Chapter Nine

*A Sudden Change in Direction*

“Ana, are you NUTS?” Jasmine yelled. “How can you even think of such a thing at this time?”
“Yeah!” Marie added. “I mean, with the baby and wedding how is a merge going to help you?”
“I haven’t said YES yet!” I replied trying to get the girls to understand my point of view. “I just said I was considering it. I’ve been reviewing Cameron’s financial history and working with him via email and phone for more than a month now. I think he and I will work well together if I were to agree to it.”
“Diana, you have made TSG what it is today.” Jasmine explained. “Are you really going to split your assets and profits with a guy who thinks you are nothing but a threat to him?”
“I don’t think he sees it that way.” I explained. “He and I have been corresponding daily with each other and I haven’t picked up on any negative signals or bad vibes about him. He’s also shown me reports that are classified and not allowed to be released to anyone but him. If he didn’t have my best interests at heart, he wouldn’t be wasting his time with me.”
“And what does Michael have to say about you being so close to this guy?” Marie asked eating her pasta salad.

“He knows we’ve been talking quite a bit and is really uncomfortable with it. But from one businessperson to another, he knows that this is all formality and nothing else.”

“Diana, I think you need more time.”
“Don’t worry, Jas. I won’t make any impulsive decisions.”

“Mr. Garivey, you have a call on line three.” Erica said pressing the intercom on her office phone.

“Garivey.”
“Cameron, I’m glad I caught you.”
“What do you want, Jon?”
“Did you receive your funds?”
“Yes. A few weeks ago. What do you want?”
“Since you no longer require my assistance, I guess this would be a good time to congratulate you.”
“On what?”
“Luring Diana Dean into your web of sin.”
“What the hell are you talking about?”
“There are rumors going around that Miss CEO is considering merging her company with a very strong competitor. And we all know who that is.”
 “You’re lying.”
“Am I?”
“I don’t have time for your silly games, Jon. Why are you calling me?”
“Turn on the news and see for yourself. And by the way, don’t ever come to my office asking for my help again. You’re lucky I’m not charging you with assault.”

“Go to hell, Jon. I don’t need you or your sorry ass reporters for shit. I made the mistake of asking you for help when I should have listened to my instincts all along. You’re a loser, your reporters are losers and you will die alone as a loser. Don’t ever call me again you useless son of a bitch.”

Cameron slammed his phone down and turned on his flat screen, wall mounted TV in his office. As he flipped through the channels, the news of Michael’s case coming to an end and Diana entering her third trimester were making headlines. He sent the beautiful CEO a brand new report he created entirely on his own a month ago consisting of strictly classified information as a way to convince her into believing that Cameron was willing to do ANYTHING to make the merge happen. Once he had her under his spell, Cameron knew his other plan wouldn’t be too difficult to execute. It was all just a matter of timing and patience. Nothing could come between Cameron Garivey and his plan to create a powerful business empire – one that he knew he’d become the leader of someday.

With Michael’s case coming to the verge of exoneration, the Pop star knew he’d finally be able to continue working on his business ventures and create new songs in his own recording studio. With Quincy and his other craft creating members by his side, Michael knew there was nothing he couldn’t do. As a ‘thank you’ to his fans around the world, he quietly composed several songs and short film ideas unknown to anyone, including his fiancé. Diana had been so wrapped up in her own business world that Michael was starting to feel distant from her and needed a way to deal with his new found emotions. As he sat in his studio at Neverland, he pondered for hours at a time every single night with nothing but a tape recorder, notepad, amplifier and synthesizer at his side.

“Michael?” Marie said from outside the studio intercom. “It’s me. Can I come in?”
“Sure, bear.”

He pressed a button on a nearby wall unlocking the main entrance door and Marie saw her idol sitting alone in the dark. She turned on the light switch near the studio door and walked towards Michael sitting next to him inside his sound booth.

“Why were you sitting in the dark?”
“I didn’t feel like being in the light.”
“Why?”
“I have a lot on my mind, Marie.”
“You know you can always talk to me about it.”
“I guess if anyone would understand it would be you.”
“Okay…”

Michael explained to his favorite fan that Diana was getting way too close to Cameron against his wishes. Marie explained to her Pop star friend that the CEO was just trying her best to make sure her business ran smoothly and efficiently during her absence at the office. Michael knew his fiancé loved him deeply but could not shake the feeling that something uncertain was hiding behind Cameron’s intent but without any solid proof, Michael knew he had nothing going for him other than suspicion. Knowing her promise to Diana about keeping the merge a secret, Marie did her best to convince Michael that nothing bad was going to happen and that things would work out perfectly at the right time.

“You are always so understanding.” Michael said.
“I do my best.”
“Will you always be my fan, Marie?”
“Hmm…that depends.”
“On?”
“If you’ll smile more and continue making great songs and wowing me with new dance moves.”

Michael giggled and smiled brightly at his fan.

“I’ll do my best. But once she gets here it’s going to be hard to focus on my work.”
“Don’t worry, I’ll take Jacksonella off your hands for a few hours each day and so will Jasmine.”
“Jacksonella?” Michael asked looking confused.
“That’s the name Mac gave her.”
“Speaking of which - what happened between you two?”
“Nothing.”
“You seemed upset on Halloween when you two fell in the pool together.”
“We didn’t fall Michael. YOU PUSHED US IN THERE!”

The two of them laughed thinking back to that wonderful evening of fun.

“You’re right. I did. But tell me, what happened?”
“Nothing, Michael. Really.”
“Are you sure?”
“It’s just...I knew nothing could ever happen between us but when Mac told me he was engaged I just…”
“You realized that friendship was really all you two could ever have.”
“Exactly. It just seems like every time I like a guy something bad happens. I mean it happened with you, with Gerwin and now with Mac.”

Michael hugged his teddy bear friend affectionately and kissed her forehead.

“I’m sorry.” He whispered. “I know there is someone special out there for you and when he comes into your life he will sweep you off your feet.”
“I’m not really looking for love.” Marie explained. “Just someone I can be friends with who isn’t already taken so that I can grow to love them eventually.”
“I understand.” Michael said holding his friend tightly. “I know how it feels, believe me.”
“I know you do. That’s why I knew you’d understand. The girls have no idea I feel this way. I mean Jasmine has David and Diana has you. What about me?”
“Marie, you will always have me in your life. You know that.”
“I do and seeing you makes me really happy.”
“I’m glad.”
“You’re a good person, Michael.”
“I’m just me.”
“That’s what makes you special.”

The King of Pop blushed as he let go of his friend. Marie looked down at the studio panel and noticed a large writing pad full of scribbles written in Michael’s own handwriting.

“What’s that?” She asked.

“Nothing.” Michael replied turning the pad face down.

“ARE YOU WRITING NEW MATERIAL, MICHAEL?”

“SHHHH!” Michael replied covering his friend’s mouth. “Please don’t tell anyone.”

Feeling excited, Marie jumped out of her seat and started screaming. Michael put his head down and giggled adorably as he watched his devoted fan jump for joy.

“Marie, stop!”
“Oh my god. Michael I am SOOO happy! When is it coming out? What’s it called? Can I hear it?”

“Oh god…” He said trying not to blush again. “Nothing is confirmed yet. I’ve just been doing a lot of composing and messing around with my equipment. Quincy’s coming over later to help me fine tune it all.”
“Quincy’s coming back here? OH MY GOD…this is going to be AWESOME!”
“Marie, please don’t tell anyone. I’m just in the planning stages right now. I don’t know if anything will even be released yet.”

“Will you add some of your unreleased songs to your new project?”

Michael looked stunned.

“How do you know about that?”

“Mac. He mentioned it to us while he was here that you have a lot of unreleased material locked in a vault.”
“He’s right. I do.”
“I’d really love to hear some of it one day.”
“I’m sure I could arrange for that.”
“YAAY! I’ll let you get back to work now.”

Marie headed towards the booth door and opened it when Michael called out to her.

“Marie?”
“Yes?”
“Thank you for always believing in me.”
“No need to thank me, Michael. Your fans will always love you.”
“You really think so?”
“Of course. To your family, you may just be Michael Jackson, the seventh child born to Katherine and Joseph, but to your fans and the rest of the world, you will always be the greatest entertainer, humanitarian and short film creator ever to walk this earth. You are invincible.”

Marie smiled and winked at her idol before turning her back and leaving his studio. Once he was alone again, Michael grabbed his notepad along with a pen and thought deeply about what Marie had just said to him.

*“Invincible…”* He said to himself before writing several words in his notepad.

“Ms. Dean, how wonderful it is to see you again.”
“Cameron, we’ve known each other for two months now.” I said walking into his office. “You can call me Diana.”
“If you insist.”

The handsome CEO helped his potential business partner sit comfortably in one of his office chairs.

“Would you like some coffee or tea?”
“No, thank you. I must avoid caffeine for now.”
“It shouldn’t be much longer I presume before the big day?”
“Three months.”
“How time flies.”
“Indeed.”

The two business people spoke for a long time about upcoming plans and projects they both had lined up and Diana could not help but be amazed at Cameron’s brilliant ideas. Not only was he her career match but he was also very keen on doing things distinctly, unlike any other competitor their business had ever seen or known. Cameron enjoyed Diana’s company and knew in the back of his mind that if he spent enough time with her, he could easily snatch her away from Michael making him the new lucky man in her life.

“As always, I am very impressed with your work.” I said looking over several sheets of paperwork. “I hate to cut this meeting short but I have a follow up appointment with my doctor that I can’t be late for. Would it be ok if I took your documents home with me to review them further?”
“Why don’t we change things up a little bit, Diana?”
“What did you have in mind?”

Cameron grinned devilishly.

“Why don’t we discuss these plans in more detail over dinner?”
“I beg your pardon?”
“I’ll make reservations for tonight.”
“Cameron, I appreciate that but I don’t think—“
“Bring your fiancé too.”
“That’s definitely not a good idea.”

Cameron laughed on the inside. He knew that was exactly what Diana was going to say.

“And why is that?”
“Isn’t it obvious? He’s Michael Jackson. The man can’t go anywhere in public without causing a riot.”
“So your telling me that your moonwalking significant other will have a problem with his fiancé going out to a business dinner without him on her arm?”
“Cameron, it’s a lovely gesture but I think we should keep this strictly business.”
“Diana, business will always be business. This is just a friendly invitation to a potential co-partner to share a lovely meal with me in a different atmosphere.”

Diana was completely aware of the fact that going out to dinner with Cameron would upset Michael. She refused the CEO again but as we all knew, Cameron was not one to ever take NO for an answer.

“Since when does the world renowned Diana Dean allow a man to dictate to her?” Cameron asked cleverly. “Didn’t you once tell me that no man could ever put you in your place and live to tell about it?”
“Cameron, that was then. This is now.”
“Now has not changed just because you have a child inside of you, Diana. You are still the same CEO you were before. Your personal life does not reflect on your business life. I too tend to keep both worlds completely separated.”
“And what does the President and CEO of Capital Records do in his personal life that must be kept a secret?”
“Would you like to find out?”
“You are a very charming and convincing man, Mr. Garivey.”
“Believe me. You haven’t seen anything yet, Ms. Dean. I’ll pick you up at 8.”

“Mr. Jackson? Your guest has arrived.”
“Thank you, Javon. Please let him in.”

Michael’s talk with Marie inspired him so much that he filled two large notepads with song lyrics and poems in just a matter of minutes. As he waited for Quincy to arrive, Michael grabbed a third notepad from a nearby shelf and started to write down more of his thoughts and ideas. For a short while, it seemed like Michael’s zest for music never left him and he was on the brink of creating a project that was so incredibly unique and wonderful. One that he knew his fans would love and appreciate mostly because it came from him.

“What’s going on Mike?“ Quincy asked as he entered the sound booth. “You wanted to see me?”
“Yes. I have something really important that I want to share with you.”
“Hi, Michael.” A female voice said peering in through the door.

“Oh my god!” Michael yelled as he wrapped his arms around the surprise guest Quincy brought with him.
“I thought you could use a visit from an old friend.” Quincy said grinning.

“It’s been so long.” Michael said smiling from ear to ear. “How are you?”
“I’m well. Thanks a lot for inviting me to your Halloween party!”

“I’m so sorry. Q said you were out of town.”
“I was. I just wanted to see you sweat.”
“Same old Siedah Garrett.”
“You know it!”

“So Mike what did you want to see me about?” Quincy asked while taking a seat in one of the plush studio chairs.
“I’ve been coming up with some big ideas and I wanted your feedback about them.”
“What kind of ideas?” Siedah asked sitting next to Quincy.
“Musical ideas.” Michael said. “I want to get back in the studio.”
“Mike, don’t you think you have a lot on your plate already?” Quincy asked.
“No. I’ve been working like this my whole life.”
“Mike, you’re engaged, about to become a father and settle your case with your ex-wife. Now you’re telling me you want to get back into singing?”
“Music is my life, Q.” Michael explained. “Without it, I have nothing. I need to do this. It will help me stay sane.”
“Sane?” Siedah asked. “From what?”
“From life.”
“What’s going on, Mike?” Quincy asked concerned.
“Nothing. This is just something I need to do. Are you with me?”
“Let’s see what you got.”

“Michael! Jas! Marie!” I yelled walking through the main entrance door.

“In here, Ana!” Marie yelled from the living room.

“Hey, how was your day?” I asked sitting next to my best friend and former secretary.

“It was ok. How was your meeting with Mr. CEO?”

“Interesting.”
“In what way?”
“Marie, I need some advice.”
“You’re asking ME?”
“Why wouldn’t I?”
“You usually go to Jas for advice, Ana.”
“I know but I have a feeling she will take this too far if I tell her right away.”
“What are you talking about? Is everything ok?”
“Marie…”

I sighed deeply feeling an enormous burden over my head clouding my mind with nothing but guilt and extreme confusion. Marie studied my face and knew within seconds that something serious had happened and I just could not get the words out of my mouth to tell her about it. She put her arm on my shoulder as a way to comfort and assure me that everything would be ok. For some unknown reason, Cameron Garivey had a serious effect on me – one that I did not know how to control.

“Ana…what is it?”
“Marie…you know Cameron and I have been working closely together for the past month.”
“Yeah...”
“And you know Michael and I have been sort of distant lately.”
“Yeah…”
“Well, something happened today and I don’t know how to tell Michael or Jasmine about it.”
“Ana, you’re really freaking me out.”
“Cameron asked me to go to dinner with him.”

“PFFFFT!” Marie and I heard as we both turned our heads and saw Jasmine standing near the living room doorway spitting water out from a glass she was holding.

“HE ASKED YOU OUT?!”
“SHHH! JAS, MICHAEL MIGHT HEAR YOU!”
“OH.MY.GOD. Please tell me you said yes.”
“Jasmine, you are always creeping up on me at the wrong time.”
“The WRONG time? Girl, if I hadn’t come in just now I would’ve missed the biggest news of the century. So, when and where are you two going? Oh my god we have to get you a dress. Wait…you did say yes right?”
“JAS!” I yelled trying to get her to see reason. “I’m engaged and six months pregnant remember?”
“Oh right. But this is Cameron Garivey. He’s ridiculously hot. Diana, you have to go out with him. Did you say yes?”
“Not exactly.”
“So you turned him down?” Marie asked.
“Not exactly.”
“Ok, now I’m lost.” Jasmine said sitting next to Marie and I. “What DID you say to him?”
“I didn’t say anything. We were talking about future business plans and the next thing I knew, he said ‘see you at 8’ and I just shook my head and smiled as I left his office.”

“And what exactly are you going to tell Michael?” Marie asked.
“The truth. I know he doesn’t approve of mine and Cameron’s relationship but we are just potential business partners. Nothing more.”
“Diana, that man is fine as hell. I swear if I wasn’t married I would tap that—“
“JASMINE!” I yelled interrupting her wide awake wet dream. “Please keep your freaky fantasies to yourself.”

“On a serious note—“Marie added. “I don’t think Michael will be comfortable with you going out to dinner with another man alone. Especially since Cameron is at the top of Michael’s hate list.”

“He’ll just have to get used to it.” I explained. “If we merge our companies together, Cameron is going to be in and out of our lives forever. Michael will always have my heart and be my husband. Cameron is nothing but a businessman trying to look out for me and my career as well as his own.”

“Whatever the case may be…” Jasmine continued. “We need to find you a dress. Let’s go to the mall after you tell Michael about it.”

“Where is he anyway?”
“Studio.”

“Again?”
“He’s been in there all day.” Marie said. “I talked to him earlier and he hasn’t come out of there ever since.”
“That man does nothing but work all day long.”
“Well, what else do you expect him to do, Diana? You don’t exactly give him the time or day anymore.”
“I have a business to run!”
“So does he.” Jasmine said putting me in my place.

“Marie, can you please ask him to meet me upstairs? I’d go myself but my back is starting to hurt and my ankles are really badly swollen.”
“Sure, Ana.”
“I’ll help you upstairs.” Jasmine said lifting me off the couch.

“You certainly have a lot of magnificent ideas.” Quincy said reviewing Michael’s notepads. “You’re really serious about all this?”
“Absolutely.”

“In that case, I’ll arrange some recording time for after next week once your case is closed.”
“Thanks, Q. Siedah, can you stay for a while?”
“Of course. I can’t leave without meeting your PYT.”

Michael giggled.

“She’s great. You will love her.”

“She really is amazing.” Quincy said. “Vince and I are convinced she’d be with one of us if we were her age.”
“She has standards, Q.” Mike joked making Siedah laugh uncontrollably.

“Obviously not if she’s with you!” Q spat back.

“She had to pick the one with the most talent.”
“And that’s why you asked ME to help YOU today?”
“I settled for you because Vincent is out of town.”
“YOU’RE GOING INTO THE DANGER ZONE NOW, BOY.”

Michael and Siedah laughed as Quincy playfully messed up Michael’s hair and hugged him like a son. Marie went over to the studio and informed Michael over his intercom that Diana was home and wanted to speak to him. Once all of Michael’s ideas had been presented to his two friends and musical assistants, the three of them headed towards the main house to meet the future Mrs. Jackson.

“Ms. Dean?” Bev asked knocking on the bedroom door. “Mr. Jackson has a visitor he would like you to meet.”
“I’ll be right down.”

“I wonder who’s here.” Jasmine said.
“I have no idea. I just hope it’s not Joseph.”
“Oh God please, anyone but him.”

Jasmine helped me touch up my face and hair and reminded me to tell Michael about Cameron so that she could take me to the mall to buy a new dress. I had no intention of impressing my possible business partner but Jasmine was adamant on making me look my best to help maintain my professionalism and to give the CEO a glimpse of what he could never have. As we made our way down the grand staircase, I saw Quincy and Michael sitting in the living room and Siedah sitting next to Marie taking a picture with her.

“OH MY GOD! SIEDAH GARRETT!” Jasmine yelled. “I love you!”
“Um, thanks.” She said hugging my best friend and assistant. “It’s always nice to meet a fan.”
“I’m Diana.” I said politely shaking her hand.
“She’s my one and only.” Michael said standing next to me and kissing my cheek.
“You are beautiful.” Siedah said gazing at me. “Congratulations on your upcoming wedding and baby.”
“Thank you so much.”

“I have refreshments in the dining room.” Kai announced as she made her way into the living room. “Ms. Garrett, how nice to see you again.”
“Thanks Kai.”

“You all help yourselves.” I said gently holding onto Michael’s arm. “I need to speak with my fiancé alone for just a minute.”

As everyone left the room, Michael and I sat on the couch and I told him about my business dinner with Cameron. To no surprise, he was livid and demanded that I refuse the CEO‘s invitation.

“Diana, he is just trying to seduce you.”
“WHAT? By asking me to join him on a business dinner?”
“It’s not a business dinner. It’s a ploy to get you in his bed.”
“Michael, I’m engaged to you and three months away from having your child. Do you REALLY think he finds me attractive enough to get into his bed?”
“He may not want to sleep with you now, but he’s trying to gain your trust so that he can pounce on you when the time is right for him.”
“And you believe that’s really his plan?”
“I’ve seen it happen several times with my brothers. Believe me. I’m talking from experience here. Please don’t go with him.”
“Michael…do you trust me?”
“Yes but I don’t trust Cameron Garivey.”
“Let me handle him. Nothing will happen.”
“Diana, I don’t want you to go.”
“I have to Michael. This is good for my career.”
“Why do you always just think about yourself?”
“Excuse me? I don’t.”
“Ever since you’ve been working with this guy you’ve completely changed. You don’t even want to spend time with me anymore.”
“I’VE completely changed? I’m not the one who’s always buried in music and barricading myself in a damn studio 24 hours a day!”
“I wouldn’t have to do that if you would give me a second look every now and then like you used to.”

“What’s going on?” Jasmine asked. “We can hear you two screaming all the way from the dining room.”
“It’s nothing, Jas.” I said grabbing her arm. “Let’s go to the mall. We need to pick out a dress for me to wear tonight.”
“TONIGHT? HE’S TAKING YOU OUT TONIGHT?”

“YES.”

“DIANA, DON’T GO WITH HIM.”
“You can’t tell me what to do. I don’t get involved in your career so stay the hell out of mine.”
“Diana, that’s not nice.” Jasmine said.
“No one asked you. Stay out of this.”
“You have my baby inside of you.” Michael said. “Until she gets here I have the right to protect you both.”
“Staying in a childlike home and refusing to grow up is not protecting us, Michael. You need to see the world for what it is and stop trying to hide behind your difficult past and childhood.”

“DIANA!” Jasmine yelled. “You are going too far now. Michael’s childhood was not an easy one and that should never be something you use against him.”
“I told you – STAY OUT OF THIS!”
“Fine. Go with him.” Michael said. “But don’t come crying to me when you find out the truth.”
“Don’t worry, I won’t. Unlike you, I KNOW the people I choose to be around.”

Michael stormed out the living room pushing past me and Jasmine. She scolded me for what seemed like the longest time about my rude behavior towards my future husband. I explained to her that I did not take orders from anyone and if Michael were to start dictating to me now, he would never let me have my way in anything and that was a power I refused to let anyone have over me. I made my way into the dining room and politely said goodbye to Michael’s guests before going upstairs and getting my purse and phone. Marie joined us and we all headed to the mall to get a new outfit for my business dinner that evening.

“Someone looks happy today.” Erica said handing her boss a few files to look over. “Did you enjoy your meeting with Ms. Dean?”
“Very much so.” Cameron replied smiling. “I should have known all along that I could get that woman on my side without anyone’s help. What a waste of time it was to get Rick and Jon involved.”
“Did she accept your proposal?”
“Not yet.” Cameron said as he opened the folder Erica placed on his desk. “But she will soon. It’s all about timing, my dear Erica.”
“Good luck.” She said as she left her boss’s office.

*I don’t need luck*. Cameron thought to himself. *I need to lure that woman away from that weirdo before it’s too late.*

He continued reviewing his new files then paged Erica to make special arrangements for him and his dinner guest. Cameron smirked cheerfully as he looked at a picture of Diana that he kept hidden in his desk drawer. He knew it was just a matter of time before his wish to be with her would come true and eventually Cameron’s secret that he too kept hidden could also be revealed. Especially since he knew Diana’s and her fiancé didn’t.

**LATER THAT EVENING**

“Ana, you look gorgeous.” Jasmine said as she helped me put on my new black maxi dress. “Cameron is going to get knocked off his feet.”
“Please don’t use that expression, Jas.” I said as Marie helped pin my hair up with a crystal clip. “The last thing I want to hear is anything related to Michael’s songs.”
“I still think you were really tough on him earlier.”

“I didn’t mean to sound harsh but he was really pushing my buttons.”
“Diana, he loves you and doesn’t like the thought of you spending so much time with another man.”
“He needs to get over his own ridiculous insecurities! I have been trying to help Michael with his confidence for years and he just doesn’t see himself the way we do. I can’t keep drilling it into him if it’s not going to work.”

“Then you two really ARE meant to be together.” Jasmine joked.

“And what is THAT supposed to mean?”
“You both are stubborn as hell.” Marie explained. “You always want things your way and he always wants things his way. Neither of you is used to rejection and that’s what makes you butt heads all the time.”
“She’s absolutely right.” Jasmine said pinning my dress from behind. “I know you won’t say or do anything stupid but Cameron is known to be a bit of a ladies man.”
“He can be one all he wants. Michael should know by now that I am committed to him and him only. If this baby inside me isn’t convincing enough then I don’t know what will be.”

“Just focus on the dinner and keep things professional like you said you would.” Jasmine suggested. “But if that man tries to do anything with you, go to the bathroom and call me. I’ll drive down there and give him a piece of my mind.”

“That’s not ALL you’d be willing to give him, Jasmine.” Marie joked.

“Oh Lord tell me about it.” She said going into her naughty fantasy land again. “He is so freaking hot. I swear I would give anything to lick his—“
“ENOUGH.” I said walking away from the girls and looking at myself in Michael’s full length mirror. “Thank you both for your help and advice but I’m a big girl and can handle my own affairs.”

“Just be careful with him, Ana.” Jasmine said. “We all worry because we care.”

“I know.” I said hugging the two girls. “I love you both for being so loyal to me. My hormones are all over the place these days. My back hurts, my ankles look bloated and I’ve been peeing nonstop for the past few weeks.”
“Welcome to your last trimester.” Jasmine said. “Just remember her and the reason why you’re at Neverland, Diana. You are so blessed. We all are.”

“Thanks Jas. You and Marie really ARE the left side of my brain.”

“Don’t you look stunning?” Bev said as she saw me and the girls coming down the grand staircase. “What’s the occasion?”
“A business dinner.”
“Wow. Some big deal happening?”
“It’s in the planning stages right now. We’ll see what happens down the road.”
“Well, I hope it all works out.”
“Thank you. Where is Michael?”
“In his office making a phone call. Shall I get him for you?”
“Yes please. I’ll be in the living room.”

Michael was in his study looking for an old phone book. Since his fiancé was going out with the opposite gender, there was no reason why the King of Pop couldn’t do the same except he would have this special someone come to his house. He rummaged through old boxes of photographs, video tapes and pages of song lyrics when an old photo fell to the floor in front of him. Michael noticed the people in the photo and smiled as he bent down to pick it up. In that moment, Michael knew exactly who to call to get back at Diana for speaking to him the way she did. After opening another box, Michael finally found his old phone book filled with people’s contact information he used to keep in touch with in the 80’s. After seeing that old photo, he took it as a sign that he needed to call the person he posed in the photo with. Someone that he had a real connection with at one point. Someone that he thought would love to hear from him again after such a long time.

“Mr. Jackson? Ms. Dean would like to see you in the living room.”
“I’ll be there in a minute, Bev.”

He sat in his chair and turned each page in his book until he came across the one number he was desperately looking for. He dialed and waited anxiously but nervously hoping that the number was still valid after all this time and waited patiently for the person to answer. After a good ten rings, there was finally a response making Michael’s heart jump instantly.

“Hello?”
“Hey…”
“Who is this?”
“You’ve forgotten my voice?”
“I must be dreaming.”
“Believe me, you’re not.”
“Is this a joke?”
“Does it sound like one?”
“OH MY GOD. I can’t believe it’s really you. Why are you calling me?”
“Is that a question to ask an old friend?”
“OLD is right, Michael. But it’s great to hear from you. Congratulations on your engagement, winning your case and your fiancé’s pregnancy. How have you been?”
 “Thank you. I’m doing alright. But I could use some company tonight.”
“In what way?”
“You know exactly what way.”
“Do I now?”
“Oh, stop it.”

The two ‘old friends’ laughed at each other making it seem like they were still the best of friends even after not speaking for more than approximately eight years.

“Are you busy tonight?”
“What did you have in mind?”
“Come over. We can talk and catch up on things.”
“Is that ALL you really want to do?”
“Stop it.”
“I’m kidding. What time is good for you?”
“After eight.”
“I’ll be there.”
“I’m looking forward to seeing you.”
“I’ve missed you.”
“I’ve missed you more.”
“I’ll be your mistress tonight.”
“Poor is the man whose pleasures depend on the permission of another.”

“How true. I’ll see you later, Michael.”
“You certainly will, Dita.”

Jasmine and Marie waited outside the main entrance to catch a glimpse of Cameron’s vehicle. Knowing that Michael would not allow the CEO to enter his property, Diana knew she had to wait outside for him but didn’t feel comfortable doing so without saying goodbye to her future husband. As Michael made his way into the foyer, he stopped and admired his more than beautiful wife to be in her new black satin dress and kissed her cheek complimenting her sparkling appearance.

“You look amazing.”
“Thank you.”
“Is he coming here to get you?”
“Yes but don’t worry, he won’t enter through your gate.”
“I’m not worried at all.” Michael said as he headed towards the main door. “Have a nice time.”
“Are you going to be in your studio all night?”
“No. I have a friend coming to visit me.”
“Who?”
“You haven’t met her yet.”
“HER?”

Michael shook his head and smiled. I was fuming so badly that smoke could have burst right out of my ears.

“Who is she, Michael?”
“Someone I’ve known for a long time.”
“Are you trying to get back at me?”
“Why would I do that?”
“I can’t believe you. Fine. Do whatever you want. Goodnight.”

Diana stormed out of the house and walked with the girls towards the main entrance gate. Michael watched the mother of his child from a nearby window and sighed deeply. He had no idea what was happening to his relationship and the thought of Diana being alone with another male who was also her career equal terrified him. He trusted his fiancé but couldn’t help but wonder if Cameron would be dumb enough to try and make a move on her. Not wanting to stress about things beyond his control, Michael decided to stay strong and positive and let Diana make her own decisions. She loved Michael more than anything and there was no way she would ever put their bond or unborn child in any kind of danger or uncertain situation.

“How did he take it?” Jasmine asked while slightly touching up my hair at the back of my head.
“He hit the roof just like I knew he would.”
“Can you blame him?” Marie asked. “He is your fiancé, after all.”
“I know that. But he needs to realize that trust is a very important factor in any relationship. That is something Michael obviously needs to work on.”
“What do you mean?” Jasmine asked.
“He’s having someone over tonight.”
“Who?”
“I have no idea. Some woman.”
“WHAT?” The girls both asked.
“I know. I wish you two could spy on him and find out who this tramp is.”
“Ana, it’s probably one of his sisters.”
“He said it’s someone I haven’t met yet.”
“Oh god.” Jasmine said. “He also requested his staff members not to bother him after you left and told Marie and I he wanted to be alone tonight.”
“I’m not going to be a hypocrite, girls.” I explained. “Michael needs to learn to trust me and I must do the same. I’m not going to be the insecure one in our relationship.”

“You go, girl.” Marie said. “That’s the Diana Dean we know and love.”

Just then, Cameron’s black Audi pulled in front of Michael’s gate.

“Oh my god, that’s him.” Jasmine said trying not to get overly excited.

“I’ll introduce you two.”

I signaled Michael’s guard keeper to open the gate and the three of us exited Michael’s property and headed towards Cameron’s car door. He jumped out and greeted me by gently kissing my right cheek.

“You look stunning.”
“Thank you. So do you. These are my two best friends and associates, Jasmine and Marie.”
“Nice….nice…to meet you…sssir.” Jasmine muttered completely embarrassing me.

“Hi…” Marie said getting lost in Cameron’s smoky grey eyes. “We’ve heard so much about you.”

“All good things I hope.” Cameron replied smiling brightly making the girls lose their train of thought.

“Of course.” I said. “Shall we go?”

Cameron walked me to his passenger door and opened it for me. As I sat down and made myself comfortable, he closed my door and walked back to his side saying goodbye to the girls one more time before driving away.

“You were right, Jas.” Marie said. “He IS hot.”
“I KNOW! Diana is one lucky lady.” Jasmine said. “She gets to work with one hottie and be married to another.”

**AN HOUR LATER**

“You have a disguised female visitor at your gate, sir.” Javon said as he called Michael on his intercom system in his office. “She’s light skinned with oversized sunglasses, a small mole on her face and a scarf covering her head.”
“I know who she is.” Michael said smiling brightly. “Please let her in.”
“Certainly sir and as you requested, no staff members will be on call for you this evening.”
“Thank you, Javon.”

Michael straightened himself out then went to his front door to meet his visitor. He wondered what she looked like after all this time and hoped she would not think he wanted anything more than to catch up with an old friend. During the 80’s Michael and her developed a strong friendship but parted ways due to his lady friend being too ‘provocative’ and ‘open minded’ for him. After an eight year hiatus and to show his fiancé that he too could have a strictly platonic relationship with a career equal of the opposite gender, Michael invited her to his home to reminisce and talk about the good old days. When he reached the front door, he was amazed to see how youthful she still looked for her age and giggled to himself as she walked towards his front door and wrapped her arms around him.

“Michael…how nice to see you again.”
“You too.”
“You look amazing.”
“I was just thinking the same thing about you.”
“I can’t believe I’m really here.”
“You are. Please come in.”

They both sat in the living room and Michael closed the foyer doors allowing the two of them to sit and enjoy each other’s company in private. Kai had placed beverages and snacks on the coffee table for Michael’s visitor and the two of them smiled at each other as they sat comfortably on the Pop star’s black leather couch conversing about the past.

“It’s been too long.” She said eyeing her friend amusingly.
“It really has.”
“How are you doing?”
“I’m ok. You still look shocked about being here.”
“I am. I can’t believe you called me.”
“I found an old photo of us and took it as a sign.”
“I’m glad you kept my number after all these years. I certainly didn’t mean to scare you away back then.”
“Don’t worry about it. But enough about me, let’s talk about you – tell me everything that’s been going on.”

“Like you, I’m a very busy person.”
“I know. I saw you in Evita.”
“Did you really?”
“Yes. You were brilliant.”
“Thank you. I had the hardest time filming that project.”
“I read about that.”
“But luckily everything turned out ok.”
“How is Lourdes?”
“Good. Being a little brat as usual. She just turned one last month.”
“I’m happy for you.”
“Thanks. I’m excited for your little girl too.”
“Only three more months to go. Are you still with Carlos?”
“We broke up in May.”
“I’m sorry.”
“Don’t be. We both knew we’d be better off as friends.”

“I’m glad you two ended things maturely. I wish I could say the same about Lisa Marie.”
“I wanted to call you so many times when you were going through your divorce, Michael.”
“Why didn’t you?”
“I was afraid you didn’t want me around you anymore.”
“I have to admit, I didn’t for a while. But even though we had our differences I always missed our friendship.”
“Why don’t we just start over?”
“I’d like that.”
“Hi, I’m Madonna.”
“Hi, I’m Michael.”

“Nice to meet you.”
“Likewise.”

“Where are we going?” I asked Cameron as he drove down the highway.

“Somewhere special.”
“Do you plan to keep me in suspense all night?”
“Just until we get there.”

Cameron continued driving and glanced at his stereo clock several times as if he were late for something.

“Are you on a fixed schedule by any chance?”
“Why do you ask?”

“You keep looking at the time.”
“We need to be at the heliport before it closes for the night.”
“Heliport?”
“I’m a licensed pilot, Diana.”
“YOU’RE TAKING ME ON A PLANE?”

“A helicopter and yes, we are going on a short flight.”
“Cameron, I’m six months pregnant.”
“I realize that.”
“I can’t fly. Michael will have a heart attack.”
“That’s exactly what I’m hoping for.” The handsome CEO said under his breath.

“Did you say something?”

“Diana, it’s a 30 minute flight. Nothing will happen to you.”
“Cameron, I can’t. I have a high risk pregnancy. It’s too dangerous for me.”

“In that case, I completely understand.” He said slowing down his speed. “I should have asked you in the beginning. I apologize for not doing that.”
“It’s ok. We can go someplace local and talk business.”

“Only if you promise to go on a flight with me after your daughter is born.”
“Sure. Why not?”

“A promise I shall hold you to, Ms. Dean. Just give me a second to call Erica.”

Cameron pulled over to the side of the road after exiting the highway and called his assistant asking her to make a reservation for her boss and myself at one of LA’s finest restaurant downtown. Once confirmed, Cameron pulled back onto the road and continued driving while still trying to make conversation with me.

“So, tell me more about yourself, Diana.”
“What would you like to know?”
“Anything and everything you feel like sharing.”
“I’m originally from New York. I’m an orphan and have twins for siblings.”
“Interesting. Tell me more.”
“I met Michael, fell in love with him and here I am today. The end.”

Cameron laughed as he drove through another highway entrance ramp.

“We seem to have a few things in common.” He said picking up speed again.
“Such as?”

“We were both born and raised in America, went to school and received PHD’S, lost both of our parents and used our inheritances to become very successful businesspeople.”
“I never made that connection before.”

“There is also one more thing.” Cameron said changing his tone of voice.

“And that is?”
“We both have a secret.”