CHAPTER 6

The Stage Prop That Drove Us Crazy

The look on his face was priceless. I knew this was the perfect time for me to get him back. “Michael, I really want you.” I pulled him towards me and started kissing him. I could tell he was shocked. I tugged on his shirt as if I were trying to remove it. He laughed and moved away slightly. “What are you doing?” “I want you NOW.” “No, we can’t.” “Why not? No one will see us.” “Michelle, not here.” “I can’t wait. I really want you.” I then reached for his pants. “Girl, are you crazy?” “YES! I’m crazy about you! Don’t you want me too?”

“Yes, but not like this.” I ignored him and gently pushed him against the wall. “You do this to me.” “No, Michelle. I don’t want to. It’s not right.” “You’re saying you don’t want me?” “NO! Why would you think that?” “Because YOU’RE the one resisting now.” “It’s not like that. I just don’t want to here and now. That’s something that means a lot to me and should be done at the right place and at the right time.” He was too sweet for words. I knew I had to tell him the truth.

“I was just kidding. I wanted to get you back for being a brat.” “You think I didn’t know that?” “OH MY GOD! I AM SO GOING TO GET YOU!” He tried to run but I grabbed him and pulled him gently on the floor and got on top of him. “You are such a kid.” He couldn’t stop laughing. It was beautiful to see him so happy. “Can I give you a hug you?” “Of course.” We both held each other on the floor without saying a word. It felt wonderful being close to him. I put my head on his chest and listened to his heartbeat.

“Are you still feeling ok?” “Yes, thank you.” “I should go so you can get ready for your pictures.” I stood up and helped him to his feet. “I’d love to see you again. Will you be at the house this week?” “I’ll be there tomorrow.” “I’ll meet you there.” “I’m looking forward to it.” He grabbed my hand and refused to let go of it. “Michael, I have to go.” “I don’t want you to.” “I’ll be right outside. Besides, I really want to see you dance.” “You do?” “YES! You dance like a god.” He smiled. “I do not.” “You know it’s true. Ask Aria. She will say the same thing.”

“Thank you. I’m to know you feel that way.” He walked me to the front entrance. I brushed his clothing from the front and back, touched up his hair and gently kissed his cheek. “You really are very handsome.” “I don’t think so.” “I’m serious, you really are.” He thanked me again and kissed my forehead. “I’ll see you out there.” I left the room and noticed the group photos were still being taken.

Janet came over to me and asked if I would take pictures her and Aria. I didn’t want to at first, but I didn’t want to seem like a snob so I took a few with the girls then Janet and I took some together. It felt really nice knowing we had a family looking out for the two of us. It was also a huge blessing to know that family was the Jackson’s.

Later, Michael came out of his dressing room wearing something completely different from before. He wore black pants, a blue shirt and a white shirt underneath. He looked simple yet so cute. He knew how to grab attention without even trying. Of course, he could be wearing something unusual and still capture everyone’s eyes. As I watched him walk across the stage, my feelings for him grew deeper and deeper by the second.

There were several photographers and people from the media taking pictures of him. “Look, sis he’s ready!” “I know. I helped him with his hair.” “You did?!” “Yes. Doesn’t he look great?” “His smile is bigger than anything.” Janet said. “What were you two doing that his hair needed to be fixed, Michelle?” “OOOOO, SIS! You got your freak on!!” “WILL YOU KNOCK IT OFF?” “It’s nothing like that. I just wanted to help him look his best.” “UH HUUUUH!” They both said.

The truth was, Michael looked stunning. It was obvious the camera loved him and even though he was always very shy, I could tell he loved the camera too. I couldn’t take my eyes off him as I watched him in the spotlight. His dark hair, flawless skin, angelic eyes and vibrant smile just blew me away. “He is so beautiful. Michael could give sight to the blind.” “That is so sweet. You should tell him. He will love that.” “Tell who what?” “Tell Mike what you just said.” I realized I was talking out loud and not to myself. “I didn’t say anything.” “Oh really, Mrs. sight to the blind?” Aria said. They both continued making fun of me and I was starting to blush even more than before.

I kept staring at Michael as he continued taking pictures. He signaled Aria to go over to him so they could take a few together. Janet stood next to me and noticed I was still staring at him. “Does he know how you feel?” “I don’t feel anything.” “Your eyes tell a different story, Michelle.” I sighed. “Yes. He knows.” “So, what’s the problem?” “I work for your mother, and I regret telling him now.” “Don’t say that. He feels the same way.” “Did he tell you that?” “Yeah, he did.” “I just don’t know how this is going to work. I mean, you are all famous. Aria and I are nobody’s.”

“Don’t ever let me hear you say that again. You two are like family and you’re both very special. Mike has never been in a real relationship before. He chose you because you two have a lot in common and you don’t care that he’s famous.” “Maybe you’re right. Thanks for seeing that.” I looked up at him again and saw him winked at me as he continued taking pictures. “He is very special. I don’t know what pulled me to him, but whatever it was definitely worked.”

“Are you going to start living for yourself now?” “Only if you two will help take care of Aria.” “Deal. She’ll be ok.” “Please don’t tell Aria yet. Michael made me promise not to say a word to anyone. But since you already knew, I didn’t want to deny it because you are his sister.” “You can always talk to me or Mike about anything and if you don’t feel comfortable telling us, you can always tell mother. She’s our best friend first then our mother second. She’s a great listener and very good at keeping things to herself. “Thank you for telling me. I just might take her up on that.” “She’d be delighted to help you.”

I didn’t notice Michael came over to me right in front of his sister. “Michelle, take a picture with me please?” “Are you kidding? NO WAY!” “Please?” “NO!” “Michelle, no one will see it. It’ll just be for me.” “No, I look horrible in pictures.” “You do not, Elle! You look beautiful.” “Whose side are YOU on?” “His!” “Michelle, it’s three against one.” Janet said. “Fine, only ONE and NOBODY can see it. EVER!” Janet and Aria started playing around and put some makeup on me and fixed my hair. Janet even put a wig on my head. “I DON’T THINK SO!!” I said and I pulled it off. “I was just seeing how it looks on you.” She was silly like her brother but also very adorable.

I stood next to Michael and the photographer asked us to stand inwards facing each other. Just seconds before the shot was taken, Michael put his arms around my waist and kissed my forehead. Janet and Aria were oohing and aaahing in the background. “I can’t believe you did that.” I whispered. “Our sisters have been teasing me about you all day and now you just gave them another reason to bug me.” “It could have been worse.” “How?” “I could have kissed you here instead.” He put his finger on my lips which made the girls scream even louder. “Stop it.” He laughed. “I love you, girl.” “Yeah, I know.” “Don’t you?” “You caught me, didn’t you?” He smiled brightly.

**\*\*\* LATER THAT DAY \*\*\***

After the photographers were done, Janet announced on a loud speaker that it was break time and everyone was to return to the set promptly in an hour to start the screen test and then shooting of the first few scenes. Aria was excited. “I’m going to practice my walk and some other steps. I’ll be back when the break is over.” “I’ll go with you, Arabella.” Janet said. “I’m sure these two can find something to do on their own.” “PLEASE, stop!” I begged. “You know you love it.” Michael whispered in my ear.

The girls left and Michael and I were alone. “I’ve never seen a film set like this before.” I said as he took me on a tour. “You have amazing taste.” “I chose you, didn’t I?” I smiled as he winked at me again. “I think there’s something wrong with your eye.” “It likes you.” “I’ve been hit by a smooth criminal.” He then started singing. *“Michelle, are you ok? Will you tell me, that you’re ok?”* “You are so silly.” “I love you.” “I love you too.” We continued walking as he showed me all of the different stages that he’d be working on.

He then walked me to the very back of the set where there was a back alley with a few older looking cars. “This is the central location.” He said. “Arabella and I will be filming here. But first, we’ll do the entire act on stage to get a feel for things. Once I see the playback we’ll come here and bring it all to life.” “This is cool. You really know what you’re doing.” “I did the same thing with Bad.” “Really?” “Yes, except that one was at a subway station but the whole routine was done on stage first. It helps me see what I like and what I don’t like in different backgrounds and lighting.”

“I never knew there was so much work involved in making films and music videos.” “There isn’t really but that’s just my way of doing things. I’m a perfectionist like that.” “And a cute one too!” We continued walking further when suddenly Michael grabbed my hand. “No one is here. Is it ok?” “Sure.” Like two kids, we were holding hands swinging our arms together. I felt like a child all over again. It seemed so lovingly innocent. “Michael, do you ever get nervous when you perform in front of millions of fans?” “No, not really.” “NEVER?” “I did at first when I was little but when you grow up with a father like Joseph, you’re never allowed to be nervous.”

“Was he really strict?” “You have NO idea. He still scares me to this day.” “Really?” “It’s because of him that I don’t look at myself.” “WHAT?” “I didn’t mean to say that. Forget about it.” “No, wait. What do you mean you don’t look at yourself?” “It’s nothing.” I couldn’t believe what he just told me. “You know I won’t judge you.” “That’s something that’s private. Nobody knows about it.” “I don’t want to seem pushy, but nobody knows what?” “That I hate the way I look.” “MICHAEL!” “Please, don’t tell me how handsome you think I am or how beautiful I look.” “I can’t believe you! Why would you think something so horrible about yourself?” “Because it’s the truth!” “ARE YOU KIDDING ME? NO, IT’S NOT! ” “You’re just like everyone else.” “I’ve telling you how gorgeous you are from the first second I met you. Why would you think I was—“ “Michelle! Forget about it!”

“No, I can’t. When was the last time you saw yourself in the mirror?” He was silent. “Please tell me!” “It doesn’t matter.” “It does to me!” He let go of my hand and starting walking away from me in the opposite direction. “Wait! Don’t leave me alone here in the dark!” I ran after him. “You won’t tell me?” “No, and I don’t want to.” “Maybe I can help.” “You can’t. No one can. The damage is already done.” “Damage?” “I told you – it’s nothing.” I didn’t want to make him angry so I stopped asking. But one thing was for sure – knowing that about him had me even more concerned. It was one thing for Michael to have physical pain and another to find out he was insecure about his own face. It cut me like a knife knowing that something so beautiful to me was so terrifying for him.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to upset you. Can we talk about something else?” He didn’t say a word and turned his back towards me. I didn’t want him to be angry so I hugged him from behind and kissed his back. “You know I’d never say anything to hurt you on purpose.” He was still quiet. “Ok, I’m a bad girl. I’m going home.” I walked away and he followed asking me not to leave. “I wasn’t going to. I just wanted you to forgive me.” “You didn’t do anything wrong. I didn’t even think about that for a long time. It’s a relief to finally get it out.” “Can I please just how long it’s been since you’ve seen what you look like?” “A REALLY long time.” “Weeks?” “More like years.” “MICHAEL! WHY?!”

“Michelle, I DON’T want to talk about it.” “Ok, I’m sorry. I won’t bring it up again.” “Maybe one day. But not now, ok?” “Sure.” He thanked me and kissed my forehead again. Knowing his secret disturbed me. I knew I had to change Michael’s opinion about his appearance and it wasn’t going to be easy or happen overnight. But if I could get the man to drink my protein shakes, I knew I could get him to open up about this issue too.

We walked a bit further then sat on the pavement against a wall and looked up at the sky. “I love looking at stars.” He said. “Me too. They are so pretty.” He put his hands around me and lifted me up putting me on the ground between his legs. “I don’t like when you’re far away.” “I didn’t want to invade your space or make you feel uncomfortable.” He placed his head on my back as I leaned against him.

We both sat there enjoying each other’s company. “I think we should head back.” I said not wanting to be late. “We will. I just love being with you like this.” He then started biting my ear which gave me a strong tickling sensation. I couldn’t help but giggle like a little girl. “You sound adorable when you do that.” “It’s not on purpose. You’re tickling me.” “Am I really?” “Yes!” I tried to wean him off me. “Come here, girl!” “Michael, you’re tickling me!” “Do you want me to stop?” “NO! I mean yes.” He then laughed to himself and continued.

He then ran his fingers down the back of my neck and gently blew on my skin. My hands were seizing and my breathing stalled. He kissed my back then worked his way around me. I knew that wasn’t the time nor the place, but at that moment, I really didn’t care. I had fought this man way too many times. I knew the time had come to finally give in to my desire.

“What if someone sees us?” He looked over at a parked car across from us. “Let’s go there.” “Michael! That’s someone’s car!” He shook his head and laughed. “It’s just a stage prop. It doesn’t belong to anyone.” We then got up and ran inside of it. I jumped in the backseat and he followed landing on top of me. “Are you sure no one will see us?” “Everybody is gone for now. When Joe comes back, he’ll sound the alarm.” “Who?” “The director.” “Oh, right.” “There’s an alarm at the main entrance. When the crew leaves, they sound the alarm so I know who’s here and who’s not. When they come back, they sound the alarm again.”

“Is that your way of knowing when to stop doing things you really shouldn’t be doing?” “I never do anything bad, Michelle.” He winked at me again. “You really need to get that eye looked at.” “I told you, it likes you.” “Come here.” I yanked him towards me. While we were kissing, I tried to untie Michael’s white belt that he had wrapped around his pants. He quickly put his hands on top of mine as if he were trying to stop me. “Wait! Wait, Michelle!” “What is it?”

“Girl, you are so impatient.” “I know. I’m sorry. I can’t help it. You drive me crazy.” “I do?” “Take off that belt and I’ll show you.” He giggled then did as he was told. I pushed him down on the seat and he began to undress me. The next thing I knew, we were both rolling around in the backseat of a stage car half naked. I had never done anything like that before. It was very exciting and SO much fun! I kissed his chest and worked my way down to his stomach. Michael was so turned on, he kept squirming all over me.

“Michael, stay still please!” “I can’t! That feels SO GOOD! PLESE don’t stop!! Girl, you’re amazing. Keep going.” “You like when I do that?” “YES!” Seeing and hearing Michael aroused made me laugh but turned me on at the same time. Him being pleased was definitely a beautiful sight to see. He suddenly got up and put me on the seat and jumped on top of me. “Please be gentle with me. I’m a lady.” “Oh, yes! I know!” I couldn’t help but laugh at him.

He lifted my shirt and started kissing me in all directions. What REALLY got to me was when he started licking me all over with his tongue. “OH MY GOD!” I screamed. Now I was the one squirming. He held my legs down with his strong, lovely arms so that I wouldn’t be able to stop from what he was doing to me. The man had me screaming so loud I was afraid someone would hear me. Michael was so loving towards me. He didn’t even care if anyone was around to see us. He suddenly removed my pants and then his own. He was so quick that I didn’t get to see him completely, but based on what I did see, Michael had a body like no other.

“I’ll try not to hurt you.” He said as he lowered himself onto me. I grabbed his face and kissed him again, this time with my tongue in his mouth. He did the same and before I knew it, the two of us were making love right. He went inside of me so fast I thought I was going to be finished within seconds. He pushed deeper and deeper until he knew he couldn’t go any further. I tried to be quiet but it was difficult not to scream and moan out loud. It was even harder for him as he was being louder than me.

There was so much intensity between us that we both couldn’t hold it for very long. Within minutes, it was over and Michael fell onto me, panting and exhausted. I put my hand on the back of his head and kissed the side of his neck. “Thank you.” I whispered in his ear. “You can stay like this on me if you want. I know you must be so tired.” “I am but I have to get up. I’m sweating and have to get changed before everyone gets back.” Just as he said that, we heard the alarm going off throughout the entire set.

“We have to get out of here NOW.” He pulled me up and we both got dressed as quickly as we could. “Joe is back. That means everyone else will be here soon.” He flung the car door open and helped me get out. We both ran back to the set looking like we had just woken up from a nap. My hair was frazzled and my clothing was uncoordinated. Michael looked even worse. His hair was so messy it looked like he had just been electrocuted. His clothes were wrinkled and his belt was hanging off the side of his pants.

Luckily, no one saw us as we ran to his dressing room and locked the door. “There’s a sink and a mirror right there.” He said pointing to a corner room. “I’ll be right back. I need to get out of these clothes and look like me again.” I laughed and kissed his lips. “You are so cute.” He smiled and looked down like a shy little boy. “Aww, are you embarrassed?” “No, I’m just so happy.” “Me too.” “That was so fast but I loved it.” “So did I.” He kissed my cheek and thanked me for what he called the greatest moment in his life. I told him I was honored to be a part of it.

“Michael, I will iron your clothes for you while you fix your hair.” “Are you sure? “Of course. I’m a care aid. That’s my job.” He quickly changed into something else and brought me the clothes he had on. “You really don’t mind?” “If I did I wouldn’t have offered.” “You are the sweetest girl in the world. I love you so much.” “I love you too. Now go finish getting ready!” He left to do his thing while I quickly ironed his clothes for him. I made sure there were no signs of dirt or stains anywhere and added some cologne to his shirt that he had sitting on his makeup table.

Once he was taken care of, I then worked on myself. I grabbed a comb I had in my purse and re did my hair and straightened out my clothes. I noticed a red mark on my neck from where Michael was kissing me. “Oh my god. How am I going to cover this?” “What is it?” I turned around and showed him and all he could do was laugh hysterically. “It’s not funny! You want me to give you one?” “Would you please? I know the perfect spot.” “MICHAEL!” “I’m sorry. I didn’t know that would happen. Come here.”

He sat me down on his chair with his name on the back and applied some makeup to my neck. “There. You can’t even see it now.” I looked in the mirror and he was right. “Thanks! I’ll give you a touch up now.” I added some color to his lovely face and he was happy with the results. I noticed Michael glanced in the mirror just for a second then looked away. I doubt if he actually looked at himself but I knew that wasn’t the time to bring that up. I didn’t say a word about it.

Just then, people were knocking at his door. “I think they’re ready for the screen test now. Do you want to leave first?” “Yes. It will look strange if you leave before me. Wait here for a few minutes after I go. I’ll distract everyone and then you can sneak out.” He got up from his chair and kissed the side of my head. “Thank you. I really enjoyed being with you.” “Me too.” He then left the room while I hid in the corner.

A few minutes later, I opened the door and quickly snuck out. I didn’t see Janet or Aria anywhere but noticed the entire crew was back from the break. I sat near the cameras hoping to catch the screen test when Aria came up from behind me. “There you are!” “Where were you?” “Janet took me and a few others out to eat. What did you do?” “No one. I mean NOTHING.” She looked confused. “Elle, are you ok?” “I’m good. Where’s Janet?” “She went to change. She’ll be back soon.” *What is with these Jackson kids always changing their clothes?* I thought to myself.

I was still really jittery about what happened in the car. I couldn’t sit and my hands were shaking. Aria noticed my odd behavior and had the most puzzled look on her face. I knew I wasn’t being myself. I tried to be normal around her but considering what just happened, I thought I was doing a pretty good job. Joe came over to Aria and asked her to get ready for her screen test. “Wish me luck!” “You don’t need it. You are going to blow up! Now go over there and strut your stuff!” She hugged me and then took center stage.

I watched her walk around in her high heels, working her body like she owned it. Suddenly, Michael appeared on screen from behind her and they were both walking around while he was singing trying to gain her affection. Aria walked by the car Michael and I were in moments ago making me laugh. I was so loud that I accidentally interrupted their screen test. “QUIET PLEASE!” Joe yelled. I looked at Michael who was also laughing to himself. He tried to get Aria to move to another place but Joe kept telling her to move towards the car. She then went inside and Michael jumped in after her. When Aria opened the door to get out, she fell right to the ground.

I got up to see if she was alright but Michael signaled me not to come into the shot. He helped her up and she seemed ok. Vincent, the choreographer told them to keep going as the two of them looked so natural together. It was obvious that the two of them had serious on screen chemistry. Once the screen test was over, Joe asked Aria to wait while Michael reviewed her work with him, Vincent and a few others.

“Arabella, you were wonderful.” Michael said as he hugged her. She thanked him as he escorted her off the stage. Janet came over to us from across the room where she was watching and also said she did a fantastic job. “Now he’ll see how you look with him on camera and make adjustments if he wants to. He’s not doing anything that he doesn’t usually do.” “Thank you. I was so nervous, I hope it didn’t show on screen.”

“I didn’t notice.” I said trying to comfort her. “Neither did I. You did a great job and you were working those shoes.” “I AGREE! You really were, Aria. There’s no way I could pull that off.” She sat next to me and the three of us waited for Michael to finish watching her performance. Halfway into reviewing, Michael called Janet over to watch the tape and get her feedback about it. Aria was worried she’d be cut from the film. “Don’t worry. He just wants to know what I think as a second opinion. It’s nothing bad.”

“Thank you for being here with me. I feel less insecure around you.” She went over to Michael and Aria was so nervous that she accidentally hit my neck smearing my makeup. “Sis, do you have makeup on your neck?” “No! Why?” “Because something just rubbed off on me when I touched you.” “It must be my sunscreen. I always wear it when I go out and sometimes it comes off.” She looked puzzled again but thankfully didn’t question me about it.

Two hours went by since Michael and his film crew started reviewing Aria’s screen test. She was getting anxious. “I can’t take this anymore. I’m going for a walk.” “Don’t go too far. They could be done soon.” “I’ll be back in ten minutes.” After a while, the review was finally completed and Janet said Aria passed with flying colors. “Where is our star?” “She felt a bit edgy so she went for a walk.” Ten minutes went by and there was no sign of Aria. “She might be in the bathroom.” I said. “I’ll go look.” I went to the ladies room and to my surprise, Aria was injured. She was on the floor holding onto her leg as if she had broken it…