**Chapter Four**

*Curiosity, Cover Ups and Cleverness*

Michael was livid as he read the note several times. The thought of a stranger approaching his gate without his guards noticing infuriated him. He ran to the phone in the living room and paged his guards who were monitoring the premises to meet him in his living room immediately. Michael paced back and forth wondering who would write such a thing and why Jasmine would know something about his fiancé that he didn’t.

“Yes, sir?” A few of his guards said as they entered the living room.

“Where’s Javon?”
“Doing his patrols. Should I call him?”
“Yes, please.”

A few more guards entered the room and Michael closed the double doors leading to the foyer so that his guests wouldn’t hear their conversation. Javon grew worried as he saw the troubled look on his boss’s face wondering what the problem was and why he looked so upset.

“First of all…” Michael said trying his best to stay calm and polite. “I need you to check the surveillance cameras from the time we left for the hospital until now.”
“Why?” Bill, one of Michael’s guards asked.

“I’ll get to that. Secondly, no one is to leave messages for me without providing their first and last name. If they don’t, throw the message out. I don’t want to know about it.”

“Did something happen, sir?” Javon asked.

Michael explained the mysterious phone calls and the note left on his gate to everyone in the room. They all gasped in horror as their boss told them that someone had been harassing him about his fiancé and not getting caught. Javon informed Michael that the phones at Neverland were tapped and that he could easily run a trace on the phone records for him to find out which number and location the mysterious calls were coming from. Michael agreed and also informed all of his security to remain quiet and not alert his maids, chefs or guests about what was happening. Everyone agreed and left the room just as Diana opened the double doors.

“What’s going on?” I asked seeing an army of people leave through the main door.

“We just had a quick meeting. I need to wash up and change. I’ll be right back down.”
“Michael, the food is about to be served.”
“I won’t be long.”

He kissed my cheek and ran upstairs to his room closing the door behind him. It was painfully obvious that something was bothering him. I glanced in the living room and noticed the paper with Dr. Klein’s diet and exercise plan for me resting on the table. I quickly grabbed it and slipped it inside my laptop pouch on the floor in the far corner of the room.

“Where’s Mike?” Mac asked as he made his way towards me.

“He went upstairs to change and freshen up.”
“Oh man that guy always changes his clothes a million times a day.”
“You noticed that too?”
“I think he picked that up from me. I used to do that every hour too.”
“He just loves to look presentable every second of every day.”
“He’s lucky he doesn’t have to try so hard.”
“I agree. Neither do you.”
“Aw, thanks Diana.”

Mac hugged me just as Michael entered the living room.

“Hey! She’s MINE!” He yelled. “Get your own, girl.”
“Relax. I was just hugging her. Jeez.”
“Are you two always like this?” I asked seeing the two friends hit each other playfully.

“Yeah when Mike’s not being a bonehead!”
“You’re the bonehead!”

“GENTLEMEN!” Kai yelled coming into the room. “Lunch is ready.”
“We’re coming!” Michael said putting Mac in a headlock on the living room floor.

Kai and I stood at the doorway shaking our heads as we watched the two ‘boys’ wrestling on the floor and tickling each other screaming and laughing.

“I’m so glad I’m having a girl.” I said to Kai. “I can teach her to be a lady and not some obnoxious little boy.”
“HEY!” Mac said as he tried to get Michael away from him. “I’m not obnoxious.”
“Oh, yes you are!” Michael said.

“You two can behave like barbarians all you want.” Kai said. “I am taking this lovely lady to the dining room so she and Miss Marie can eat like civilized people!”
“OK, OK we’re done.” Michael said as he snuck up behind Mac and grabbed him again.

“UGH!” Mac said. “MIKE, STOP IT!”

“NO WAY!”

“GOODBYE!” I said as I left with Kai to the dining room.

The wonderful aroma of freshly baked bread and pasta sauce made my mouth tingle and water. Marie was seated at the dining room table waiting patiently for all of us to arrive. Kai had prepared my favorite foods: lasagna, Caesar salad, freshly baked dinner rolls and roasted baby potatoes. Michael and Mac finally joined us and we all devoured the wonderful meal in a matter of minutes. After the kitchen staff cleared our plates, a large chocolate cake with a picture of a baby girl and the words ‘CONGRATULATIONS MOM AND DAD’ was brought to the grand table. Marie ran to get her camera and Michael and I couldn’t help but hold back tears of happiness.

“Thank you so much.” I said to the entire kitchen staff. “You are the best people in the world. Michael and I are so thrilled to be having a baby.”

“You two deserve all the happiness in the world.” Mac said as he eyed the large, round dessert. “Where the heck did Marie go? I’m about two seconds away from becoming one with this thing.”
“I’m back!” She yelled taking several photos of the cake. “Now, let’s eat it!” She said grabbing the pink bowed knife from the table.

“Marie!” Mac said. “Let Diana cut her own cake!”
“We can all do it together.” Michael said as he placed his hand on top of mine. Mac and Marie also joined in and Beverly took a photo of us slicing into the delicious looking confection.

“We’re going to do this again soon.” Michael whispered in my ear referring to the cake at our wedding reception.

“Feed each other!” Marie said.
“We’ll save that for the wedding.” Michael said trying to hide his rosy cheeks. “Now, let’s eat.”

“Rick, where is the information I asked you for?”
“I told you, I can’t send it to you.”
“It was my family that made you who you are today. Don’t forget your place.”
“I haven’t and I don’t appreciate you throwing it in my face every time I refuse to give you what you want.”
“I don’t want to have to get ugly with you. Send me his background check.”
“You don’t need it.”
“Why the hell are you refusing to give it to me?”
“It’s none of your business.”

Cameron suddenly put two and two together feeling like an idiot for not realizing something so obvious.

“YOURE HIS LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE!”
“I didn’t say that.”
“It’s a conflict of interest for you.”
“Cam—“
“You bastard. Why didn’t you tell me?”
“There’s NOTHING to tell you!”
“I WILL get what I want, Rick! Even if it means firing you in the process. You know I ALWAYS get my way.”

“Cam, you really need to ease up. His wife doesn’t want—“
“SHE’S NOT HIS WIFE!”

“I’m not going to help you destroy two lives. Do what you want. I’m out of it.”

Rick hung up making Cameron throw his phone across the room. He needed to make sure Diana would agree to merge her business with his so that he could get his hands on her assets and profits. Cameron Garivey never had any real competition in his line of work until Diana moved to Los Angeles and stole his thunder right out from under him. Unknown to Diana, Cameron also had a secret crush on her and wanted to singlehandedly destroy her relationship with the King of Pop by making ‘anonymous’ phone calls about her secret and sending one of his workers to tape the note on Michael’s gate wearing a disguise. Cameron wasn’t one to give up on what he wanted. If his associate wasn’t going to give him what he needed, he would just come up with another way to get it – even if it meant breaking the law to do it.

“I am so full.” Mac said groaning as he plopped down on Michael’s sofa. “That food was absolutely amazing.”

“I agree.” Marie said sitting next to her friend.

“I need to call Waleed.” Michael said helping me sit down on his leather recliner. “I’ll be back in a while.”
“Is everything ok?” I asked.
“Yes, I’m fine.”
“You’ve been acting strange ever since you had the meeting with your guards. What’s going on?”
“It’s nothing for you to worry about.”
“Michael—“
“Believe me, Diana. It’s nothing.”

He kissed my forehead then left to his study. Mac and Marie were watching The Simpsons and enjoying their time together and wanted to see Michael’s animals once their large meal digested. As Michael walked across the long corridor, the front door swung open and Javon came in with Michael’s pet chimp sitting against his right hip.

“Look who’s awake and ready to start the day?” Javon said bringing Bubbles inside.

“BUBBLES!!!” Marie yelled jumping up from the couch and running towards him.

Michael immediately stood in front of his anxious fan and explained that chimps were very sensitive animals and didn’t like it when humans would charge in front of them. Marie then calmed down and petted the furry chimpanzee on his head. Mac and I joined in and Michael took his furry little friend from Javon and placed him in his arms hugging him tightly as if he hadn’t seen his owner in years.

“Good boy.” Michael said as he placed him down on the floor. “You remember Mac don’t you, Bubbles?”
“Hey there, buddy.” Mac said opening his arms.

Bubbles, like most chimps, had a photographic memory. He ran over to Mac and licked his face trying to kiss him with his large, damp lips. Michael asked us to keep an eye on him as he went to his study to call his business partner. Kai also came to greet the pet and told her boss that he had another missed call from an unknown person. Not wanting to alert his fiancé, Michael simply thanked his chef and left wanting to return his calls. Bubbles was wearing a diaper and a red military style jacket with gold embroidery similar to his owner’s attire.

Mac used hand signals to gesture the adorable scamp to sit on the couch next to Marie as he turned off the TV wanting to hear Michael’s music. Mac walked towards Michael’s large entertainment center and turned on his stereo. Ironically, a CD of Michael’s unreleased songs was already inside of it and the first song that played was called “Monkey Business.” Mac explained to Marie and I that Michael had a vault where he kept several thousand recorded and unreleased songs that only a few select people knew about. Curious, I wanted to know more about them and why he never told any of us.

“Your fiancé is full of talents and a golden heart.” Mac said. “He’s a writer, drawer, singer, dancer, lyricist, actor and the greatest humanitarian in the world.”
“I’m aware of that now.” I said watching Bubbles laugh and rock himself back and forth on the couch.

“Can we see the other animals now?” Marie asked.

“Ask Mike when he gets back. His animals are his babies – no one sees them without his permission unless they’re bathing or feeding them.”

While the three musketeers enjoyed listening to Michael’s music and danced in the living room, I decided to review Cameron’s financial reports again hoping to reach a final decision about the merge within the next few days. As I reached for my laptop and pulled it out of its pouch, the white note I had slipped inside earlier fell into my lap. From the corner of my eye, I noticed another piece of paper sitting on Michael’s glass end table similar to the one in front of me. I opened the note in my lap and gasped loudly as I read the words written on it.

***“SHE HAS A SECRET. ASK JASMINE.”***

“OH MY GOD!”

“What’s wrong, Ana?”
“Nothing. Stay here. I need to call Jasmine.”

I folded the paper and placed it back on the table making it seem like it had been untouched before I ran upstairs to Michael’s room and locked the door. I sat down on the edge of the bed and took deep breaths trying to calm myself down. In that moment, I realized that Jasmine and I were no longer the only two people were knew what I had been hiding for so many years. Where did this note come from? Did Michael read it? Has he asked Jasmine about it already? Why didn’t he tell me? So many questions ran through my mind as I tried to figure out who the other person was, how they found out and why they would use it against me to destroy my relationship with my future husband.

Jasmine was at TSG trying to take care of her boss and best friend’s business. Being away for five months really made the beautiful CEO fall behind on several projects but it wasn’t anything Jasmine couldn’t handle on her own. After standing in at an important board meeting on her boss’s behalf, Jasmine had a missed call from Neverland and a voicemail message. Thinking it was Diana, the voicemail alert made Jasmine listen to the message before returning her best friend’s missed call. To her surprise, it wasn’t Diana who called her:

*“Jasmine, it’s me. Call me back as soon as possible. Don’t tell Diana.”*

Jasmine gulped loudly as she ended the call. What could Michael possibly want to talk to her about? Why couldn’t she tell Diana? Hundreds of questions flooded her mind and all Jasmine could do was sit and ponder while sitting at her boss’s desk. After seeing Michael’s number flash across her phone screen again, her conscience suddenly kicked in and Jasmine gasped as she jumped to the wrong conclusion:

**HE KNOWS.**

Katherine’s driver was just minutes away from reaching her son’s home. Her heart was pounding as thoughts of her baby boy and future wife circulated through her mind. She knew her husband was a gruff and very stubborn man but didn’t realize how extreme he could be especially about Michael’s love life. For some reason, Joseph Jackson always took a liking towards Michael’s ex-wife. He truly believed that Michael was completely at fault for the breakup of his first marriage and was convinced that the only daughter of Elvis Presley was his son’s real soul mate.

Mrs. Jackson was no fool when it came to intuition. She knew in the core of her being that a storm was brewing and she had to warn her son about it before things turned for the worst too quickly. She asked her driver to hurry as she sat in the backseat worrying about her son’s future and hoping that whatever disaster was lurking around the corner would soon disappear.

I stood up from the bed and grabbed my cell phone from the dresser near the door. I called Jasmine hoping she would answer. After several rings, she finally did putting my mind somewhat at ease.

“Diana?”
“JAS! We need to talk.”

Remembering Michael’s words, Jasmine kept a normal tone and did her best to act like she had never heard from her best friend’s future husband.

“Is everything alright?”
“Jasmine, someone else knows.”
“That’s impossible.”
“I thought so too until I saw the note.”
“What note?”

I explained the details to Jasmine who was shocked beyond words. She and I made sure no one would ever find out until the time was right. All of the documents relating to the incident were kept under strictly classified sanctions until Jasmine and I both signed and agreed to disclose them to Michael or anyone else. Who could possibly have access to such confidential information? And why would they want to use it against me?

“Ana, it’s most likely that reporters and paparazzi are trying to stir up controversy between you two. I don’t think anyone else knows.”
“But what if Michael read that note and tries to call you wanting to know what it’s about?”

It was then that Jasmine realized she needed to tell the truth.

“Ana, I think he has read it.”
“How do you know?”
“He called me twice before you did.”
“WHAT? WHY DIDN’T YOU TELL ME?”

Jasmine told me about Michael’s message and things were now starting to make sense. Michael’s strange attitude towards me, the meeting with his security, saying he had to speak to Waleed. It all became clear. He was curious and wanted to dig up information without me knowing.

“Ana, you need to tell him.”
“I will, Jas.”

“You’ve been saying that for months. I am sick of it.”
“Jasmine, I am going through a lot right now.”
“So is he. If you tell him you will remove this heavy burden from your shoulders.”
“Jasmine, we just came back from a five month long tour in Europe. I’m five months pregnant, Cameron is on my back about merging Capital with TSG, I have you trying to run my business, and Michael is sneaking around trying to get information behind my back. It’s way too much for me. I feel like I’m going to explode.”
“Diana, I’m sorry you feel so stressed out but believe me it’s for the best. You need to take responsibility. Michael has a right to know and now is a great time. We’ll all be there with you when you do it. Tell him, Diana.”
“You’re right and I know the perfect day to do it.”
“When?”
“Halloween.”

Michael tried calling Jasmine a few more times but her line was busy. Not wanting to appear dishonest, he called Waleed to inform him about the HIStory tour’s upcoming financial disclosure and Waleed said he would be coming over in a few days to discuss those details as well as the arbitration between Gerwin and Lisa Marie. Michael knew seeing those two would be difficult but in order to get them out of his life for good, he had no choice but to face them one more time. He prayed that once this nightmare ended, he could finally put the past behind him and open a new door towards a brighter future with the love of his life.

“Michael, there is one thing we still haven’t told John or Rick.”
“I know, Waleed. I don’t want them to find out.”
“But Mike, it’s important to our case. Lisa Marie drugged you.”
“You don’t have to remind me of what she did.”
“I’m sorry. I know it’s tough to talk about but if we mention it—“
“Waleed, Lisa Marie did that without thinking. She’s not vindictive.”
“But her actions were.”
“I know her better than anyone. She’s a troubled woman who thinks and acts impulsively sometimes.”
“Just like someone else we both know.”
“I don’t want to ruin her reputation any more than I have to. I just want her to pay for what she did with Gerwin. I don’t care about the harm she caused me personally. I can forgive and forget it.”
“But, Mike—“
“I need to be with Diana before she suspects something. Call me again in a few days.”

I went back to the living room to join Mac and Marie who were now watching Tom & Jerry. Bubbles was still sitting next to them eating popcorn and laughing like a child. Seeing him so comfortable around other humans fascinated me. It was amazing how Michael’s love for animals shined through Bubble’s character and mannerisms. As I stood by the living room doorway, I felt the sensation of two strong arms curl around my waist.

“Here you are.” Michael said kissing my ear. “I missed you.”
“Me too. Did you call Waleed?”
“Yes. Everything is ok.”
“I’m glad.”
“Bubbles!”

The chimp turned his head and ran towards his owner.

“It’s time for your jog and snack.”
“He goes running?” Marie asked.

“Of course. I don’t let him sit around the house all day and eat junk food.”
“Like I do.” Mac said stuffing popcorn in his mouth.

“I’ll be right back.” Michael said briefly kissing my lips. “I need to take him to his trainer outside.”
“Can I go with you?”
“Sure.”
“Mike, is it ok if we visit the sanctuary now?” Mac asked.
“Yes, but please don’t take any pictures.”
“Why not?” Marie asked sounding disappointed.

“The flash from the camera frightens them. Even if you turn it off they will still feel unsafe around you and might get defensive.”
“That’s understandable.” Marie said turning off the TV.

As we all made our way to the front door, Michael froze in his tracks as he saw his mother walking up the stone path towards the main entrance.

“Mother?”
“Hi, Michael.”
“What are you doing here?”

Seeing Mrs. J after such a long time brought tears of joy to my eyes. I knew she came to give Michael and me her blessing about the baby and upcoming wedding.

“I need to talk to you.”
Mrs. J!”
“Diana, my dear.”

She hugged me tightly and saw Marie and Mac standing behind me. She gave them both hugs and told Mac he was growing faster than she was shrinking. After messing up his shaggy blonde hair, Katherine informed her son that what she had to tell him was very important and couldn’t wait. Michael asked Beverly to take Bubbles to his trainer and to walk Marie and Mac to the sanctuary so that Michael and I could speak to his mother alone. After the others left, Michael and I sat on the couch with Katherine as she filled us in on the Jackson family’s opinions about our union.

“Michael, your father is not happy about the two of you.”
“He never has been, mother. What’s new about that?”
“But this time is different. He wants Diana to prove that you are the father.”
“WHAT?”

“Baby, let her talk.” I said holding my fiancé’s hand.

“You know how your father is, Michael.”
“Unfortunately, yes.”

“You two will always have my blessing but Joseph is adamant that Diana is not pregnant with your child and if she is, she must sign a prenuptial agreement before you two are married.”
“WHAT?” It was my turn to yell.

“She is not signing anything.” Michael said sternly trying not to raise his voice and sound disrespectful to the woman who gave him life. “She is carrying MY child and I am going to marry her in a matter of months after she’s born.”
“She?”
“Yes, mother. We are having a baby girl.”

Katherine stood up and squeezed us both against her. She kissed our foreheads and thanked me for giving her and her son such a wonderful gift. I remembered Mrs. J telling me that she wanted a boy but I knew having a girl would not be disappointing for her. Wanting them to have a mother son talk, I excused myself and went upstairs to take a nap. Michael walked me to his room and said he would join me after his mother left. After getting me settled in bed, he kissed my lips and went back downstairs.

“What is the real reason behind Joseph’s intentions?” Michael asked.

“He still thinks Diana is trouble and believes Lisa Marie is truly the one for you.”
“Well, she isn’t and never was.”
“I know that and you know that.”
“Joseph doesn’t control me anymore, mother. I’m a grown man with my own home and my own career. I’ve been making my own decisions for a long time now. Joseph is just going to have to get used to Diana being around.”

“Be careful.” Katherine said holding her son’s hand. “I have a bad feeling about all of this.”
“So do I, mother.” Michael said hugging the woman he loved and adored his entire life. “So do I.”

“Wow!” Marie said looking at Muscles, Michael’s boa constrictor. “That thing is HUGE!”

“He’s grown since I last saw him.” Mac said running his hand down the reptiles scaly, wet skin. “He’s been shedding quite a bit too.”
“I think it’s gross when they do that.”
“Really? I think it’s kind of cool.”
“You would. You’re a guy.”
“What does that mean? Janet and La Toya think Muscles is cool too.”
“Well, they are Michael’s sisters – they share the same gene pool.”

Mac laughed as he shook his head and showed Marie some of Michael’s other animals. Louie, Michael’s charming pet llama made cooing noises when Mac petted his face and furry physique. Marie wanted to see the horses and Mac told his new friend an interesting secret about Michael that left Marie completely stunned.

“Did you know Mike is allergic to horses and giraffes?”
“HE IS?”
“Yeah, he can’t touch or go near them without taking special medication.”
“And here I was thinking I knew every single thing about him.”
“He doesn’t really tell people about it. I found out the hard way when he took me horseback riding one day and he fainted after we got back.”
“Oh no. Was that when he found out?”
“I think so but we never really talked about it afterwards. All he said to me was ‘I can’t go near them again without taking medicine first.’ That was when I knew and it’s never been brought up again since then.”
“At least he found out and it wasn’t too harmful for him.”
“True.”

They walked towards the golf carts and Mac drove Marie across the property showing her all of the rides, the guest cottages, the theatre and several other attractions all across the entire ranch. Marie couldn’t help but take photos of the wonderful scenery as Mac drove around trying to impress his new and overly excited friend. The two of them were inseparable as an adorable friendship began to bloom between them. Mac loved Marie’s company and Marie felt the same way. They both had created a world for themselves that only they knew and understood.

Cameron marched into the Los Angeles Times office demanding to speak to the manager. A tall, dark skinned man with tattoos and a diamond stud earring in his right ear greeted the CEO and asked him to take a seat in the waiting room. After waiting for more than 30 minutes, Cameron forcefully burst through a large set of wooden double doors and came face to face with an associate he hadn’t seen since he was in college.

“Oh my god. Cameron Garivey?”
“It’s been a long time, Jon. How are you?”
“My apologies. I had no idea you were waiting to see me.”
“It’s fine. I need you to do something for me.”
“Name it.”

Cameron placed a large black leather briefcase on top of Jon’s desk.

“I need your reporters to do a very important task for me.”
“And that is?”

Cameron leaned over Jon’s desk and spoke deeply and softly.

“I need your people to give me anything and everything they can get on someone.”
“Is that all?”
“Yes. For now.”
“What’s in the briefcase?”

Without answering, Cameron simply opened the carrier and turned it towards Jon’s face. His jaw dropped open and his eyes looked like they were about to come out of their sockets.

“This is just an advance. I need all the information and all the photos your reporters can get. I don’t care how they do it, I don’t care what they use or who they hurt – I NEED EVERYTHING.”
“Who are you talking about?”
“Do we have a deal?”
“How much is this, Cam?”
“The amount isn’t important. What I will give you AFTER the job is done will be much more than what you see here. Do we have a deal?”

Jon shook his acquaintance’s hand and smiled brightly as his greedy eyes glanced at the several piles of crisp, green $100 dollar bills perfectly placed inside the briefcase.

“So, who’s the target?”
“The most famous man in the world.”
“The president?”

Cameron snickered.

“Someone with way more power than he’ll ever have.”
“Who?” Jon asked taking a sip from his silver lined coffee mug.
“Michael.”

Jon immediately spit his coffee from his mouth and coughed.

“MICHAEL JACKSON?”

“You have 48 hours to get me something or you can kiss this job and your career goodbye.”

“But Cam, he’s the most impossible person—“
“48 HOURS, JON.” Cameron repeated before turning his back and leaving the office.

Jon Thurber has been the managing and print editor for the LA Times for the past 24 years. Cameron’s parents were close friends with the newspaperman and ran a story on the handsome CEO when he inherited his business. With Rick being of no help to him, Cameron decided to bribe his way into getting the information he needed so that he could execute his plan to destroy Michael and Diana’s relationship giving him the perfect chance to weasel his way into the picture and snag what he believed was rightfully his – TSG’S profits.

Cameron smirked as he left the LA Times building and jumped inside his jet black Maserati GranTurismo. He drove away in confidence thinking his idea was finally going to work in his favor. Unknown to Cameron, Michael was no fool when it came to protecting himself and his privacy. NO ONE could or would ever invade his seclusion without him knowing about it. Many had tried and failed but Cameron was certain he could do it. With his money, title and power in the business industry, Cameron was on a mission. A mission that could ultimately demolish the relationship between the King of Pop and his beautiful CEO fiancé – a relationship Cameron was aching to see the end of.

“I must go.” Katherine said standing up from Michael’s leather sofa. “It was good to see you again, Michael.”
“You too, mother.” He replied hugging her. “Please give my love to everyone at home.”
“You know I love you, son.”
“I love you too.”

Michael walked his mother to his front door and stood at the entrance watching her get into her driver’s vehicle and exiting his property. He sighed deeply as he worried about Diana, her condition and what his father was going to say or do next. Michael was never one to back down from his father and he wasn’t about to start now. He had a beautiful fiancé, a baby girl AND a court case to worry about. As he went upstairs to join his future bride, he heard the phone ringing in the distance. Beverly walked in the hall and told Michael he had a phone call from Waleed. Michael thanked his maid and took the phone into his living room.

“Michael, you better sit down.”
“I am. What is it?”
“They’ve both been released.”

“WHAT? WHEN? HOW? WHY?”

“Earlier this afternoon. It’s all over the news.”
“Who did it?”

“Her mother.”

Michael closed his eyes and sighed. He was so angry he could strangle someone.

“She always hated me, Waleed. I should have known she’d be the one to rescue her own child.”
“There’s more – the arbitration date has been moved up.”
“To when?”
“October 31.”
“Oh no. Everyone’s planning something for Halloween here.”
“Michael, this is your life. You can’t blow it over some stupid holiday that you don’t even celebrate.”
“We were doing it for the children, Waleed. It’s not about me.”
“Whatever the case may be, we need to start planning as soon as possible. I’ll come over tomorrow with John in the morning to discuss details.”
“Thanks Waleed. You’re always looking out for me.”
“Go be with your fiancé. You two need this day together since you won’t see much of each other for a while.”
“Thanks. Bye, Waleed.”

Michael hung up the phone and left it on the couch. He went upstairs to meet his fiancé hoping she was still awake and not suspicious about anything.

“Hey…” Michael whispered in my ear as he slid onto his side of the bed and wrapped his arms around my waist. “Are you asleep?”
“Not really.”
“I’m sorry about all the commotion. Things are just really hectic now.”
“I know.”
“Are you upset with me?”
“No, I’m just stressed and really overwhelmed.”
“I know. But we can get through this together, Diana.”
“I hope so.”

“How is cupcake doing?”
“She’s fine.”
“Have you felt her kick yet?”
“No. I think that will start within the next few weeks.”
“I can’t believe we’re going to be parents soon.”
“I know. Me neither.”
“Thank you, Diana.”
“You’re welcome.”
“I love you.”
“I know. I love you too.”

Michael then told me about his ex-wife’s and Gerwin’s bail granted by none other than Lisa Marie’s mother, Priscilla Presley and that his arbitration with the two of them was re-scheduled for Halloween. Although disappointed, I understood that my future husband’s legal battle was more important than any festive party and did my best to sound supportive. I also realized that day would no longer be the perfect time to tell him my secret. I sighed deeply as I tried to think of some other way to break the news to him.

“What are you thinking about?” He asked as he kissed my nose.

“Nothing you need to worry about for now.”
“Diana, I really need you in my life.”
“I know you do.”
“I have so much going on. I don’t know where I’d be or what I’d be doing if I didn’t have you by my side.”
“Michael…there’s something you have to know.”
“What is it?”
“Do you remember when we were leaving Europe and I said we needed to talk about something before the wedding?”
“Yes.”
“We still need to have that talk.”

“I know. I haven’t forgotten. Do you want to tell me now?”
“No. After your nightmare with Lisa Marie is over.”

“Diana, that might take months.”
“I’m sure it won’t.”
“Ok. But you know you can always tell me anything.”
“Anything?”
“Of course.”

“Maybe it’s best that you know now then.”
“Ok...”

Michael helped me sit up on the bed and rested my back against his square framed wooden headboard. He slid a feathery soft pillow behind my back and placed his arm around me while caressing my hand with his.

“What is it?” He asked linking his fingers with mine.

“Michael….”

Fresh tears began flowing from my eyes. Michael wiped them immediately and kissed my cheek as he whispered in my ear that he loved me and wouldn’t get angry or upset about what it was that I had been keeping from him. I tried to regain my composure and took deep breaths as I began to speak the words I had wanted to say to him for nearly six years:

“You have to know that I didn’t tell you right away for your own sake...”
“Tell me what?”
“I never wanted to keep this from you forever. I just didn’t know how to bring it up…”
“Diana, what are you talking about?”
“Michael…I have—“

“Mr. Jackson?” Beverly said as she knocked on the bedroom door.

“Not now, Bev!”
“I’m sorry to disturb you but Ms. Averson is here to see Ms. Dean.”
“We’ll be right down.” Michael said as he thanked his maid.

“What were you going to say?” He asked pulling me closer towards him.
“I guess now isn’t the right time.” I said moving away and standing up. “Let’s go see Jasmine.”
“You go ahead. I’ll be right down.”

“Ok.”

I quickly splashed some water on my face and touched up my hair before going downstairs. Michael smiled at me as I made my way across the room and closed the bedroom door behind me. It was then that Michael realized his future wife had been keeping something from him and it was no small matter. It was huge. So huge that he couldn’t shake the negative vibe of energy that rushed through his body when Diana said the words ‘I have.’ Michael then realized the notes and phone calls he was receiving had to be for a reason. Why would someone want to warn him about her? Was her secret really that serious? Wanting answers, Michael decided to question his future wife about her secret once more when the time was right. Curiosity was getting the best of him and he was going to find out one way or another – even if it meant asking Jasmine behind her back.

“Stop crashing into me!” Marie yelled as she and Mac went on a bumper car ride.

“It’s fun!” Mac said constantly hitting his vehicle into hers.
“I’m trying to drive here!”

Mac and Marie were enjoying themselves behaving like children at Neverland. Michael always wanted his guests to feel at home and leave their troubles behind his gates and that was exactly what everyone did. Marie had no desire to leave the property and Mac spent every second of everyday entertaining and getting to know his new friend. The two of them walked and drove around the entire property eating sweets, playing games and watching movies in Michael’s theatre. Marie had never imagined being so close to a famous person who was so many years her junior. Mac always believed that age was not a factor in friendships and helped Marie to realize the same. What they had was special and there wasn’t anything anyone could do or say to come in between their rapidly growing bond.

“Hey!” Jasmine said as she saw me coming down the grand staircase. “I just thought I’d come by and fill you in on what we missed while being in Europe.”
“How did the meeting go?”
“Fine. Boring as always. I took notes and emailed you the summaries.”

We both made our way into the living room and sat down. Jasmine briefed me on the HIStory tour’s financial disclosures, new talents trying to sign with my company, reports from the investors and many other documents that needed my immediate attention. After discussing all of the business related details, I mentioned Michael’s arbitration to Jasmine and explained that I was seconds away from telling him what I had been keeping from him before she came over. She agreed that now probably wouldn’t be a good time since he needed to keep a clear head for his battles in court. It was then that Michael entered the room wearing a new red and black wardrobe looking as handsome as ever.

“I’m glad you came back.” Michael said as he hugged his tea flower.
“She was just informing me of what’s going on at TSG.”

“That reminds me…” Michael said. “Diana, I forgot to tell you that I called Jasmine earlier.”

Jasmine gasped. Why would he tell her not to say anything to Diana then mention it himself?

“You did?”
“Yeah. I wanted to plan something special for you and needed her advice about it.”

Jasmine and I looked at each other in shock. Was he serious?

“I’m sorry I missed your call.” Jasmine explained. “I was in a meeting on Diana’s behalf then got really caught up with so many other things. I figured we could talk when I came over.”

“What exactly are you planning?” I asked my future husband.

“You’ll see.” He replied winking at me and smiling.

Michael then walked over to his glass end table and grabbed the folded note. I flinched in horror as I sat on the couch holding my tongue in extreme fear. Michael knew the note was there making me realize he had already read it and was seconds way from questioning Jasmine about it in private. His ‘planning’ idea was obviously a decoy to make me believe that he genuinely wanted to surprise me about something. Jasmine looked over at me and nodded her head as a way of saying ‘Don’t worry. I won’t say a thing.’ Surprisingly, Michael crumpled the paper and held it firmly in the palm of his hand.

“Come with me.” Michael said to Jasmine leading her towards his study.

“Michael, what’s that in your hand?”
“Something someone left on my gate earlier today.”

“Can I see it?”
“It’s just some ridiculous comment someone wrote to try and hurt me. I forgot to throw it away.”
“I can do that for you.”
“No.” He said firmly. “You stay here and rest. I’ll throw it out but I need to speak to Jasmine in private. We’ll be back in a few minutes.”

He kissed my forehead then left with Jasmine. After reviewing Michael’s finances, costs, profits, shares and disclosures for himself, Waleed, the investors, Kingdom and TSG, I signed each document and put them back inside their envelope. I paged Javon from the living room phone and asked him where Michael’s safe was and he informed me that it was in his study somewhere. I stood up from the couch and headed towards the office ensuring Michael’s business documents were kept safe and away from harm. Wanting to make sure our baby’s details were also kept private, I ran upstairs and placed the pictures of my sonogram from Dr. Klein inside the envelope as well. Michael hadn’t seen them yet and I wanted him to be surprised when opening the envelope to sign the documents releasing the funds to all those involved in his tour.

“Jasmine…I need you to tell me the truth.” Michael said as he sat in his office chair.
“About what?”
“Is Diana really keeping something serious from me?”

Before she could respond, the phone on Michael’s desk rang. The screen indicated Javon was calling and Michael knew he could not ignore his driver and member from his own security team.

“Yes?” He asked trying to sound as polite as possible.
“The phone records and tapes you requested are ready, sir.”
“Great. Did you get all the details?”
“Yes, we did.”
“Who was it?”
“The person who left the note was completely in disguise and dressed in all black. They showed up during the middle of the night in an unmarked car and were camouflaged in the darkness making it almost impossible for us to see them on camera. They did not touch the gate making it impossible for us to capture their fingerprints too. A scalpel type instrument was used to tape the note to the gate. It’s also hard to determine their gender because of the clever way they covered themselves.”
“And the phone calls?”

“They used two different numbers to call the property. One is linked to a business office and the other was done by an unregistered cell phone which we are still trying to track down.”
“Who’s office was it?”
“A US Official named Rick Ellis.”