if he doesn’t—“  
“CALL HIM NOW!”

“Okay, okay. I’m on it.”

**AN HOUR LATER**

Cameron drove me to his home in Malibu, an hour’s drive away from Capital Records. His security team escorted us in their unmarked vehicles all the way to his beautiful white stone walled mansion and drove away as soon as Cameron entered his security pin on a nearby control panel at the edge of his drive way. I immediately got the impression that Cameron wanted us to be by ourselves. I then realized being alone with the CEO of Capital Records at his own home was definitely a red flag.

“Cameron, why did you bring me to your house?”  
“You want to know my secret.” He said winking at me. “You’re about to find out what it is.”

Feeling nervous, I opened the car door and he helped me out of his vehicle. As we made our way inside, he had a large elevator similar to the one at the hotel in Germany where the girls and I stayed during the HIStory tour. There were mirrors everywhere and Cameron kept a straight face as he waited patiently for us to reach the main floor of his home.

“Welcome to my abode.” Cameron said as he swiped an access card through a slot in his entry door. When I walked through the entrance, I couldn’t help but admire the beautiful dwelling that belonged to the President and CEO of Capital Records. Neverland was one of the grandest places I had ever seen but it was perfectly clear that Cameron’s home was a close second. The entire mansion was embedded with style and elegance and nothing but sophistication dripped from each wall.

“Cameron, your house…”  
“You like it?”  
“LIKE? It’s unbelievably stunning.”  
“I’m glad you think so.” He said offering me a seat in his living room.

“Would you like anything?” He asked making himself comfortable next to me.

“No, thank you. So tell me, what is it that Mr. Garivey is hiding from the world?”  
“I see you don’t like to waste any time.”  
“Absolutely not. I’m dying to know.”



“Diana…” He said speaking very slowly. “I’m not the man you think I am.”

“What do you mean?”  
“I have very...’unique’ interests.”

Cameron’s voice suddenly became deeper.

“What are you referring to?”  
“I don’t think you’d understand if I told you.”  
“Show me then.”

Cameron smiled. He obviously misinterpreted my words and thought I’d be ok and comfortable with the one aspect of his life that he chose to keep a secret. Not wanting to assume the worst, I stayed quiet wanting to know the single hidden detail about my future business partner that only a few select people were informed about.

“Come with me.” He said standing up from the couch and leading me by the hand upstairs to another floor in his oversized palace of a home.

Marie called Neverland trying to reach Michael but Kai and Bev both told her he was not there. She then tried calling Javon knowing he took him somewhere but he too was not answering his calls or returning any of them. Worried, Jasmine drove to Capital Records demanding answers. She saw Erica at the front desk and told the girls that both CEO’s left in his car a while ago and did not say where they were heading or when they would return.

“Where does he live?” Jasmine asked.   
“Somewhere in Malibu.”  
“Give me his address!”  
“I’m sorry. I can’t release that information to you.”  
“Diana is weeks away from having a baby and she’s practically gone missing.” Jasmine said. “I’m not asking you Erica. I’M TELLING YOU. Give me Cameron Garivey’s address or I will see to it that you never work in this city again.”  
“Mr. Garivey will fire me.”  
“Believe me…” Marie said trying to stay calm. “He won’t get the chance to if we find him first.” Marie added.

“GIVE ME THE MAN’S ADDRESS NOW!” Jasmine yelled alerting the other staff members.

Erica did as she was told and wrote her boss’s address on a piece of paper. Marie snatched it from her hands and the two of them bolted out of Capital Records in Jasmine’s car racing down the freeway towards Malibu. Jasmine’s heart was pounding and Marie was so worried she couldn’t help but cry. Jasmine regretted telling her boss about the handsome CEO and vowed to break his legs if he laid a hand on her boss and best friend.

After going down four floors in the elevator, Cameron led me across a very long, black walled hallway in his home filled with red halogen lights and black throw rugs against the dark burgundy hardwood floor. He stood in front of a large black painted door with a poem engraved on it:

“**We are always in season for the embrace of pain.**

**To experience pain requires no intelligence, no maturity, no wisdom,**

**no slow working of the hormones in the moist midnight of our innards.**

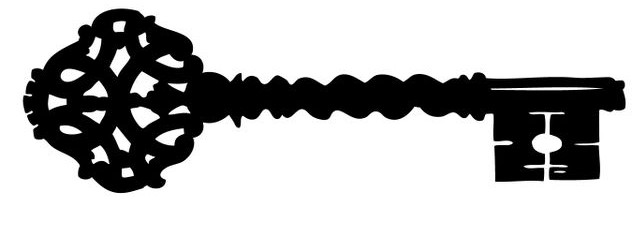
**We are always ripe for it. All life is ripe for it. Always**.”

I gasped to myself. **What the heck kind of interest did this man have?**

“NO ONE can ever know about what you see behind this door.” Cameron said with a dark, raspy sounding voice. “Promise me, Diana.”

“Sure, I promise.”

He pulled out a single black matted skeleton key from his pant pocket and placed it in the keyhole. After gazing at me one more time he unlocked the door and opened it switching the light on showing me a room full of items I had never seen or heard of before.



“Hurry up, Jas!” Marie said.

“I’m going, I’m going!” Jasmine replied speeding like a race car driver on the freeway. “I don’t want to get us killed.”  
“Please don’t use that term!” Marie said feeling more anxious than ever. “Oh god, I really hope she’s ok.”  
“She’ll be fine.” Jasmine said. “I’ve called the police and notified Michael’s security. If that fucker tries to do anything with Diana he’ll regret it for the rest of his sorry life.”

“I’ll squeeze his scrawny little neck till his eyeballs pop out!” Marie said.

“And then I’ll use David’s military equipment to castrate him, cut his eyelids off and feed him nothing but sleeping pills.”

“Jas, you’re a psycho.” Marie said fearing for her life.   
“When it comes to the people I care about, yes.” Jasmine said calmly while still driving like a maniac. “No one messes with our best friend, boss and Michael’s fiancé and lives to tell about it, Marie. NO ONE.”

“Cameron…what is all this?” I asked with my back towards him.

He didn’t respond. I then turned around and saw him standing directly behind me with a flogger in one hand and no shirt on. His entire body was covered in bruises and red marks startling me to death.

“I’m a masochist, Diana.” He replied with a completely new tone of voice.

I screamed for my life and tried to run but Cameron forcefully grabbed me and held me close to him.

“I’ve been fantasizing about this day for so long.” He said adding pressure to his already firm grip on me. “I want you to be my one and only client, Diana.”  
“Cameron, you’re hurting me.”

“Doesn’t it feel good?”  
“NO, IT DOESN’T! LET ME GO!”

I tried to free myself but Cameron’s strength was much too overbearing. His touch went deeper against my arms making large indents on my skin.

“Cameron, please let me go. I can’t do this with you. I’m engaged and pregnant.”  
“That didn’t stop you from being with me for the past three months.”  
“I had no idea you were like this. You had me convinced that you were a normal businessman.”  
“I am when I walk out of those doors. But in here, I’m in my world of reverie.”  
“Cameron, this is insane.” I said with fresh tears pouring down my face. “I can’t do this. Please let me go.”

“You wanted to know my secret and now you do.” He said kissing and licking my cheek. “Do this with me, Diana. I guarantee you will love every second of it.”

“STOP!” I yelled as he continued to keep hold of me in his hands. “LET ME GO NOW!”

After a hard struggle, I finally managed to break free from him and tried to run away but he grabbed me from behind and pulled me towards him.

“You will be with me, Diana.” He said directly in my ear. “I will make sure of it.”  
“Cameron, you need help. I can’t believe I didn’t listen to Michael or my friends about you.”  
“Fuck that girly looking clown!” Cameron said angrily. “He can’t do a thing for you. I can give you the world and bring it to your feet if you let me.”

“GET AWAY FROM ME!” I yelled. “I want nothing to do with you. Our business deal is off. I don’t want you anywhere near me. LET ME GO!”

I elbowed him in the groin and managed to escape from his grip again but he quickly got up and threw me against his black colored wall pushing me into it with extreme pressure directly on my pregnant belly forcing me to gasp and whimper in unbearable pain.

“If you refuse me, I’ll expose you to the world and to your sorry excuse of a fiancé.”  
“Cameron, I’m pregnant. My baby--”  
“Exactly, Diana.” He said changing his tone of voice again. “I’ll make sure everyone finds out about your son that you’ve kept a secret for the past six years…”