**CHAPTER FIVE:** A Change of Heart

I was in shock all over again. **How can this happen to me A SECOND TIME?** I thought. I picked up the fedora, brushed it off with my hand and slipped it halfway into my purse. I then started walking back to the VIP entrance when I heard the back door open. “Thank god you’re alright!” Jermaine said as he came out. “I was afraid you were hurt.” “I’m ok, thank you. Did he get his glove?” “He most certainly did. But he asked me to get you. He’d like to thank you personally for being kind enough to return it.” “Oh, gosh NO. I don’t want to bother him or be in his way. I’m sure he has to get ready for the opening.” “Believe me, it’s no trouble at all. We’re actually ahead of schedule. He’d love to meet you.”

“I have to admit, I’m not really a fan of his.” “You’re not?!” Jermaine asked sounding shocked. “Why not?” “His music just isn’t my style. But my two best friends are totally in love with him. You know Marie and my other friend Jasmine.” “Oh, right. Well, maybe once you meet him, you’ll change your mind.” “Do I have to?” “No, but whatever Michael wants, Michael gets.” “What do you mean?” “Michael is extremely relentless. If he doesn’t meet you now, chances are, he’ll find another way to track you down. Trust me.” Not forgetting my promise to Marie, I reluctantly agreed to meet him.

I went through the back door with Jermaine and stopped for a second. “I know this might sound silly but, can I just have a minute to myself? I’d like to look presentable.” Jermaine laughed. “Hey, don’t laugh at me!” “I thought you said you weren’t his fan!” “Well, I’m not!” “UHHH HUHH!” Jermaine said shaking his head. “I’M NOT!” “RIGHT - that’s what they ALL say…at first.” “I’m serious!” “Ok, ok sure. Take your time. Knock on the door when you’re ready, I’ll be right inside.” I thanked him as he walked away.

There were two large bodyguards standing in front of a huge black door. Jermaine went inside as I stood at the far end of the hall. I had no idea what came over me. **Wanting to look presentable? And for MICHAEL JACKSON of all people?!** I then remembered what his limo driver told me about having an aura and getting caught up in the madness. **This is ridiculous!** I thought. **He’s just a human being!**

I quickly ran my fingers through my hair and wiped my face with a napkin from my purse. I didn’t want to look unorganized. I figured if I stay professional and to the point, I could get this whole thing over with sooner rather than later. I’ll give Michael his fedora right after he thanks me for returning his glove. That way, I can kill two birds with one stone and finally put an end to this.

I straightened myself out and knocked on the door. Jermaine answered. “Sorry, Diana.” He whispered. “He’s upset. He doesn’t want to see anyone right now.” “Why?” “You won’t believe this, but he’s missing something again.” I smiled. “I know. I have it.” “YOU DO?!”“Yeah, I found it outside. It’s right—“Suddenly, a huge group of screaming fans rushed the back door and were charging towards me. “OH MY GOD, GET IN QUICK!” Jermaine said as he yanked me inside the room. “Stay in there for now. I’ll tell you when to come out!” He then slammed the door shut as he pushed all of the crazy fans out of the way.

I had never seen a dressing room at a museum before. It looked like something out of a movie. There were two rooms separated by doors. The room I was standing in seemed like a lounging area with sofas and tables. I didn’t see anyone so I opened the other door at the far end of the room. “Hello?” I didn’t hear anything. I walked in further and noticed there was a chair with a beautiful black jacket covered in jewels draped over it. **That must be his** I thought. I then heard footsteps behind me. I gasped and stood still, frozen for a moment with my back facing whoever was coming behind me.

“You must be Diana.” A man’s voice said. I had never heard such a voice before. It sounded sweet, subtle and very charming. “Um, yes.” I said with my back still towards him. He then let out a soft giggle as I heard more footsteps that seemed to be coming closer. As he was approaching me, I could see a shadow appear and reflect from the light onto the floor. I looked down and noticed a tall, slender shadow with a few curls resting in front of its face. I knew exactly who it was. Forgetting the fact that I wasn’t his fan, I felt like something had taken over my mind.

Seconds later, I felt a gentle touch on my lower back. “You can face me.” He said. “I promise I won’t hurt you.” **Hearing that voice could make anyone forget their own name** I thought. I slowly turned around and there I was – face to face with the man the world knew, loved and called the greatest entertainer of all time. “Hi.” I said politely while looking into his eyes. “It’s nice to meet you. I’m Diana.” I held my hand out for him and started feeling butterflies in my stomach. I had no idea what was happening to me. Then suddenly my conscience kicked in. **DIANA! YOU’RE NOT HIS FAN! GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF!!** I tried so hard to repeat that over and over again in my head but I just couldn’t get it to sink in.

“It’s nice to meet you, Diana.” He said as he shook my hand. “I’m Michael.” Shaking his hand felt like being in another world, like reality had left and nothing else mattered except this moment. “Thank you for returning my glove. I was so worried that I’d lost it. But now that it’s back, I lost my hat.”

“Oh, you mean your black fedora?” “YES!” Michael said amazed. “You’ve seen it?” “Yeah, I found it. I have it right here—“As I reach for it from my purse, Michael’s fedora accidentally slipped and fell onto the floor. “I’m sorry, I’ll get that for you.” I said crouching down. “No, it’s ok.” Michael said, also crouching down. Just then, our hands touched as we both reached for his fedora. I looked up at him and he smiled at me. As I smiled back, I noticed him biting his bottom lip. He then winked at me. I had never felt so turned on in my life. My cheeks felt warm and I knew I was blushing.

Feeling incredibly nervous, I then started to laugh like a little school girl. “I’m sorry.” I said as I stood up. “I wanted to return your glove and then found your hat outside so I thought I’d pick it up and return them both when I met you.” “Thank you so much.” He said smiling again. “This hat means a lot to me. I wear it often. Just like my glove. I feel lost without them.” “They look really nice on you.” “Thank you. Did you get my card?” “Yes, I did. Thank you.” “I made you a promise – if you bring my glove back, I’d let you keep it after I do the opening.” “You really don’t have to, sir.” Michael then grabbed my hand. “But I want to.” I smiled and felt butterflies again. This was definitely NOT the reaction I was supposed to be having. “Really, it’s ok.” I said. “It’s best if you keep it. I mean, it’s a part of your routine.”

“But I have so many. And you were kind enough to bring it back. Really, you can take it. I want you to. Please?” I knew I couldn’t resist his voice and those beautiful, angelic eyes of his. “Ok, I’d love to. Thank you.” I then looked down and noticed Michael was still holding my hand. “So, tell me about yourself.” He asked as he sat me down gently on a nearby couch. “Um, I’d love to but I really should go. I don’t want to be in your way and my friends are waiting for me.” “You came here with someone?” “Yeah, my two best friends. Marie and Jasmine. Marie has been a fan of yours ever since I can remember. In fact, her mom told me her first word was Michael.”

He laughed beautifully. I suddenly started to adore him. “That’s so sweet. I’d love to meet her. Why don’t you bring them both back here afterwards?” “Are you sure that’s ok?” “Of course. I’d love to meet them.” “Ok, thank you. I know they will appreciate it. But I have to warn you – Marie is extremely eccentric when it comes to you. She might scream her head off in your face.” He laughed again. “It’s ok. I get that all the time. I’m used to it now.” “It must be tough to live like that.” “It is.” He said while looking down. “But I love what I do. It’s my purpose, it’s why I’m here. I wouldn’t change a thing.”

Michael’s words instantly attracted me to him. “Really? So you mean if you had the chance to go back in time and start your life all over again from the beginning, you’d still choose to be a performer.” “Absolutely. I love being on stage. It’s my place, it really is.” “That’s amazing and very inspiring.” I started gazing at his lovely presence. I then noticed again that Michael was still holding my hand. “Sir, my hand.” I said looking down at it. “I’m sorry.” He said as he let go and laughed. “I didn’t mean to do that.” “It’s ok. I don’t mind at all.” **Diana, what is wrong with you?** I asked myself. **This is not you! Snap out of it and leave the room already!** My conscience was saying one thing but my heart was saying another. I was having a battle with myself and not knowing the outcome started to worry me. I wanted to get up and leave but I just couldn’t. I was drawn to this man. Really drawn.

Michael then looked at me and said “I feel like I can talk to you about anything.” “ME?” “Yes. I’m glad I met you today.” “Um, me too.” I said feeling incredibly awkward. “Well, I’ll let you get ready now.” I said as I stood up. I started walking towards the exit door when Michael gently grabbed my arm and pulled me back down on the couch. “Diana, I’d love to see you again.” I trembled. “You would?” “Yes. Will you please meet me again after all this is over?” “Sure. You asked me to bring my friends too, remember?” I reminded him hoping he wouldn’t change his mind about including Marie and Jasmine. “Yes, I’d like that.” “Ok. I’ll see you again after the opening.” I then slipped my arm out from underneath his.

I walked closer towards the exit door and just as my hand reached the knob, Michael grabbed me again and pulled me towards him. “Diana?” “Yes?” He turned me around facing him. I loved the way he was handling me. “You are so beautiful.” “ME?” I asked in shock. He smiled and laughed. “Yes. “ “Oh god, I don’t know what to say. Um, thank you. So are you.” I suddenly began staring into his dark, chestnut eyes. “I can’t wait to see you again.” He said. “Me neither. I’m really looking forward to it.” I just couldn’t take my eyes off him. He was SO incredibly stunning.

Michael then started to move closer towards me. I did the same. I didn’t know what to expect. Our lips were getting closer and closer to each other when suddenly Jermaine and two other men barged right through the door. “WHOA, MAN!” One of the guys said. Michael and I instantly let go of each other. “It’s a mad house out there, Mike! Why aren’t you dressed yet?” “I was talking to Diana.” He said to one of the men while smiling. “She’s the one who found my glove and she also found my fedora outside.”

“Thanks again, Diana.” Jermaine said while trying to catch his breath. “Michael and I really appreciate it.” “It’s really no trouble at all. I’ll be going now.” I had the hardest time keeping a straight face in front of Jermaine and the others. I couldn’t believe what would have happened if they hadn’t walked in!

“The guards outside will escort you to the VIP entrance. There are way too many people out there and you won’t make it through the crowd alive.” Jermaine said. “I wouldn’t want anything to happen to you, Diana.” Michael said. He then touched my hand again and smiled at me. His charm had me hooked to him like a moth to a flame. “Sir, you are very sweet! Thank you!” I slowly ran my fingers through his beautiful, long, curly black hair as he smiled and laughed gently to himself. “Uhh, is there something that I should know about?” Jermaine asked jokingly. “Don’t be silly!” Michael said. “She was just leaving when you all came in.”

“So, Diana. I guess I can say I told you so!” “About what?” Michael asked. “NOTHING!” I yelled. “Jermaine told me a joke earlier and I didn’t think it was funny at first. RIGHT, JERMAINE?!” I looked directly at him. “Oh, yeah, yeah suuuure! MMM HMM, whatever you say, girl!” Michael laughed. “Ok, I have to get dressed.” Jermaine said. “Diana, thank you once again. We really appreciate you bringing Michael’s things back and I’ll see to it that you get your car as quickly as possible.” I thanked him again as he and the others walked through another set of doors leaving Michael and I alone again. “Car? You mean YOU’RE the one he ran into?” “Yes.” I said to Michael, noticing his shocked expression. I briefly explained the entire story to him and he couldn’t believe what he was hearing.

“You know, I think fate brought us together for a reason.” He said as he put his hand on my waist. “Really?” “Yes. I don’t believe in coincidences. It was definitely meant to happen. Maybe that’s why I’m so drawn to you.” He then took his hand and rubbed the small of my back. It felt heavenly. “Thank you sir, but I really should be going now.” “I know. It was really a pleasure to meet you.” “Thank you, same here.” He then opened the door for me like the gentleman he was. As I walked halfway through, I looked over at Michael and said “Good luck out there.” He smiled and thanked me as I left with the guards. A few seconds later, Michael called out to me. “Diana!” I turned around and faced him. “I can’t wait to see you again.” Then he smiled. “Neither can I.” I said as I winked at him. He winked back at me and smiled again as he closed the door. I then left with the guards.

“Here you are, miss.” One of the guards said while opening the VIP door for me. I thanked him as I entered through and sure enough, Marie and Jasmine immediately ran over to me from across the room. “WHERE’S MY AUTOGRAPH? HOW DID HE LOOK? WHAT DID HE SAY? WHAT DID HE DO??” Marie yelled in one ear. “DETAILS!! WE WANT DETAILS!! AND WE WANT THEM NOW!!” Jasmine yelled in my other ear. “Ok, calm down first!” I said to both of them.

“Oh, my god, Ana!! You met him! You met him! I can smell him on you!” “How the hell do you know what he smells like??” I asked sounding more confused than ever. “Don’t ask me that. Just tell me everything!” “Marie, you’re a psycho!” Jasmine said as I burst out laughing. “How the heck DO YOU KNOW what he smells like?” “I DIDN’T know what he smelled like until just NOW!” She explained. “Ana smells different. She doesn’t wear this kind of perfume and it smells very masculine so I know it’s his!” She then started sniffing my shirt. “MARIE!” I yelled pushing her away from me. “Will you stop sniffing me like a dog? Jeez!” “I’m sorry. OK, I’m calm. I’m cool. SO TELL US, PLEEEEZE!! What happened?”

“Well, I’ve got good news and bad news.” “What’s the bad news?” Jasmine asked. “I didn’t get his autograph.” “WHAAT? Why not?!” Marie asked disappointed. “Because of the good news.” “Which is?” They both asked. “Marie, you CAN’T scream or flip out.” “I won’t, I promise.” “Jas, she’s going to freak and embarrass me.” “Ok, then just tell me in my ear and I’ll take her outside and tell her myself.” I whispered in Jasmine’s ear that Michael wanted to meet both the two of them. “ARE YOU SERIOUS?” Jasmine asked yelling at the top of her lungs. “Jas, be quiet about it! There are A LOT of people here and I don’t want to draw attention to us!” “What is it? What is it?” Marie asked.

“You know what, Ana? I think it’s best we don’t tell her at all. She won’t be able to handle it.” Jasmine explained. “We’re better off surprising her.” “Maybe you’re right. But if we do that it might make things worse and she’ll embarrass us even more. Maybe we should just tell her now, let her scream her head off and get it over with.” “But she’ll do that anyway whether she knows or not.” “HELLOOOO?!” Marie yelled. “I’m still here and I can hear you two talking about me!!”

“We know that, Marie. We’re just afraid that whether we tell you this or not, you’re going to embarrass us. Jasmine, YOU tell her. BUT, TAKE HER OUTSIDE FIRST!” “I think we both need to do this. One of us has to cover her mouth and the other has to catch her from hitting the ground when she faints.” “What are you two talking about?” Marie asked. “Let’s go outside first.” I said. We opened the doors and tried walking outside. We noticed hundreds of thousands of screaming people everywhere. It was impossible to hear anything other than people blasting Michael’s music and chanting his name. “So, what is it?” Marie asked. Jasmine told her the news. “Marie, your wish is going to come true today!” “WHAT WISH?!” She asked screaming over loud fans. “ANA MET MICHAEL. HE SAID HE WANTS TO MEET YOU!” “WHAAAT?” She yelled. “MARIE, HE WANTS TO MEET YOU. I TOLD HIM ABOUT YOU!” I yelled. “WHAAT?” She still couldn’t hear us.

Frustrated, I opened the doors and pushed them both back inside the museum. “THIS IS RIDICULOUS!” I said. “Jas, I’ll tell her and as soon as I say the words, you open that door and push her out so she can scream her head off outside. It’s so loud no one will even notice or care.” “Gotcha!” Jasmine said. “Marie, I…Jas, cover her mouth. Just in case.” She did and then I finished. “Marie, I met Michael. We had a really nice chat. I was going to get his autograph for you but when I told him I came here with you and Jasmine, he asked to meet the both of you personally. So, after the opening, we’ll all go to the back entrance and you can meet him and get his autograph yourself.” Marie let out a huge breath. I then quickly opened the door and Jasmine threw Marie outside. She let out the most piercing scream any of us had ever heard.

We then closed the doors and let her continue. After a few minutes, Marie came back in and acted like nothing had happened. “So, \*ahem\* um, now that I know this wonderful news, I need to go home and change. Jas, you’re taking me home NOW!” “What about the opening?” I asked. “Who cares about the dumb opening? I’m going to MEET HIM! I need to look like a goddess not some bum who’s interested in art!” I rolled my eyes. “Jas, let’s GO! We’ll be back in a while, Ana!” They tried to leave but the crowd outside the doors wouldn’t let them get anywhere near the parking lot.

“Ok, ok. Forget going home. I need to look good with what I have on.” Marie said. She then grabbed Jasmine’s arm as they both went into the bathroom. I stood there, looking around at all the famous faces not having a care in the world. I started having flashbacks of what happened earlier in Michael’s dressing room. **I can’t believe that almost happened**. I said to myself. **What was I thinking?** I sat down in a nearby chair trying to pull myself together.

“ATTENTION, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME!” An announcer on a loud speaker said. “WE APOLOGIZE FOR THE DELAY BUT WE ARE NOW READY TO BEGIN THE OPENING OF THE MANHATTAN MUSEUM OF ART!” Jasmine and Marie both flew out of the bathroom and stood next to me, jumping up and down. “Will you two knock it off?! This is a museum full of celebrities and rich people. Can you two please act like you’re civilized?” “Ana, you just don’t get it. We’re going to meet him, we’re going to meet him!” “I know that, Marie. But you need to stop acting like this, it really IS EMBARASSING!” Jasmine nodded her head and asked Marie to stop. She did and we all stood and watched as the board of directors made their speeches, talked about their budgets, upcoming plans, goals for the future and a description of the type of art work that was going to be displayed.   
  
“AND NOW, THE MOMENT YOU’VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR!” The announcer said. “Oh, my god. Oh, my god. He’s coming! He’s coming!” Marie yelled. “Jas, I can’t do this, she’s embarrassing me. I’m going to stand somewhere else.” “NOOO, ANA! DON’T LEAVE ME HERE!!” “Then STOP IT. I’m dead serious!!” “Ok, ok. I’ll be good.” Jasmine and I stood in between Marie just in case she fainted or started to run across the room towards the front.

Within seconds, hundreds of policemen and security guards entered the VIP section. They all stood in a square surrounding the entire room. As soon as the last guard entered, the main entrance doors flung open, allowing everyone that was waiting outside to come in. The entire room was full of people, screaming and hollering for Michael. In less than a minute, the entire museum was packed. Including the outside parking lot. Not one more person could get in or out. It felt like a soccer stadium. Just then, all of the lights went out and the entire room was dark. We then heard the beat to Billie Jean and a silhouette of a dancing man appeared from an overhead projection screen.

“AHHHHHHH!!! OH MY GOD, OH MY GOD!” Marie and Jasmine were screaming at the top of their lungs. As I watched Michael’s shadow, I started thinking about him in his dressing room again. **Diana! STOP. You are NOT his fan. You are NOT his fan. Don’t do this to yourself!** One side of my brain was repeating this and the other side was saying **he’s gorgeous, he’s amazing and he’s charming.** The battle had begun and I didn’t know which side to choose. Just then, the screen was lifted and Michael appeared, live and in person.

Marie couldn’t handle it. She left Jasmine and I and started pushing and shoving her way to the front so she could get a better look. She didn’t get very far as the crowd was so out of control. As I followed them, we managed to get halfway in between where he was performing. Again, Marie and Jasmine were screaming and cheering while I stood there, watching his every move. After Michael’s performance was over, he stood at the front of the room with the board of directors and the chairmen of the museum as he cut the ribbon in front of us all.

He then made a beautiful speech about his love for art, music, poetry, dance and the love he has for New York City. As I stood there listening to his every word, my heart was literally skipping beats. “He’s lovely.” I said out loud without thinking. Jasmine and Marie both heard me and turned their heads with expressions on their faces like they had just seen a ghost “WHAT?!” They both asked. “Nothing. I was talking about someone else.” “Right, Ana.” Jasmine said. “I’m serious!” “Uh huh. You can deny it all you want. But we heard you loud and clear.” “Shut up, Marie! I wasn’t talking about him.”

Just then, Michael said something in his speech that really moved me:

“I apologize for delaying this opening. I know this was supposed to happen weeks ago, but I had lost my glove and didn’t want to disappoint my fans by coming here and not performing so I had to say no at first. But then I found out where it was and then I changed my mind and decided to do this after all. I am so grateful and appreciative to the person who had found it and returned it to me. Thank you so much.”

He then looked right at me, smiling. I smiled back and waved to him. He then said a few more words then said goodbye and he left the room. I looked over and noticed Jermaine and his guards at the far end. He signaled me to wait ten minutes. I shook my head yes to inform him I understood. Most of the crowd had left by this time. It was now time for mingling, drinks and refreshments.

Jasmine and Marie were again staring at me in amazement. “Uhh, did something happen between you two when you met him?” Jasmine asked. “NO! Why would you ask that?” “What’s up with the girly laugh, the wave and all the smiling?” “Yeah, Ana. I thought you hated Michael.” Marie said. “I never said I HATED him!” The two of them laughed. “I didn’t!” “You ALWAYS say you hate Michael, Ana!” “Well, that was then and this is now. I don’t hate him, I just hate how obsessed Marie is about him.” “SOOOO, when do we meet him? Now? Now? Now?” “STOP IT, MARIE!” Jasmine said. “Ana will tell us when….so Ana, it’s soon right?” “You two disgust me!”

I was about to walk away from them, when I saw Jermaine again in the distance. He signaled me to go to the front door. I shook my head again. “Come on you two. Let’s get this over with.” Marie started to panic. “OH MY GOD! How’s my hair? How’s my face? How are my clothes? Oh god, I have no makeup on. What’s my name again? What’s your name? What’s ANYONE’S name? Where do I live? What do I ask him? Where should I put my hands? Oh wait, I know the perfect place!!” Then Jasmine started falling all over herself asking the same dumb questions. “I don’t know you two.” I said rolling my eyes.

Marie started walking fast towards the front door. I grabbed Jasmine by the arm and took her aside. “Jas, there’s something you need to know. Something happened earlier.” “What?” She asked. “Jas, I don’t know what’s happening to me. You know I’m not usually like this. I’m trying to put up a front with Marie because I don’t want her to say I told you so.” “Ana, what the heck are you talking about?” “Jas, I’m falling for him.” “Falling for whom?” “JAS! ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!” She then took a deep breath and gasped loudly. “NO WAY! NO WAY, ANA! YOU! YOU OF ALL PEOPLE? The one person who said she’d rather die than like Mich—“ “SHH!” I said to Jasmine, covering her mouth.

“I don’t want ANYONE to know about this. But that’s not all. There’s more.” “MORE? What more?” “Jas, we almost—“ “COME ON YOU TWO!” Marie yelled grabbing our arms. “It’s TIME!” “We’re coming, Marie. You can keep walking ahead of us.” “So, what happened?” Jasmine asked. I looked up and noticed Jermaine was signaling me, this time to come quickly. “I can’t tell you right now, Jermaine wants us to go now. I’ll tell you later.” “Ana! What is going on?” Jasmine asked as she stopped me from walking. “I don’t know myself, Jas! Look, let’s just go meet him and we’ll talk later about it ok?” “Fine.” She said as she walked next to me.

“Sorry for taking so long.” I said to Jermaine. “These are my friends, you met Marie and this is Jasmine.” “It’s a pleasure to meet you both.” He said shaking their hands. “Um, sir? I have a question: what should a person expect or say or not say when meeting your brother for the first time?” Marie asked. Jermaine laughed. “Don’t worry about a thing.” He said. “Michael is very easy going. Just be yourself.” “And you two PLEASE DON’T embarrass me by screaming in his face!” Jermaine and I walked together in front while Jasmine and Marie were behind us. They both straightened their hair and clothes and then started competing with each other out of nowhere.

“My hair looks better than yours!” Jasmine said. “Please, he’ll see right through that fake weave!” “I don’t wear weaves! This is my natural hair, unlike those plastic boobs of yours!” “OH, NO YOU DIDN’T!!” Marie yelled. I was furious. “HEY!!” I said coming in between them. “What the hell is wrong with you two? I can’t believe you girls! Stop acting like drama mama’s and show some etiquette please!” They both apologized to each other, pulled out their cameras and autograph books and we all followed Jermaine to the back. “Sorry for their behavior.” I said to Jermaine. He laughed it off by saying “It’s ok. I’ve heard much worse.”

Just to make sure those two didn’t go at it again, I walked behind everyone this time as we walked through the back entrance doors. Jermaine asked us to wait in the hall while he knocked on the door to see if Michael was ready to meet us. After waiting a few seconds, Jermaine went inside to have a look. “I’ll be right back. Please wait here.” “Oh my god. I can’t stand still, my palms are sweaty.” “Marie, zip it.” I said. “Ana, you don’t have to be so mean!” “And you don’t have to be so embarrassing!” “Be quiet, you two!” Jasmine said. “Ana was right. Show some manners. We don’t want Michael to think we’re stupid, immature, drama causing heifers!!” A few minutes later, Jermaine came out and told us Michael wasn’t in the room.

“I know he’s here somewhere, he told me to bring the three of you inside. He might be in another one of these rooms. Follow me.” We did as we were told. Within seconds of walking, a door next to me suddenly opened and I was grabbed by my arm and thrown inside a room. I tried screaming for help but my mouth was covered by a hand. The lights suddenly came on and the hand was removed from my mouth. “Did I scare you?” Michael asked. “YES!” I said smiling. “We were just looking for you. Should I call the others?” “Not yet. I wanted to see you first.” My heart suddenly began to race. “Um, why is that?” “I just had to see that beautiful face of yours again.” He then touched my hand gently and folded his fingers between mine.

“Um, Sir I—“ “SHH!” He put his finger on my mouth. “What’s my name?” “I can’t say it.” “What is it?” “I can’t say it.” “What is it?” “I can’t say it. It’s not respectful. I mean, you’re such a huge, incredible star. I can’t call you...” “Call me what?” He asked changing his voice to a much deeper sounding tone. I suddenly felt aroused. “I can’t, I’m sorry. I just can’t—“ “ANA! ANA, where are you?” I heard Marie and Jasmine calling me from outside. “Sir, those are my friends, they’re looking for me.” “This door is locked from outside.” Michael said. “They can’t come in here unless I let them.” “But, sir-“ “What’s my name?” “Please, I can’t say that.” “Just once?” “I really can’t. I respect you too much.” “I’m honored to know that. But I’d love to hear you say it just once. Please?”

The hardest thing for me to do was resist him. He really was the most charming man I had ever seen or met. Those eyes, that voice, his beautiful porcelain skin, his perfect lips and smile. I tried changing the subject. “You know, your limo driver warned me about you.” “What do you mean?” “He told me he sensed an aura about me and that I was going to be mesmerized by you one day. I didn’t believe him at first.” Michael then came as close to me as he possibly could, still holding my hand with my back completely against the wall. “Do you believe him now?” He asked as he gently stroked my cheek with his other hand.

His lips were so close to mine, I could feel and hear him breathe. “I think I do.” I said while staring into his eyes once again. “ANA!! ANA!!” I could still hear Jasmine and Marie’s voices faintly in the background. I was so distracted by the man I was in front of that I didn’t care about those two or anyone else.

“I have a confession to make.” Michael said. “That wasn’t my limo driver you met that day.” “It wasn’t?” “No…it was me.” “WHAT?!” “I was in disguise. I do that often that so people won’t recognize me. It’s how I get around without being mauled or harassed by my fans or the media.” I put my free hand over my mouth, completely shocked. “I can’t believe it. But, how did you know—“Michael put his finger on my mouth again. “I saw you that morning through my car window from a distance when you were walking across the parking lot. You looked so beautiful. I just had to meet you. Then I saw you bend down and I knew that would be the perfect chance so I lowered my window, apologized for being in your way and purposely dropped my glove on the ground in front of you. I was hoping and praying you’d notice it and pick it up and you did.” I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. “Then I knew if I said I wouldn’t do the opening, you’d feel bad and return the glove to me and I’d finally get my chance to meet you in person.”

“I can’t believe this. You went through all this trouble just to meet me?” “Yes.” He said quietly. “Then I started to worry if you’d come or if you would give the glove to someone else to bring to me so I sent you that card as my way of making sure that YOU would come back and personally return it to me. Then the announcement was made that the event was postponed so I disguised myself as a limo driver so that I could leave quickly and quietly. And then fate came in between us again when your friend jumped in front of the car that day. And that was when I saw you and spoke to you.” Michael then looked down, staying quiet. It seemed like he became shy all of a sudden.

After hearing what Michael did just to meet me, I felt incredibly flattered. No one had ever done anything like that for me before. On top of that, no one had ever changed my feelings the way he did. I took my free hand, raised his angelic face by his chin, looked in his beautiful eyes and said “I guess that makes you right.” “About what?” He asked. “I DID fall very hard for you and you DO have an effect on me…Michael.” I then grabbed him by his waist and pressed his lips passionately against mine.