**Chapter Twenty**

*Who Is It?*

Thinking they were candy, Prince eyed the prescription bottle carefully and placed it in his hands. As soon as he grabbed one of the pills from inside, Diana entered the room and screamed incredibly startled to see her child with a fully opened medicine vial in his tiny hands and just seconds away from swallowing its contents.

“MICHAEL, NO!” I yelled as I ran directly towards him and forced the pill out of his mouth. “Where did you find this?”  
“In there.” He said pointing to the open nightstand drawer. “It was open, mommy. I was going to close it for you.”  
“Honey, you know you are not allowed to put anything like this in your mouth.”  
“I’m sorry mommy.” The young child said lowering his head. “I thought it was yours and daddy’s candy.”  
“No baby, this is NOT candy.” I explained. “This is daddy’s medication. If you ever see anything like this again, DON’T touch it or put it in your mouth again.”  
“Ok mommy.”  
“Promise?”  
“I promise.”

“Good boy.”

I kissed his little cheek then asked Prince to go in his room and play. After he left the master bedroom, I read the prescription bottle he had in his hand and realized that Michael was still taking sleeping pills and prescribed painkillers in secret. Thinking there would be more, I searched the entire bedroom, Michael’s closet and every bathroom cabinet in the main house, the cottage houses, his entire office and every other room that I could possibly think of. To no surprise, I had collected more than a dozen different bottles of various drugs that my future husband kept hidden from me and everyone else. Wanting an explanation, I gathered Dr. Baler’s documents into a folder and paged Michael in his studio asking him to meet me in our bedroom immediately.

“What is it, Diana?” He asked coming into the room and closing the door behind him.

Without answering, he saw all of his prescription bottles lying on the bed and gulped loudly.

“Are we even now, Michael?”  
“Pardon?”  
“Was this your way of getting back at me for keeping your son a secret from you for so long?”  
“Diana, you don’t understand….”  
“Make me understand then!”

Michael explained that he had been secretly taking prescription medication since the day Cameron and I started talking about becoming possible business partners. The distance between us, the constant arguing, loneliness, anger and betrayal was too much for him to handle and in order to ease his pain and sleep at night, he had unwillingly succumbed to his previous addiction once again.

“Do you take these every night?”  
“No, Diana. I don’t.” He explained. “I have it under control. It’s been a while since I’ve taken any of those pills.”

“Good!” I said gathering them into a pile. “Then you won’t mind if I throw them out.”

“DIANA, NO!” He yelled placing his hands over mine. “I didn’t say I don’t need them. I just don’t take them every day.”  
“Michael, let go of me.”  
“Please don’t get rid of them.”  
“Michael! STOP IT!”  
“GIVE THEM TO ME!”

The two of us struggled with each other as we both fought to grab the bottles. When Michael refused to let go of them, out of anger and concern, I had no choice but to push him against the wall in an attempt to block him from stopping me.

“MICHAEL! YOUR SON WAS SECONDS AWAY FROM SWALLOWING ONE OF THESE PILLS!”

“WHAT?!” The Pop star asked sounding completely shocked. “When? How?”

I explained the ‘candy’ incident to him and told him about our son coming into our bedroom to grab Dr. Baler’s documents. The thought of one of our children accidentally ingesting one of his medications frightened him. Without hesitation, Michael grabbed the bottle from my hands and the bed then headed straight to the bathroom.

“I will NOT let these harm me or my family.” He said emptying each bottle and flushing its contents down the toilet.

I stood in the bedroom and watched as he grabbed each bottle one by one and flushed every single pill away. I sighed in relief. It became clear that Michael FINALLY realized he no longer needed to depend on drugs to live a happy life.

“I’m very proud of you, baby.” I said kissing his lips as he emptied the last bottle into the toilet bowl. “I hope you never have to see or use those pills again.”  
“I won’t as long as I have you and the kids.” Michael replied as he wrapped his arms around me. “I love you so much.”  
“I love you too.”  
  
“I’m sorry Diana. I guess we ARE even now.”  
“Michael, there is no revenge in a relationship.” I explained. “You and I are human beings and we both made mistakes. We’ve also learned from them and know that they won’t be repeated.”  
“I didn’t know what else to do…” He said between sniffles. “I thought I was going to lose you and I just couldn’t handle it.”  
“I know, baby. I’m not saying it’s entirely your fault. Just know that the storms are now over and we can finally enjoy the rainbows they have left behind with our children.”  
“I can’t wait to marry you.”  
“Me too.”

**LATER THAT DAY**

Michael and I sat in his office discussing the details of Dr. Baler’s faxed medical questionnaire. The Pop star was saddened to hear the news of his son possibly contracting the same disease as him and desperately wanted to help his firstborn as much as he could to stop the disorders from worsening. We filled out each document thoroughly and called Katherine at Havenhurst asking her to come over right away in order to give us some more insight into her son’s medical conditions as a child and also to provide details about the Jackson family’s past medical history.

The matriarch was also greatly concerned about her grandchildren. Although initially shocked to discover the news about Prince, she adored him and wanted her grandson to receive the best treatment possible. After providing as much information as we all could, Dr. Baler arranged for a specialist to come to Neverland with a few professionally trained nurses to privately administer blood and urine tests and to submit them to Dr. Baler for further examination. Based on the results, Dr. Baler informed us that he would let Michael and I know if additional testing and/or x-rays would be needed.

Katherine’s samples were also taken and after spending a few hours with her grandchildren, she had to return home and promised not to disclose any of Prince’s details to her husband. After testing was completed and the medical staff left Michael’s property, Katherine told her son in confidence that she brought his signed marriage certificate with her and wished to return it now that her baby boy was sure he would be marrying the woman of his dreams. Michael smiled and hugged his mother affectionately thanking her for always being the apple of his eye. She gave the document to him and he immediately ran to his office placing it safely and securely inside his vault.

With his upcoming wedding and new project being in production, Michael knew he was really pressed for time. Waleed and John made all of the necessary arrangements for their friend’s trip to South Africa hoping he’d be able to enjoy himself before more serious matters were to take place in his life once again. For safety reasons, the Arabian Prince decided to accompany his friend and business partner and the two of them were very excited to travel together again.

“Our itinerary has been confirmed, Michael.” Waleed said as he and John entered the main house with treats for the kids. “We’re all set to leave next Thursday.”  
“Perfect.” Michael said holding Paris in his arms. “I’m going to miss my little princess.”  
“She’ll miss you too.” John said grabbing his client’s daughter. “I wish we could take this little bundle of joy with us.”  
“Not yet.” I said entering the foyer joining the three gentlemen. “Maybe in a few years.”  
“And where is the junior King of Pop?” Waleed asked.   
“PRINCE!” Michael yelled.

The young boy came down the grand staircase wearing an exact replica of his father’s iconic ‘Billie Jean’ wardrobe making everyone in the foyer laugh with joy.

“Oh boy!” Waleed said seeing his business partner’s son. “Diana is NO Billie Jean. This kid really IS your son!”

“You are absolutely right.” Michael said kissing the top of Prince’s head. “He’s my legacy.”  
“Indeed.” John replied. “Let’s talk business now shall we? I have some important paperwork I need you to sign so we can move forward with acquiring the licenses for the short film.”  
“Short film?” I asked confused. “Michael, you’re making another one?”  
“Sorry, Diana.” He said giggling. “It’s strictly confidential.”

“OH MY GOD!” Kai yelled coming into the foyer from the kitchen. “Mr. Jackson is returning to the big screen?”  
“Nothing has been confirmed yet.” Waleed added. “We are just taking care of all the necessary paperwork at this time.”  
“YAAAY!” Prince yelled. “Daddy is going to dance again!”  
“Maybe, son.” The Pop star replied.   
“Someone better take this gorgeous little creature away before I take her home with me.” John said handing Paris to Kai who then took her upstairs for a diaper change.

“I think her father would hunt you down, John.” I said smiling.   
“He wouldn’t even make it near the front entrance gate.” Michael explained. “Javon would shoot his tires and rip his car door open.”  
“You got that right!” Javon said entering the main house. “No one gets away from me and lives to tell about it!”

John gulped loudly feeling intimidated for his own life.

“It’s a joke, John.” Waleed said. “You can breathe again.”  
“PHEW!” The attorney said wiping the forming sweat on his forehead. “Let’s get to work.”  
“My office is open.” Michael said to both men. “Go right ahead. I’ll be there in just a minute.”

John and Waleed headed down the hall towards the Pop star’s office when Javon whispered in Michael’s ear that Joseph had been calling every guard at Neverland all day trying to get a hold of his son. Not wanting to deal with his father’s crazy antics and ridiculous attitude, he thanked his guard and informed him that he had no interest in dealing with Joseph at that time. Javon’s instructions were to inform the Jackson patriarch that Michael would be leaving town (which was the truth) and would deal with him after he returned to Los Angeles. Javon obeyed his boss’s request and informed his other co-workers of their employer’s decision.

Michael smiled as his heart began to feel at ease once again. Things were slowly starting to fall back into place at Neverland but with the absence of Marie, a dark cloud hovered over her idol’s head in memory of her. Not wanting to believe that she would be gone forever, the entire gang had faith that their best friend and Michael’s beloved teddy bear would one day return to her place of belonging.

**THREE MONTHS LATER**

**AUGUST 23, 1998**

Kai and Bev conducted several preliminary interviews searching for a nanny for Prince and Paris. After extensive background screening and security clearances, Michael and his fiancé still couldn’t agree on who they could trust alone with their children. Business matters at TSG were going smoothly with the exception of having to find a new administrative assistant to replace Marie. Jasmine went through resumes on a regular basis and did telephone interviews hoping to find a suitable candidate but was not able to choose someone on her own that would be able to handle the elements of the job as wonderfully as her best friend once did. After several in person interviews, Jasmine and Diana finally came to an agreement on an applicant they both felt would be a wonderful addition to the TSG team.

David left Los Angeles for his duty tour and would not be returning until early November just in time to attend Michael and Diana’s wedding. With Marie gone, Prince being re-united with his immediate family and her husband being overseas for such a long time, Jasmine felt that she was losing her entire family all at once. Feeling deeply concerned about his tea flower, Michael insisted that Jasmine stay at Neverland until after the wedding so that she could be close to him and her best friend. The beautiful right hand assistant loved the idea and happily took the Pop star up on his gracious offer.

Michael’s trip to South Africa in May was short but enjoyable. Several reporters and paparazzi followed him everywhere he went during his stay at the former South African President’s home in Johannesburg. Hundreds of photos were taken and several articles were written in magazines and newspapers about Mr. Mandela’s exclusive guest. As a birthday present to his good friend’s great granddaughter, Michael arranged to have $100,000 placed into a trust fund under Pumla’s name that she would have full access to on her 21st birthday. Humbled and flattered by the Pop star’s generosity, Mr. Mandela thanked Michael publicly and requested him to return again to his native country anytime he wished.

Brad and Ashley called Diana on a regular basis from school making sure that the entire gang was doing okay. The news about Prince being Diana’s son caught them off guard but both respected and understood their older sister’s intentions. Michael asked if they would like to help with the wedding planning and Ashley, being an aspiring fashion designer, jumped at the opportunity while Brad was more interested in planning his future brother in law’s bachelor party. Once their final exams were over, both siblings promised to return to Michael’s ranch for a second visit and to be included in the wedding preparations.

Jasmine and David were constantly keeping in touch with each other by phone and made sure their ‘stepson’ was adjusting well to his new surroundings and not feeling abandoned by his adoptive parents. After two months of paperwork, legal ramifications, a few court appearances, additional medical testing and personal interviews, Michael successfully added his name to his son’s birth certificate happily declaring him as the biological father of his firstborn, ‘Prince’ Michael Joseph Jackson junior.

Dr. Baler regularly visited Michael’s home to check on Prince’s condition to ensure he was progressing normally. Luckily, the young boy was not diagnosed with lupus but the small patches of discoloration on his body were ‘slight possibilities’ of vitiligo. Michael and Diana always made sure their son followed his doctor’s orders regularly and reduced his outdoor activities to a minimum in order to prevent any extreme exposure to sunlight.

Not wanting to isolate his firstborn from the great outdoors and to make his home more entertaining, Michael designed and arranged to have a shaded baseball field added to Neverland along with a large swing set, children’s pool, teeter totter, a second tree house next to his own and a large sandbox. Several new staff members were hired for the additional maintenance to his home and the Pop star was even in negotiations of adding more animals to his zoo. It became evident that the Gloved One’s children were definitely at the top of his priority list – along with God, his mother and his soon to be wife.

Unknown to the great entertainer, Diana, Jasmine and the staff at Neverland were secretly planning a party for Michael’s 40th birthday. As a special treat and due to their special day being just a few days (and 22 years) apart, Jasmine decided to include Mac’s birthday as well and informed him that the entire gang was planning a surprise for Michael only. Knowing the festivities could not stay hidden, Jasmine told Michael about the upcoming event but said that the party was for Mac only leaving both friends to believe that the guest of honor was going to be the opposite person.

Although the party was planned in such short notice, Diana’s guest list was confirmed for more than 100 people including a few members of Mac’s immediate family. Katherine, Janet, La Toya, Jermaine and Randy also planned to attend the event and of course, Michael’s three little angels were also invited. Kai and Bev volunteered to decorate and prepare the beverages and appetizers but Jasmine insisted on including everyone in the fun and no one was to worry about any of the preparations.

Diana made arrangements to have her fiancé’s magical home professionally decorated and hired caterers for the food so that everyone at Neverland could take a break and enjoy themselves on Michael and Mac’s special day. Kai being the health nut she was, insisted that she add a few organic entrees to the menu made by her due to her boss’s food sensitivities. Jasmine respected the chef’s wishes and Kai lovingly prepared a simple yet delicious sounding organic meal for Michael and the children. She felt better knowing that she too could enjoy herself and not have to worry about her boss or any of his loved ones feeling ill from consuming any unknown food items.

“Check, check and check!” Jasmine said crossing off several items from a checklist on a clipboard in her hands.   
“Everything good to go Miss Jasmine?” Bev asked coming into the living room with Paris.

“Yup! I just have to call the bakery to make sure they received my cake designs and we are good to go!”

“Michael will be so surprised.” I said as Bev placed my daughter in my lap then left the room. “And this adorable little bunny is going to look so pretty next to her daddy.” I said kissing all ten of her tiny toes. “I can’t believe our little princess is already four months old!”

“Where’s little man?” Jasmine asked as she flipped through a party magazine for more ideas.

“At the studio with Michael. He wanted some father-son bonding time.”

“I’m glad those two are getting closer every day.”  
“Me too. How’s David?”  
“Having fun in Europe. I think he met some hot blonde with a Swedish accent.”  
“WHAT?”  
“I’m kidding. He’s doing well. We talked on the phone last night.”

“Are we all set for the party ladies?” Kai asked entering the living room with a large pitcher of iced tea and freshly baked sugar cookies.   
“We certainly are.” I said pouring a glass for Jasmine and myself. “Has anyone heard from Mac yet? When is he getting here? Who’s going to the airport?”   
“Michael said he called a few days ago.” Jasmine said sipping the cold juice from her gold rimmed fluted glass. “He had some last minute things to take care of and couldn’t get an earlier flight. He’ll be here the day after tomorrow in the morning. Javon will get him.”

“Great. That’s perfect timing.” Kai said as she scooped Paris from my embrace. “It is now time for this little girl’s bath and nap.”

“Thank you Kai. You and Bev have been a huge help with her.”  
“It’s our pleasure, Diana. Have you and Mr. Jackson decided on a nanny yet?”  
“No. Michael is extremely paranoid about allowing a stranger near his children. The only people he trusts around them are the three of us, Bev and Katherine.”

“Well, who can blame him?” Jasmine asked. “The press doesn’t leave him alone. What makes you think they’ll leave his children alone?”  
“I know, Jas. But we need to make a decision sooner rather than later.”

“He’ll come around.” Kai explained. “I’ve known my boss for a long time. He can be headstrong but has very good intuition. He may take a long time to decide but once he chooses someone, I can guarantee you that it will be the right person for the job.”

“I hope you’re right.” Jasmine said taking a bite out of Kai’s buttery cookie.

Michael’s chef then left the room singing ‘itsy bitsy spider’ to Paris as they both made their way up the grand staircase. When the two were no longer in sight, I asked Jasmine the only question that had been circulating in my mind for several weeks.

“Have you heard from Marie?”

My right hand assistant shook her head no in disappointment.

“Still no luck.” She said not looking up from her magazine. “I have no idea where she is.”  
“I can’t find her anywhere either. Mac said that her parents moved from Rochester and no one knows where they are now. I’m really worried.”  
“Don’t be.” Jasmine said now looking up from her reading material. “According to what she said before she left, Marie is a grown woman and can make her own decisions. She also knows where we are if she ever wants to contact any one of us.”  
“Jas, we both know that Marie will not reach out to us first.”

“Yes, but we also know that Marie is still bitter about Michael choosing you and not her.”

“That doesn’t make the fact that she’s missing any easier, Jasmine.”

She sighed deeply then closed her magazine placing it next to her on the chaise sofa.

“Ok, Diana. I see where you’re going with this. If we don’t hear from her by the time David gets back from Europe, I’ll go to New York and try to find her.”  
“You’re a good friend, Jasmine.”  
“I know and you are very good at getting your way.”  
“I learned from the best.”

We both laughed as she and I went over a few final details for the upcoming party.

**OCEAN WAY RECORDING STUDIO**

**LOS ANGELES**

“You are a master.” Teddy said as he and Michael reviewed some new material in the sound booth. “How do you think of such things?”  
“They come from above.” Michael said humbly. “God gave me my talent to share with the rest of the world. I’m simply doing what I was put on earth to do.”  
“You are amazing.” The young producer said rubbing his mentor’s shoulder. “You have no idea how honored I am to be a part of this project.”

Michael smiled and laughed at his producer’s comment.

“Daddy!” Prince yelled as he sat on a couch at the far end of the recording studio with his Michael action figure and a few coloring books. “I love you.”  
“I love you more.”  
“He’s adorable.” Teddy said. “He has your voice.”  
“Does he?”  
“For sure. Maybe one day you can record him on a song.”  
“I just might.” Michael said smiling at his child. “You never know.”

Teddy’s cell phone rang and the producer excused himself as he left to room to answer his call. Michael turned his head and admired his little boy sitting across the room. He smiled to himself feeling proud but also blessed to have two beautiful children that he could finally call his own. After waiting almost 40 years, the Pop star finally felt content about having a stable family and loved the thought of a little boy and girl calling him ‘daddy.’

“Sorry, Mike.” Teddy said returning to the booth. “That was Rodney.”  
“Is he on board?”  
“He is, but he said in order to get your lyrics recorded we’ll need to go to his studio.”

Michael was so excited and relieved to finally get a chance to schedule and work with acclaimed producer Rodney Jerkins for his new project.

“We can be there tomorrow!” Michael said happily. “Where is it?”  
“Um, that’s the problem…” Teddy said.

“What do you mean, T?”  
“He needs us to record your material at the Hit Factory.”

Michael’s eyes widened and he gasped loudly.

“IN MIAMI?”

“You got it. Are you down?”

Michael sat in the booth chair scratching his head in confusion. He really wanted Rodney to be a part of his new album but also knew in order to get the perfection he desired he would have no choice but to make a trip out to Florida. On the other hand, leaving Diana with the children again wasn’t something he was prepared to do. He glanced over at Prince playing across the room and couldn’t help but feel flustered.

“I don’t know, Teddy…” He said brushing his bottom lip with his thumb. “Diana might not like the idea of me leaving town again.”  
“Mike, this is a once in a lifetime opportunity.” Teddy explained sitting next to him. “If we don’t move on this now, we’ll lose Rodney and he won’t be able to work with you again for the next three years.”

Michael sighed deeply and placed his head in his hands.

“I’ll talk to Diana when I get home.” He said. “I hope she will be ok with it.”

“Make sure you talk to her tonight.” Teddy replied. “Rodney needs us there by the 30th.”  
“Oh god…” Michael said under his breath. “The day after my birthday.”  
“It’s got to be done, Mike.”  
“I know, Teddy. I know…”

**LATER THAT EVENING**

“Dinner will be ready soon.” Kai said as she came to the outdoor gazebo where Jasmine and I were sitting overlooking the breathtaking view of snowy mountains and crystal blue lakes.

“Thank you, Kai.” Jasmine said. “We’re just waiting for Michael to come home.”  
“I’ll be sure to keep things warm until he gets here.”

Jasmine and I thanked Michael’s chef as she headed towards the main house. The sun was beginning to set beneath the horizon while the entire sky tinged of pink and purple. Neverland was looking more beautiful than ever and all that was missing was its rightful owner.

“Speak of the devil.” Jasmine said as she and I saw Javon’s black SUV driving through the main entrance gate.

The two of us stood up from our patio chairs and waited for Michael and Prince in front of the main house. As soon as the vehicle’s back door opened, Prince saw Jasmine and I waiting and ran as quickly as he could towards us.

“MOMMY! AJ!”

“Hey, squirt!” Jasmine said kissing her stepson on his nose. “How was your day with daddy?”  
“It was fun.”  
“Hi baby.” I said as he wrapped his tiny arms around my neck. “Did you get to hear daddy sing a bunch of new songs today?”  
“Yes mommy and one of them is for you.”  
“REALLY?”

“SON!” Michael yelled lovingly. “That’s a secret.”  
“Oops!” He said covering his cute little mouth. “Sorry, daddy.”  
“I’ll take him inside and get him ready for dinner.” Kai said greeting her boss and his child at the front door.

“It’s alright.” Michael said. “I have to do the same so we’ll do it together.”

As we all made our way inside the foyer, Prince accidentally revealed something to us that he obviously wasn’t supposed to.

“Mommy! Daddy is taking me to Disneyworld!”

“Shhhh! Prince…”

“You mean DisneyLAND, sweetie.” Jasmine said.   
“No, AJ.” Prince said shaking his head. “DisneyWORLD.”

“But that’s in Florida.” I said sounding more confused than ever.

“Kai…maybe you better take him upstairs.” Michael said sighing deeply.

“Sorry again daddy.”  
“It’s ok.” Michael said smiling and hugging his baby boy. “I love you.”  
“I love you too.”

“Let’s get this handsome little boy cleaned up for his favorite dinner!” Kai said as she took Prince’s hand and led him up the grand staircase.

When the two were no longer in sight, Michael asked Jasmine and I to sit in the living room and thanked Javon as he left the main house to tend to his duties. Michael then sat between us on the black leather couch and bit his bottom lip nervously.

“What’s wrong baby?” I asked placing his curly black hair behind his right ear.

“I know this is really bad timing but…”

“But what, Michael?” Jasmine asked.

“I have to fly to Miami to finish my project.”  
“WHAT?” I yelled not knowing what else to say.

“COOL!” Jasmine yelled turning against me. “I need to buy a new bathing suit! Oh man the guys are gonna be super smoking hot! We’re going to Miami!”  
“JAS!” I yelled bursting her fantasy bubble. “WE’RE not going anywhere!”  
“Like hell we aren’t!” She said standing up from the couch. “Forget dinner! I need to lose weight so I can wear a bikini. Miami beach’s here I come!”

Michael shook his head and giggled cutely to himself. I, on the other hand, was fuming so hard smoke could have come right out of my ears.

“I guess she can join me if she wants to.” Michael said grabbing my hand. “I’m sorry, Diana.”  
“Michael, you’re taking ANOTHER trip without me?”  
“I have to…” He explained. “This is the only time Teddy and I can get Rodney on the album.”  
“Rodney?” Jasmine asked. “RODNEY JERKINS?”

“The one and only.”   
  
“OH MY GOD! WE’RE GOING TO MIAMI! WE’RE MEETING RODNEY JERKINS! THIS IS BIGGER THAN MEETING MICHAEL JACKSON!”

Michael immediately stood up from the couch and crossed his arms.

“I BEG YOUR PARDON?”

Not realizing what she said, Jasmine cleared her throat and tried to explain herself.

“I mean…uhh…well you know….KAI! WHAT’S FOR DINNER?” She yelled leaving the room.

Michael shook his head and laughed as he turned around and faced me. Seeing me so angry changed his laughter into seriousness. He pulled me towards him and kissed my cheek turning on his innocent ‘it isn’t my fault’ routine.

“I’m sorry, Diana.” He whispered as he trailed kisses down my neck. “I’ll only be away for a few days.”  
“Michael, the kids and I need you…”  
“I know. I promise I won’t be gone long.”  
“How long is long?”  
“A few weeks.”  
“WEEKS?!”

He laughed then threw me into his arms.

“I’m kidding, girl. Just a few days.”  
“I’ll miss you.”  
“I’ll miss you more.”  
“When are you leaving?”  
“The day after my birthday.”

I sighed in relief knowing he could at least spend his special day with all of us and of course, attend his and Mac’s surprise party.

“I might leave right after the party.”  
“Are you crazy? It’ll be way past midnight.”  
“I have to be in Miami on the 30th or I’ll lose Rodney, Diana.”  
“Can’t you leave in the morning? The flight is only a few hours.”  
“I’ll see what I can do.” He said grabbing my hand. “Why don’t we make use of the time we have together before I leave?”  
  
I knew exactly where this was going.

“What do you have in mind?”  
“You know…”  
“Do I?”  
“DIANA!”

“MICHAEL!”

“Will you two hurry up?!” Jasmine yelled coming back into the living room. “Kai made spaghetti and meatballs and I’m about to devour it!”

“You two go ahead…” Michael said. “I need to shower and change.”

“Oh Lord, this crotch grabbing penny loafer is going make Kai’s dinner cold!” Jasmine said rolling her eyes.

“I won’t take long.” Michael said as he bolted out of the living room and ran up the grand staircase.

“That fiancé of yours is an odd ball.”  
“Tell me about it!” I said as we made our way into the dining room.

After dinner, Jasmine put Prince to bed and had a few last minute party details to take care of. Paris was asleep in her crib and the entire Neverland staff (except the guards) retired early for the night at their boss’s request. Michael was exhausted. He went straight to bed while I stayed awake catching up on emails and other work related projects on my laptop. Surprisingly, I glanced at the Pop star and noticed he actually fell asleep peacefully within the first few seconds of his head resting against his black satin pillow. I sat up in the bed with my laptop placed in front of me giggling to myself as I watched Michael’s adoringly handsome face looking incredibly serene.

“He finally sleeps.” I whispered kissing his forehead.

After wrapping up my CEO duties, I turned off my computer and opened the top drawer of the nightstand next to me. A small, white sheet of paper lay open in plain sight. Not recognizing the handwriting, I picked it up and studied it wondering who it came from, why Michael never told me about it and who would write him such a short but highly expressive note:

*“I miss you, Michael.”*