**CHAPTER FOURTEEN:** Saying Farewell

I regained consciousness and opened my eyes. My vision was blurred but I could still see who was around me. I looked up and saw an army of paramedics surrounding me as I was lying on the bed in the guest house. I suddenly remembered where I was and what happened to me. I looked around for Michael but didn’t see him anywhere. “Are you alright, Diana?” A man wearing a paramedic uniform asked me. “I think so. What happened?” “You collapsed. Do you know where you are?”

“I’m still at Neverland aren’t I?” “Yes.” “Where is Michael?” “He’s gone.” “Where?” Suddenly, Katherine walked in the room and looked very upset. It seemed like she had been crying. The paramedics told her I was ok. She thanked them as they left and said she would take care of me and let them know if anything else were to happen.

“Mrs. J, I’m glad you’re here. Where’s Michael?” “He had to leave.” “Why? Where did he go?” “He left for Japan.” “WHAT?” “Something came up rather quickly and he had to go. When you passed out he was so afraid he called me instead of dialing 911. I called the paramedics to come here and then I came as quickly as I could.” “I don’t understand why that happened. I guess I was just really fatigued.” “Diana, have you been feeling sick before this happened?”

I knew I couldn’t lie to her. She was Michael’s mother and I made a promise to her. “Mrs. J, I have to tell you something.” “I know, dear.” “You do?” “Yes.” “How did you find out?” “I have nine children. I know these things.” “Mrs. J, I am sorry.” “Don’t be. I’m not angry about it.” “You’re not?” “No. In fact, it makes me proud to know that Michael will finally have some happiness in his life.” “Does he know?” “No. He was only here until the paramedics came. As soon he heard you were going to be ok, he left.”

“Why would he do that? I really needed to tell him. I’m leaving tomorrow.” “I’m sure he will get in touch with you once he arrives in Japan.” “Mrs. J, I’m afraid to tell my parents. They will disown me when they find out.” “Don’t worry. Just be honest with them. If things get really out of hand, call me. I will come out there and talk to them.” “You would do that for me?” She then put her hand on my stomach. “I’ll do it for my grandchild.” Hearing her say that made me cry. She leaned over and gave me the most loving hug in the world.

“I love you, Mrs. J.” “I love you too, sweetie. Now, you get some rest. I have some water bottles here for you and if you need anything else, I’ll be in the main house.” “Are you staying here tonight?” “Of course. I won’t leave you alone like this. Chris will be here in the morning to take you to the airport. Michael told me before he left that he already confirmed your flight so everything should go smoothly tomorrow at the airport. He also mentioned that the airline is aware you may not be able to fly because you are sick. So, if you feel like you can’t go home tomorrow, you can extend your trip and I’ll stay here with you.”

I couldn’t believe how generous and wonderful Michael’s family was. It really amazed me to know the world’s biggest musical family was so misunderstood. “Thank you so much. I should be ok to leave tomorrow. But if not, I’ll let you know.” Katherine then kissed my forehead and said goodnight. “Mrs. J, did you ever do that to Michael when he was growing up?” “All the time. Why do you ask?” “Because he always did that to me every night before bed.” She laughed. “My son is a beautiful person. He’s just so misunderstood.” “I know and it really breaks my heart.” “But I can tell that he’s doing much better now that he has you.” “Thank you. I really want to make him happy.” “You do. I see it every day.”

She then left the room and I was alone. I remembered I had to call Jasmine as she was probably on edge waiting for me to tell her about my test results. I grabbed my cell phone and called her. When I told her everything that happened, she was beside herself. “Ana, I’m so sorry. I can’t believe you went through all that alone.” “It’s ok. I’m just glad to be coming home tomorrow. I don’t know how I’m going to break the news to my parents.” “Don’t worry. They called and said they won’t be coming back for another week. They’re having a good time and since they knew you were fine where you are, they figured you wouldn’t mind if they stayed longer in Arizona.”

That was a HUGE relief for me. “Jas, that’s the best news I’ve heard all day. That gives me a bit of time to get myself together. Will you and Marie pick me up from the airport?” “Absolutely.” “Did you tell her?” “No, and I don’t think you should either. You know how she is.” I agreed with her. We then said a few more words and hung up. Jasmine was a great friend. I knew I could always count on her for anything.

I finished packing all of my things and went back to bed. I couldn’t get Michael out of my mind. It seemed like he really wanted to tell me something but it just wasn’t meant to happen. I thought he was finally going to tell me about his legal trouble but what I couldn’t figure out was why he had to leave for Japan a day early and without saying goodbye. Things just weren’t making sense. I knew the best thing for me was to go to sleep. I didn’t expect my last night at Neverland to turn out this way.

**\*\*\* THE NEXT MORNING \*\*\***

I woke up at 7 to the sounds of Michael’s animals. His staff always allows them to wander around the ranch in the morning after they’ve eaten. My flight was at 11 and I had to be at the airport by 10 to check in. I quickly got up to shower and change. Afterwards, I went to the living room to wait for Kai to bring me my food. As I went to sit on the couch, I noticed there was a black shirt lying on top of one of the cushions. As I got closer to it, I realized it was Michael’s. As soon as my hand touched it, I couldn’t help but cry. I held it tightly against my chest trying to smell his cologne. I missed him more at that moment than ever before.

Katherine was already awake. She came into the living room and put her hand on my shoulder. “I know you miss him.” “I do, Mrs. J. I never got to say goodbye to him. Why did he leave me like that?” She sat down next to me and held me as close to her as she could. “Sweetie, it’s not healthy for you or the baby to feel like this. You have to be strong.” “I’m trying. I really am. But I never got to spend my last night with him.” She tried comforting me as much as she could. As much as I appreciated the effort, nothing she said or did could ever make up for her son leaving. There was emptiness in my heart that just couldn’t be filled. “I miss him, Mrs. J. I really miss him.” I just couldn’t stop myself from crying as she held me in her arms.

A few minutes later, Kai walked in and brought us an entire assortment of food. “He told me last week to make all of your favorites on your last day.” “Oh, my god!” I said as I looked at all of the wonderful items Kai brought me. “He said you love waffles, fruit, toast with jam and orange juice. I even brought you a few extra treats that are HIS favorites.” “I never told him what I liked to eat in the morning. I don’t know how he found out.” Then Katherine and Kai both said ‘that’s Michael’ at the same time. It made me laugh. Kai left our food on the table and said she’d be back later to gather our dishes.

Since I wasn’t going to see her again, I thanked her for all that she did. She was a very sweet woman and told me she’d love to cook for me again one day. I asked her to visit me in New York and she said she would if she was ever destined to go there. I asked Katherine to bring her along as we both sat and ate together. “Are you all packed?” She asked. “Yes. I just need to take care of a few more things.” “Chris will be here at 9 to take you to the airport. How do you feel?” “I’m ok.” “If you feel like you cannot fly, please let Chris now. Michael told him what to do if you weren’t able to leave.” “I will, thank you.”

When we finished eating, Katherine gave me advice on how to tell my parents about my pregnancy. “I know it won’t be easy, but they have to know.” “There’s just no easy way to tell them.” She then said something to me that I hadn’t even thought of. “Diana, are your parents traditional?” “In what way?” “Do they believe in premarital sex?” “No. That’s why they will never accept it when I tell them. I know my dad. He will throw me out of the house and my mother will force me to give it away IF she lets me have it.” “In the faith of Jehovah’s Witnesses, we also do not believe in premarital sex.” “I know. Michael told me you raised him and all of your other children in that faith.” “That’s right. But Michael left the church a long time ago.” “He mentioned that. When he was making Thriller.” “Yes, it was around that time.” “Were you upset with him?” “I was in the beginning but then I realized that Michael is a grown man. He’s not a child. He needed to find his own way in life and I think he did a good job.” “I think so too.”

“But what I’m trying to say is, if your family looks down on you for what has happened, I know Michael will do anything he has to in order to make sure that your parents accept this.” “What do you mean?” “I know he’ll marry you.” My heart dropped. “Are you serious?” “Yes. He loves you.” The thought of me marrying Michael Jackson seemed like a complete fantasy. My life was really starting to seem like a soap opera. “Mrs. J, as much as I would love to, there’s no way that could happen, at least not now.” “Why not?” “Because he and I come from different worlds. He’s Michael Jackson. I’m just a simple girl from New York who happened to be at the right place and at the right time. We met by coincidence and somewhere between then and now this whole thing just turned into something else.”

“Are you saying you regret it?” “NO, Mrs. J! Of course not. I love Michael but, I can’t see myself being his wife.” “I think if you were, his life would change for the better.” “You think so?” “Absolutely. He’d spend all of his time with you and the baby and would make his child his number one priority.” “You mean OUR child.” She laughed. “Yes, dear.” Suddenly, I started thinking about what it would be like to be called Mrs. Michael Jackson. “Mrs. J, I think I’d make a really great daughter in law.” “I think so too.” “Would I be your favorite?” She laughed exactly like Michael. “If Michael were here, he’d make me say yes.” “It’s amazing how much of you is in him.” “Really?” “He has your laugh and your giving heart.” “Michael has always been that way. When he was a little boy, he used to sit and watch television with me and see all those starving children in Africa and he said ‘Mother, I’m going to help those children one day’ and that’s exactly what he did.”

“He always amazes people with his good heart.” “It’s just too bad there are so many people in this world filled with evil intentions. Michael has been taken advantage of and misused by so many people, even the ones he felt he could trust the most.” “Mrs. J, I would NEVER do such a thing. Michael means more to me than anything. I’d rather die than hurt him.” “That’s sweet of you to say. I know he feels the same way about you.”

We continued talking for about an hour then the time came for me to get ready to leave. Katherine was nice enough to give me a minute alone at the guest house. “Take all the time you need. I know Michael wouldn’t mind if you took whatever you wanted.” “I wish I could take him home with me.” “He’ll always be with you, Diana. Especially now.” I touched my stomach and realized she was right. No one could ever buy me what I was taking home with me. As difficult as it was, I felt comforted knowing that Katherine was on my side.

I looked around the guest house then went to get my bag from the room. When I lifted it, I saw a picture fall from the top of my bag onto the floor. I looked down and noticed it was the butterfly shaped picture from Michael’s photo album when we first met at the museum. This time, it had a few more words added to it:

***‘Diana, you give me butterflies. You are always with me, even in my darkest hour. If I don’t see you again, know that you are always in my heart. I pray that you will never forget me. I love you, my sweet girl.’***

His signature was at the bottom. I held it close and let out a few tears. After a few minutes, I went outside and all of Katherine’s children were waiting to say goodbye. As I stood by the door looking at them, I saw how incomplete they looked without their brother and father. I thought if I was to bring Michael’s child in the world maybe that would bring his family closer together.

After I said goodbye to everyone, Katherine hugged me again and couldn’t help but get emotional. Seeing her cry made me cry too. “Mrs. J, please stop.” “I’m going to miss seeing your face around here. It’s bad enough that Michael will be gone for 5 months, now I’m losing you too.” “You’re not losing me, I’m just going home. You have my number. You can call me anytime.” “It just won’t be the same.” “I know, but at least we can still keep in touch.”

“I love to see you as you grow.” “Oh gosh, I hope I don’t get too fat.” She laughed. “Just take care of yourself. You have a long way to go before you gain weight but the time is going to go by very quickly. I’ll come out there and be with you for your last trimester.” “Would you like a boy or a girl?” “It really doesn’t matter to me. Just as long as you and the baby are healthy.” “But if you had to choose?” “It would be nice to have a little Michael Junior.” “I was hoping you’d say that. With one glove and a black hat?” We both laughed. “I’ll miss you, Mrs. J.” “Me too, sweetie. Call me when you get home.” “I will.” We both said goodbye for the last time and I got in the car. Chris put my bags in the trunk and we were off.

The entire family waved to me as I drove away. I looked back and noticed that Bubbles was chasing after the car. I waved goodbye to him as Katherine scooped him up in her arms so that he wouldn’t get hurt or run over. I felt emotional again. I cried as we exited through the gates of Neverland. Leaving was definitely one of the saddest moments in my life. But I felt ok knowing that I gained a new family and was taking so many wonderful memories back home with me.

We arrived at the airport by 10. It was insanely busy. Chris carried my bags for me and walked me to the check in counter. “This is where my journey ends and yours begins.” He said as he put my things down. I hugged and thanked him for everything. “Did you bring your herbal vitamins?” “Yes, thank you for taking me yesterday.” I suddenly had to go to the bathroom. I asked Chris to wait with my bags and told him I’d be right back.

As I was heading to the ladies room, someone wearing dark clothing with a hood draped over their face grabbed me and pushed me into a corner. Their hand was covering my mouth. “Diana, it’s me.” To my surprise, it was Michael. “Oh my god! What are you doing here?” I grabbed him and hugged him tightly. “I’m so happy you’re here, I thought you left.” “Diana, get rid of Chris.” “Why?” “Just do it and meet me over there.” He pointed to a room at the far of the room where a few security guards were standing. “Michael, why did you leave me? Why aren’t you in Japan?” “Just do what I asked you to do and go over there.” “Ok, but what do I tell him?” “Just say you’re fine and he can leave now. Trust me, he’ll leave if you tell him to.”

I quickly went to the bathroom then over to Chris and told him to go. He hugged me one last time and I watched as he drove away. I didn’t want to carry all of my things everywhere so I went to the check in counter and gave them my ticket and bags. Everything was good to go and they told me my plane would be boarding in 30 minutes. I discreetly walked to the room Michael was in and his security let me inside. He was standing in the corner of the room completely covered in black clothing, sunglasses and a hood covering most of his face.

“Baby, what are you doing here? And why did you leave me the way you did?” He didn’t say a word. He just pulled me towards him and kissed me like never before. “I just want to hold you.” He whispered. “You have no idea what I’m going through, Diana. I need you so badly.” “Michael, what is the problem? And why does your family think you left for Japan already?” “Because that’s what I want them to think.” “WHY?” “I leave tonight, anyway. I told mother I was leaving early but I didn’t. I knew you would be here so I waited for you.” “Since last night?” “No. I was still at the house but away from the main areas. I came here early so that no one would see me coming or going from the house.”

“Michael, how can you live your life this way? You are always trying to outsmart people.” “I have to.” “No, you don’t.” “Diana, you will never understand my life.” “That’s because you don’t tell me about it!” “I can’t tell you.” “Why not?” “Because…” “Because why, Michael?” “It’s complicated. I don’t even know where to start.” “It doesn’t matter where you start, Michael. As long as you start somewhere. You have to at least make the attempt.” He sat down on a nearby chair and started to cry. As bad as I felt, I had to stop pampering him, especially since I had something very serious to tell him. Within seconds, my heart took over my brain and I couldn’t see him upset. I went over and held him.

“I have to tell you something.” He said as he looked up at me. “I’m listening.” “I’m so glad you’re ok. I made sure you were alright before I left you alone last night.” “Thank you, but I wished you hadn’t left. I have to tell you something too.” “I forgot about that completely.” “It’s ok, you go first.” He took my hand in his. “Diana, what I’m about to tell you is serious.” I remained silent. “I need you to promise me something.” “What is it?” “Promise me you won’t leave me after I tell you this.” “Michael, what did you do?” “I didn’t do anything. I’m innocent. You have to believe me.” “Then why do I need to make that promise?” “Because I can’t lose you.”

“What makes you think you will?” “You’re not making this any easier on me.” I then felt angry and decided it was time to tell him how I really felt. “That’s the point, Michael. I want you to be honest with me just like you want me to be honest with you. Ever since I got here you’ve been doing the opposite.” He looked at me in shock. “What do you mean?” I took a deep breath. I didn’t want to tell him that I already knew about his problem just in case that wasn’t what he was going to tell me. “Michael, what is going on?”

He then finally let it out. “Diana, I might be going to jail.” “For what?” He paused and looked down. “For what, Michael?” “For something I didn’t do.” “Which was?” “Diana, I didn’t do it.” “Didn’t do what?” “I’ve been accused of child….” At that moment, I could clearly see Michael’s innocence. If a man was guilty of what he was being falsely accused of, he wouldn’t hesitate the way he was. “Michael, you don’t have to say anymore. I already knew.” He let go of my hand and stood up. “How did you find out?” “I overheard you talking about it with a man outside the guest house one night.”

“You knew all along and didn’t tell me?” “I was waiting for you to tell me first.” “That means he was right. You did it.” “What are you talking about?” “You’ve known all along and yesterday you went somewhere for the first time without me. You went to the press and told them. It was you, Diana.” “MICHAEL! I can’t believe you. Are you seriously accusing ME? What is wrong with you?” “Then how did they find out?” “I don’t know. I don’t even know who ‘they’ are or what the press is. I went to the store yesterday! You can ask Chris if you don’t believe me.”

“Did you really go there?” “YES! I have no reason to lie to you.” He then sat back down and looked more worried than ever. “Who was it then?” He said to himself. “Michael, it doesn’t matter who said it. What are you going to do about it now?” “There’s nothing I can do. By the time I get to Japan the whole world will know about it.” “Michael, you’re innocent. Your family knows that, I know that, your friends know that and your fans will know that too.” “I might go to jail, Diana. The boy’s family wants a trial. They want to embarrass me and end my career.”

“Michael, God is on your side and so am I. But for now, go to Japan and do the tour. Dance your heart out on stage and sing like I’m the only one you see standing in front of you.” Michael’s face lit up. I could tell my words made him feel better. “I love you so much.” “I love you too, moonwalker.” “You know, every time I do that I’ll be thinking of you.” “Please do it often. I’ll be watching you on TV. A couple of crotch grabs wouldn’t hurt either.” He laughed. “I missed your laugh, baby.” “I’m sorry I wasn’t with you last night. I’ll make it up to you when I get back.” “It’s ok. I’m glad I got to see you before I left.” We then kissed for the last time. An announcement was made that my plane was boarding. “Michael, I have to leave. That’s my flight.” “Don’t go.” “I have to.” “Come with me.” “Michael, I can’t.” “Please?” “I can’t.” “Diana, I can’t go without you. I love you, girl.” I didn’t know what to do. Resisting him was always such a challenge for me.

“Michael, I can’t go with you. I have to go home.” “I know. I’m just sad that you’re leaving me.” “I could never leave you. I’m just going home for now. Will you call me from Japan?” “Of course. I promise.” I grabbed my purse and realized my pregnancy tests were still inside of it. I had to remind myself to throw them out before I got on the plane. As I stood up to leave, Michael held me from behind and refused to let go.

“I can’t let you go.” “I know it’s hard, but this is the way it has to be for now.” I turned around and tried to remove his sunglasses. “No, don’t take them off. No one knows I’m here except my security outside. There might be cameras in this room.” “I just want to see your beautiful eyes one last time.” He slowly removed them and gave them to me to hold onto. I kissed his eyelids gently. I could tell he was about to cry. “I have to go now, Michael.” He put his hood down and held my face in his hands.

“You’re so beautiful.” He said as he took one last look at me. “So are you.” He kissed my forehead and I turned to open the door. Just as I opened it, he yelled “DIANA WAIT!” But the door swung open and I had just realized that Michael wasn’t wearing sunglasses and his hood was down completely exposing his face to the public. Within seconds, thousands of people were running in our direction. “I’m sorry!” I quickly helped him put his sunglasses on and lowered his hood but it was too late. So many people had noticed who he was and were running in our direction.

“You said you had to tell me something. What was it?” I knew it wasn’t exactly the best time but it was either now or never. Fans were hurdling across the room and the amount gradually started to increase. His security guards were trying to push people back but the crowd got bigger and bigger. It was impossible to keep everyone back. One of his guards hovered over him completely as he tried to remove him from the scene. I noticed that one fan was so close to him, she accidentally knocked his sunglasses off his face. I reached down, grabbed them for him and he put them back on.

“Diana, tell me NOW. What is it you wanted to say?” “Michael….I’m….I’m...” his guards were taking him away but he was resisting them as I stood there trying to tell him. “What is it?” As he was being taken away, fans were screaming in our ears. “Michael, I’m pregnant.” We then lost each other in the crowd and within seconds he was gone. As his fans started to leave, I stood there alone wondering if he had even heard what I had just told him. I remembered what was in my purse. I pulled out the brown bag and threw it in a nearby trash can. I was glad I didn’t have to worry about someone finding them anymore.

A final announcement was made about my flight’s boarding time. I knew I had to run so that I wouldn’t miss it. When I arrived at the gate, I made it just in time. Luckily, I had an aisle seat and no one else was next to me on the plane so I could easily get up if I felt sick or needed to use the bathroom. I couldn’t stop wondering if Michael had heard what I said. As the plane took off, I looked outside the window and smiled as I thought about my experiences in California.

**\*\*\* 6 HOURS LATER \*\*\***

I landed in New York around 7pm. I was exhausted. 6 hours on a plane in this condition wasn’t easy. I was so glad to be home. I got my bags and exited the main terminal. I noticed Jasmine and Marie were standing right at the arrival gate. They both ran up to me and gave me the biggest hug together. “WELCOME HOME!!” Marie said. “We missed you like crazy!” “Thanks, girls. I’m glad to be home.” We sat in the car and of course, Marie wanted to listen to Michael’s music.

“Now, I don’t have to worry about Ana insulting him. She loves him just as much as we do!” She then put one of his albums in the CD player. “So, tell us about your trip.” Marie said. “What’s it like at Neverland? What’s his family like? What’s HE like?” “Marie, I don’t even know where to start. I have pictures. I’ll show them to you when I get a chance.” “Are you feeling ok?” Jasmine asked as she was driving me home. “I’m fine. Just really tired. I can’t wait to get home and go to bed. I am so jet legged.”

After being in the car with the girls for over 30 minutes, I was even more exhausted. Marie kept asking me questions about Michael and was constantly playing his music. It was hard for me to not get emotional. I noticed every time Michael’s voice came on, my stomach muscles would move. I laughed at the thought of our child being a singer and dancer like his daddy. I then pictured him or her trying to grab their crotch and burst out laughing.

“What’s so funny, Ana?” Marie asked. “It’s nothing, really.” Marie played Billie Jean which made me think of Michael and me in the studio. A few seconds later, my morning sickness was starting to come back. “Jas, pull over.” “Why?” “Just pull over NOW.” She did and I quickly ran to the side of the road and threw up. Marie was frightened as she ran over to me. “Oh my god, Ana. You’re sick! Why didn’t you tell us?” I told her it was probably a delayed reaction to motion sickness from being on the plane. Jasmine was worried too but didn’t say a word since she already knew what it was from.

As we got back to the car, I asked Jasmine to take Marie home first so that she could come to my house and stay with me just in case I felt sick again. Since my family was still away for a week, the thought of me being home alone and pregnant made me feel scared. She called her family and told them she’d be staying over and thankfully they were ok with it. Once Jasmine took Marie home, the lecture began.

“Ana, I can’t believe you. How could you be so irresponsible? What the heck were you thinking?” “I WASN’T thinking, Jas. That’s the problem.” “Did you tell him?” “I tried.” “Meaning?” “He was at the airport.” “You mean he actually dropped you off?” “No, he was already there. Hiding.” “From what?” I explained the situation to her. “I can’t believe all this happened in such a short time. It just seems like something out of a movie.” “I know, Jas. Just be glad that it’s not happening to YOU!” “Do you think he heard you?” “I have no idea. I won’t know until he calls me from Japan.” “Do you think he will?” “He has to, Jas. He has to…”

**\*\*\* MICHAEL’S POINT OF VIEW \*\*\***

**SANTA MARIA AIRPORT, 9PM**

Michael was getting ready to leave for Japan. His equipment had already been loaded onto two different airplanes and his team members were ready for takeoff. As always, his fans were waiting patiently to catch a glimpse of him as it was announced all over the world that he would be leaving for his Dangerous tour tonight.

Somewhere in a dark corner outside the airport, Michael was talking to the man he had been secretly dealing with for weeks:

*“Why haven’t you left town yet?”
“I couldn’t. She needed me.”*

*“Is she gone?”
“She left this morning.”*

*“Good. “*

*“What did you find out?”*

*“Turns out she wasn’t the one who tipped the press.”*

*“For a second I thought it was, but then I knew it couldn’t have been her.”*

*“You’re lucky only one newspaper company got a hold of the story and I took care of that too. I had my people go into their office last night and shred all the information they had. You should be ok for now.”*

*“What else?”*

*“The boy’s family is willing to put all of this to rest…for a price.”*

*“What do they want from me?”*

*“25 million dollars. Mike, you need to think about this.”*

*“I have. It’s a deal. I’ll make arrangements for the funds and be in touch with you while I’m on tour. Make sure NO ONE finds out.”*

*“I’ll take care of it.”*

*“I want this over with by the time I get back to America.”
“Take my card. You might need it.”*

*“You’ve been a big help to me, Anthony. I owe you one.”*

*“Good luck on tour.”*

*“I’m more excited to come back.”*

*“Why?”*

*“Someone will be on their way to me.”*

*“Who?”*

*“My baby.”*