CHAPTER 17

The Innocent Betrayal

**\*\*\* AN HOUR LATER \*\*\***

**BREMEN AIRPORT.**

The black, shadowy figure exits the aircraft and sets foot on the grounds of Germany. It looks around hoping to find their town car waiting on the runway. It arrives just in the nick of time. It takes slow, thumping steps from the runway and walks over to its driver feeling a sense of anger.

“You’re late.”
“I’m terribly sorry. Traffic in this city is crazy.”
“Don’t let it happen again. You know I hate to wait.”
“My apologies.”
“Do you know where he’s staying?”
“Yes. I have all the information.”

The driver hands the shadow a map with coordinates highlighted in red. Its eyes are fiery as it scrolls the page from one end to another.

“Have the attendants take my things to the hotel. I must see him immediately.”
“Do you think he suspects anything?”
“Do I look like someone who can easily be identified?”
“You’re right.”
“Stop wasting my time. Get me to his hotel NOW.”

The driver opens the door and allows the figure to be seated. A cold, almost murderous chill runs down his spine as he closes it and takes his seat into the driver side. A small gust of wind came by and shook the entire car. It maneuvered slightly then stood upright again. Something was definitely unsettling. Something dark, mysterious and full of surprise…

**\*\*\* DIANA’S POINT OF VIEW \*\*\***

I got dressed as quickly as I could and joined the girls downstairs in the kitchen. I asked Marie to help me with my luggage and she was more than happy to do it. Jasmine made a huge feast for breakfast. The entire house smelled like a country restaurant. The wonderful aroma of freshly baked biscuits, eggs, hash browns and sausages made my mouth water. We all sat down and Jasmine said grace.

“Dear Lord, as we are about to eat this food, may you bring us all strength, courage, lots of love and help us get through the next 5 months of Michael’s tour with ease. May you help protect him from all harm and make sure that no difficulties come his way. Amen.”
“And please see to it that Diana has twins!” Marie added.
“OH, GOD NO!”

“We’ll see what happens now won’t we?” Jasmine asked. “Now, let’s eat!”

“We have to hurry. We need to get to the airport.”

As we were eating the lovely meal Jasmine prepared, Marie asked if Michael called.

“He did. He arrived late but he’s ok.”

“Thank goodness. Did you sleep well?”
“Not really. I was tossing and turning all night. What about you two?”
“I was too excited to sleep.”
“Me too.”
“I wish I could say the same.”
“So have you two set a date yet?” Marie asked.

Hearing her question made me choke on my juice.

“Not yet. We need to talk about a lot of things.”
“You’re not having second thoughts are you?”
“Marie, I can’t talk about that now. We need to hurry and get going.”
“How’s the baby doing?”
“It’s fine. I didn’t get sick yet.”
“Let’s hope you don’t on the plane.”
“I have a feeling I will but it’s ok. If not from this then definitely from motion sickness.”
“We’ll both be there to help you. Don’t worry about a thing.”
“Thanks Jas.”

The three of us finished eating and quickly cleaned up after ourselves. I set my alarm and informed my neighbors I was leaving and they were more than happy to watch over the house, collect my mail and water my plants. The company car arrived right on time and two gentlemen came out to help us with our bags. Once we were ready to leave, I looked back at my house one more time before getting in. I saw a large, black crow land on my rooftop. It sat there perched over with an evil look in its eye. I didn’t think anything of it as I got in the car and headed to the airport.

When we arrived, we weren’t surprised to see dozens of reporters from every news channel there to greet us. Marie and Jasmine said they felt like superstars about to walk onto a red carpet as the driver let us out of the vehicle and immediately took our things to the check in counter.

“Remember girls, not ONE WORD to the press about Michael or the tour.”
“They won’t hear a peep out of us!”

We got out and were swarmed by the sounds of cameras clicking and microphones being shoved into our faces from all directions. Our security cleared a path for us and all I could hear were reporters shouting in my ear asking all different kinds of questions.

“Miss Dean, is it true that TSG is your own production company?”
“Miss Dean, is it true that you are going to Europe for Michael’s tour?”
“Miss Dean, is it true that you once had a personal relationship with Michael?”

Hearing the last question made me angry. I kept ignoring them until one reporter asked me something I definitely didn’t want to be asked.

“Miss Dean, what are you going to do if Mr. Jackson’s drug abuse gets out of hand while touring?”

“Whatever Mr. Jackson does in his personal life is HIS business. I think it’s best that the public leave him alone and allow him to do what he does best – being the biggest and greatest entertainer in the world. We have a business relationship which is not open for discussion. Thank you.”

More and more reporters asked me, Jasmine and Marie unnecessary, irrelevant questions that we weren’t stupid enough to answer. After being hauled through security, checking in with our bags and going through the inspection checkpoint, we were only minutes away from boarding.

“FINALLY!” I said sighing with relief.

“Gosh, those reporters are animals!”
“They sure are.”
“How does Michael deal with these monsters every single day?”
“He doesn’t have a choice. It comes with the job.”
“But his fans are what keep him going.” Marie said with a smile.
“I love your passionate and positive energy about him, Marie.”
“So do I. Michael will always keep your love in his heart.”
“Aww, thanks you two.” She said with rose colored cheeks.

Once it was time to board, the girls and I couldn’t wait to get on the plane. Jasmine asked me if I was feeling alright and I told her I was. Suddenly, a man wearing a white medical coat with a stethoscope hanging from his neck went through our security checkpoint.

“Miss Dean?”
“Yes?”
“My name is Dr. Klein. I will be travelling with you.”

“And why is that?”
“It was his request.”
“Who’s?”

Marie nudged my shoulder and whispered in my ear that Dr. Klein was one of Michael’s specialists.

“I’m sorry for being forward. It’s nice to meet you.”

I shook his hand and he smiled at me as he extended his hand.

“He has requested I fly with you because of your current condition. He wasn’t comfortable with you taking such a long flight without having a medical team present.”
“A team?”
“Yes. Myself and my nurses. We will be on the same flight to accommodate your needs and make sure you are comfortable for the duration of the flight.”

I thanked him as they boarded the plane. When we finally sat down, my stomach started to turn. I was incredibly nervous. I knew this would be the beginning of something intense but hopefully positive. My conversation with Michael was still flowing through me and I couldn’t shake the awful feeling I was having. Marie noticed my discomfort and questioned me about it.

“Ana, are you ok?”
“I’m fine.”
“You look down. Do you feel sick?”
“Not yet. I just want to relax and fall asleep.”
“That’s the best thing for you right now.” Jasmine said.
“We all need a good sleep since we won’t be getting any for the next 5 months.”
“But aren’t you excited, girls?” Marie asked.

“I know I am.” Jasmine said.

“I am too. I’m happy we’re doing all this but worried about the trip itself. The length, time away from home, multi-tasking and time restrictions is going to bring a lot of stress but I know we’ll be able to handle it if we stick together.”
“That’s the Diana Dean we know and love!” Jasmine said.

“Yeah, yeah she’s still here. Just a little tired and wants to see her man.”
“I hope you didn’t forget to pack your lingerie.”
“I didn’t but I don’t think I’ll fit into it with this growing belly of mine.”
“He will always think you look beautiful, Diana.”
“I hope so. I love that man to death.”
“He loves you more.” They both said.

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

**DORINT PARK HOTEL, BREMEN GERMANY, 3AM.**

He’s been rehearsing for hours and hasn’t eaten all day. The conversation he had with Diana has been consuming his thoughts. He is restless, angry, agitated and wants to see her.

“Sir, you have been over working yourself. You promised her you wouldn’t do that ever again!”
“I know. Something is happening.”
“Like what, sir?”
“Something bad. An evil force is around us.”
“Force? Of what nature?”
“Something wants to come between us.”

“What makes you feel that way?”
“I can sense things, Chris. Something very strong and dark is coming.”
“I will always be here to protect your life, sir.”
“I know. I will always be grateful to you.”
“I’m sure this feeling will go away the second she arrives.”
“I hope so.”

“I will bring you some herbal tea and fruits.”
“Thank you.”
“Please take rest. I will be back in just a few minutes.”

A dark, shadowy figure lingers around the room. It slowly makes its way out of the kitchen and hides behind a large curtain in the living room. It examines Michael’s loyal employee as he prepares his boss’s edible items. Chris feels a presence in the room. He looks around but sees nothing. He continues with his work and hears Michael call his name. He quickly pours hot water from the whistling kettle on the stove into a cup and immediately runs to his boss.

The shadow knew this was the best time. It slowly goes back to the kitchen and pours several drops of colorless, odorless liquid into the cup. The dripping noises making its way inside ignite its eyes making it feel more and more excited about the upcoming outcome. It hears Chris’s footsteps nearby and hides itself only this time, behind a table in another room.

Chris finishes preparing Michael’s meal and puts it on a tray. He happily takes it to him and tells his boss he is going to bed. Michael shakes his head in agreement and the shadow watches Chris as he takes his leave out of the suite leaving Michael alone. The dark figure breathes steadily watching Michael’s every move as he continues rehearsing without stopping. His body becomes sluggish and he has no choice but to stop. He walks towards his room to wash his face, change his clothes and lie down.

As Michael makes his entrance to the bedroom, the shadow follows as he enters the bathroom. As soon as the water from the open tap starts flowing, the shadow makes its entrance hiding itself in a walk in closet. The door creaked loudly as it opened and is heard in Michael’s ear as he turns off the water and quickly opens the bathroom door looking around for a trace of someone.

“Chris?”

There was nothing but pin drop silence in the entire suite. Michael suddenly saw a black fedora similar to his own on the floor near the closet. He walks over to it and picks it up. The dark figure takes deep breaths and sighs fearing it will be seen. Michael placed the fedora on his night stand near the bed and went back to the bathroom leaving the door open this time. The shadow comes out of the closet waiting with high anticipation. Within minutes, Michael feels fatigued and dizzy. His thoughts were muddled and his vision was dangerously blurred.

It seemed like someone had threw grease into his eyes. He couldn’t understand what was happening to him. The entire room was spinning and his head pounded like a bulldozer drilling into his skull. The shadow knew it was time. It appeared in front of him just as Michael collapsed and landed on the bathroom floor. With his eyes losing their sight by the second, he looked up and noticed the figure standing in front of him. It revealed itself by removing its dark attire and approaches him. Michael sees who it is and says only one thing before he instantly blacks out.

“Diana….I need you.”

**\*\*\* DIANA’S POINT OF VIEW A FEW HOURS LATER \*\*\***

“Ana, wake up! We’re almost there!” Marie said as she looked out of the window from her seat.

“Already? How many hours has it been?”

“About 9 and a half.” Jasmine said.

“Oh gosh. I didn’t realize how tired I was.”

“How are you feeling?”
“I’m ok. I still don’t feel sick which is good.”

“Looks like space man is a traveler just like his daddy.”
“I think so.”

A few minutes later, the pilot came on the announcer saying there was a lot of thick fog and turbulence in the air and asked us all to stay in our seats until he informed us it would be ok to move around again.

“Marie, get in your seat!” I yelled.

“I’m coming! I’m just getting some water.”

“Hurry up! The plane is very shaky.”

She scurried over to her seat and fastened her seatbelt. The aircraft was rocking back and forth scaring us half to death. Jasmine held onto her seat for dear life and Marie closed her eyes trying to stay calm. All I could do was pray that whatever was causing this turbulence would quickly go away. After a while, the pilot finally announced that the weather was somewhat better and it was ok to remove our seatbelts. I was so relieved and needed to use the bathroom.

“I’ll be right back.”
“Where are you going?”
“To the ladies room.”
“You want one of us to wait outside for you?”
“I think I’ll be ok.”

Dr. Klein came to check on us to see if we were all ok. I told him we were and he returned to the lower deck. I quickly went to the lavatory. I wasn’t comfortable moving around with the possibility of turbulence coming back at any time. As soon as I was finished, I opened the lavatory door to leave when the plane jolted unexpectedly making me fall against the door causing me to land directly on my stomach. All I could hear was Jasmine and Marie screaming for Dr. Klein and then everything went blank…

**\*\*\* MICHAEL’S HOTEL ROOM THE NEXT MORNING \*\*\***

His first concert was in three days. Chris entered Michael’s suite to check on his boss. He noticed everything was still in place and Michael’s bedroom door was closed. Thinking he’s still asleep, he decides not to disturb him and quietly cuts his favorite fruits and prepares his juice leaving it covered on the kitchen table for him. He then leaves discreetly telling himself he will come back to check on him later.

**\*\*\* DIANA’S POINT OF VIEW \*\*\***

“Where am I?”
“Diana. Thank god you’re alright!”

“What happened, Jas?”
“You fell and were knocked unconscious.”
“On the plane?”
“Yeah, you were coming back to your seat from the lavatory.”
“Where’s Marie?”
“Out in the hall. She couldn’t handle seeing you like this. I’ll go get her.”
“Wait, Jas! What about the baby?”
“Ana…”

I knew from the sound of her voice.

“NO, JASMINE! NOT AGAIN!”

“No, Diana. Please don’t overreact. I’ll get the doctor. It’s not what you think at all.”

“What do you mean?”

She ran out of the room and called Dr. Klein. Marie came in and gave me a hug wiping her tears. I told her I was ok and thanked her for being so considerate.

“Miss Dean, I’m Dr. Reid, the gynecologist and obstetrician at this hospital.”

“Where am I?”
“We had to make an emergency landing.” Jasmine explained.

“You mean we’re not in Germany?”
“No, you’re in Amsterdam. An hour away from your destination.”

“Were we almost there when this happened?”
“Yes. You had about two hours left on your flight. But there’s no need for you to worry. Dr. Klein took care of you until we had you air lifted to this hospital.”
“How is my baby?”

Dr. Reid looked at Dr. Klein and then at the girls. He signaled them all to leave so that she could speak to me in private.

“Diana, there’s something you need to know.”
“Oh my god, my baby! What happened to my baby?”
“Nothing happened.”
“I don’t understand.”

“Well, it’s not exactly a bad thing.”
“What do you mean?”
“Diana…..”

She stalled and looked down at the floor. It was painfully obvious that she was hiding something from me.

“Dr. Reid, just tell me what it is. Is my baby going to be ok?”
“Diana, you are not pregnant.”
“HOW CAN YOU LOOK ME IN THE EYE AND TELL ME NOTHING HAPPENED!”

“Diana, you don’t understand.”

“NO, YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND. THIS IS MY SECOND MISCARRIAGE!”

“Diana, please. Let me explain.”
“EXPLAIN WHAT? THAT I’M JUST NOT MEANT TO HAVE A BABY?”

“Diana, please let me finish.”
“I DON’T WANT TO HEAR ANYTHING!”

She kept trying to talk but all I could do was scream and cry. I had never felt this devastated since the last time this happened.

“Diana, you REALLY don’t understand.”

“I understand perfectly.”
“NO, YOU DON’T!”

She screamed at me and grabbed my arm in an attempt to restrain me on the bed. She threatened to sedate me if I didn’t cooperate. I immediately settled down and gave her my full attention.

“Diana, you were NEVER pregnant.”
“WHAT?”
“You were experiencing a hysterical pregnancy.”
“What is that?”
“It’s very common for women your age who have suffered a loss in the past.”
“What is it? How does it happen? WHY does it happen?”
“It’s a condition where a woman has symptoms of pregnancy but isn’t actually pregnant. You skip your cycles, get morning sickness and you think you are gaining weight but you really aren’t.”

“This is crazy. How could I not have been pregnant? I tested myself three times and each test came out positive.”

“That’s very common as well. Your body is saying you are pregnant due to your hormonal imbalance but in reality it’s all just in your mind.”
“I can’t believe this. So you’re saying I was never pregnant?”
“Unfortunately not.”
“What causes this to happen?”
“All sorts of things. Excessive stress, mental anxiety, sudden and extreme changes to your life. There are so many different issues that bring this type of condition onto your body.”

“I don’t know what to say. This is a new type of loss for me. Do my friends know?”
“They were worried about you. I had to tell them.”
“That’s ok. It makes it a lot easier on me. I’m sorry for being rude to you.”

“Don’t apologize. I’m glad you’re ok. I’ll ask your friends to join you now.”

I thanked her as she called them. They both came in and hugged me.

“Ana, we’re so sorry.”
“There’s really nothing to be sorry about.”
“I know it was never there, but it definitely was in our hearts.”

 “Thanks girls.”
“How are you going to break this to Michael?”

I had never even thought about his reaction to the news. I couldn’t help but break down again.

“Girls, he is going to fall apart.”

“Don’t worry. We’ll be there when you tell him.”
“When can we leave here? What about our flight to Germany?”
“You will stay under observation tonight and we’ll leave in the morning. Our bags have arrived at the hotel in Germany with the rest of the crew. Everything is ok.”
“I don’t know what I’d do without you two. I hope Michael doesn’t find out about this.”
“I don’t think he will unless one of us tells him.”
“Ana, everything will be ok. I know it’s still a loss for you two but think of it as a sign that now wasn’t the right time. Maybe it’s meant to come when you two are actually married and this was a premonition from God showing you what’s coming in the future.”
“Thanks Jas. That makes me feel better.”
“And we’re both glad that you are ok. We would never want anything bad to happen to you.”
“I know, Marie. I feel the same way about you two.”
“Now we can all enjoy Europe and not worry about you getting sick anymore. It’s going to be great, you’ll see.”

Dr. Klein and his staff rented a hotel room near the airport for the night. He said he would meet me there once I was discharged. Luckily, Jasmine had a few pairs of clothes in her carryon bag that she brought with her to the hospital that I could wear in the morning. They both stayed at my bedside until I fell asleep and the two of them slept in chairs next to me. I was happy that I’d get to see Michael tomorrow but was also very worried. I knew the news of losing the baby again would tear him to pieces. I was thankful again for my two best friends. I knew having them by my side would make it a lot easier to break the news to him.

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

“Looks like you’re ready to go, Diana.” Dr. Reid said as I signed the discharge papers. I thanked her as I left and apologized again for my unacceptable behavior. She walked me to the exit doors and the girls and I waited for a cab. Thankfully, the hospital wasn’t far from the airport so we didn’t have to waste a ton of money on the meter to get there.

When we arrived, we went through the security checkpoint again and waited to board the plane. I was glad that our flight was only an hour long since I wasn’t in the mood to sit for several hours again.

“Ana, do you feel ok?”
“I’m fine. I just want to get there.”

“Don’t worry. You will see Michael in exactly two hours.”
“I hope so. I can’t wait to be in his arms where I belong.”

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

It’s been hours since Chris made Michael’s breakfast. He waited for Michael to call him but still hadn’t heard from him. Worried, he enters Michael’s suite again and becomes frantic when he sees his food hasn’t even been touched. He knew something terrible must’ve happened and barges into Michael’s room completely shocked at the sight in front of him.

\***\*\* DIANA’S POINT OF VIEW TWO HOURS LATER \*\*\***

“Thank god we made it.” I said as the three of us and Dr. Klein got off the plane. Our crew members greeted me and the girls and said they were happy to see us and so relieved that we all arrived safely. All I could think about was Michael. My heart was beating uncontrollably. I knew I was just minutes away from seeing him. Dr. Klein went his own way and said he would be attending a few of Michael’s concerts. I thanked him for his help as he left with his staff.

“The hotel is about a half hour drive from here, girls.” Jasmine said.

“Michael is staying across the street from us. Good job with the fake names, Marie!”
“Why, thank you. I know I’m good.”
“What name did you book him as?”
“Sorry, can’t tell you. Michael gave me strict orders.”
“I’m sure I can charm it out of him.”
“Just make sure you take off the lingerie first.”
“And video tape it so I can see it!”
“GIRLS! YOU ARE DISGUSTING!”

We all laughed as we got into the company car and drove to the hotel.

When we arrived, the first thing we wanted to do was see the man of the tour. We quickly unpacked, washed up and changed into more comfortable clothing. We had separate suites but with connecting doors so that the three of us could still be together with added privacy.

“Marie, hand me Michael’s phone list please. I’m going to call Chris and find out if it’s ok for us to see him now.” She gave it to me and I dialed his number twice but he didn’t answer. I had all of his information including his suite number so I figured I’d just go and surprise him. The girls agreed and wanted to join me. I quickly touched up my hair and makeup and we headed out.

“These access cards are really cool!” Marie said as she swiped hers back and forth on the door.

“Marie, don’t play with that. We’re only supposed to swipe once each time we leave and come back.”
“I know, but it’s fun!”
“Come on. Let’s go see him!”

“WAIT! I forgot something.”

I ran back to the room and grabbed the brown envelope from my bag. Since I was going to tell Michael the news about the baby, I figured I should tell him about what I’ve decided about our relationship too. I knew he would be heartbroken, but leaving him in the dark wouldn’t be fair either. I took a deep sigh and left the suite with the girls.

The roads and traffic in Germany were overwhelming. There were several shops and cafes on every corner and hardly anyone spoke English. Luckily, Marie was fluent in German so having her with us was a huge asset. She kindly asked a stranger how far Michael’s hotel was and the person explained it was literally just down the road. We all walked across the street and saw the large, glowing sign with the hotel’s name displayed on it.

“GIRLS! HE’S IN THERE!!” Marie yelled jumping up and down.
“I know! I know!” Jasmine said.
“Diana, aren’t you excited?”
“Do you see me walking fast? LET’S MOVE!”

We hurried down the block and walked into the main lobby. I was glad that no reporters or fans were there bothering him. Marie’s genius idea to use fake names definitely came in handy for him. I was certain that’s what he did every time he traveled but we knew we had to be extra cautious so that our names weren’t tarnished as well as his.

“According to his itinerary, he’s staying at the very top like always. The upper six floors are all his. We have to swipe our ID cards in the elevator before going up.”

“Marie, did you bring them?”
“I sure did!”

She handed them to us and the three of us entered the elevator swiping our cards one at a time. There was a large TV screen that beeped as we heard the computer speak.

“*Welcome to Germany. Diana. Jasmine. Marie*.”

“HOLY COW! DID YOU HEAR THAT?” Marie yelled.

“Yes, that’s pretty impressive!”
“That’s my baby. Always creating magic everywhere he goes.”

My heart was racing a mile a minute as we were slowly making our way up to Michael’s suite. I couldn’t wait to see his beautiful eyes and have him close to me. I clutched the brown envelope tightly in my hand hoping Michael would understand my point of view about our relationship. As happy as I was to see him again, I was also equally crushed. I had to clean up the mess I knew I was responsible for making. Once the elevator doors opened, the three of us got out and walked across the hall looking at the numbers on each door.

“He’s all the way at the end.” Marie said.

We walked quickly to the end of the hall and noticed the suite door was open. We walked in but didn’t see Michael anywhere. I looked around and noticed an untouched plate of food sitting on the kitchen table.

“Ana, I think he’s asleep.” Jasmine whispered as she pointed to a closed bedroom door across the hall.

“Maybe we should come back later?” Marie asked.

“Don’t be silly. I’ve waited too long for this moment. I’ll just sneak a peek without waking him up.”

Just as we opened the door, Chris entered the suite and screamed at us.

“NO! DON’T—“

I walked in the bedroom and completely lost my senses when I saw Michael and his ex-wife lying nude together. The wailing in my voice made him wake up and he saw who was next to him with the most startled look on his face. I was enraged. I walked right up to him and slapped him across his face. The impact of my hit was so large that his entire face turned red. A single tear fell from his eye and all I wanted to do was continue hitting him.

The girls ran to me and helped me gather my composure and immediately took me out of the room. They dragged me across as I wailed and screamed at the top of my lungs. I had never felt so betrayed. It was one thing to lose a child and another to lose Michael to the woman he had been with after me. I could hear him calling me as he followed me outside but the girls crowded me and pushed him aside not allowing him to get anywhere near me.

We stood out in the hallway and I could faintly hear Michael and Chris talking. I turned my head with blurred eyes from my tears and saw Michael on the floor in his suite. He was begging and pleading with Chris for some reason and I had no idea why. As I stood out in the hallway with the girls, Lisa Marie walked past me with nothing but evil intent in her eyes.

“You won. I lost.” She said.
“What are you talking about?”
“He fell asleep on me.”
“Get away from me.”
“Believe me. NOTHING HAPPENED. He loves you. I tried to get him to sleep with me and he didn’t. All he did was say your name for hours and hours. It drove me insane.”
“Then why did you spend the night with him?”
“I had to make sure he’d be ok through the night.”
“Why?”
“Because I drugged him.”
“YOU EVIL, CONNIVING BITCH!”

I pushed the girls aside and tried to attack her. They held me back and she ran away into the elevator and out of sight with her dark clothing at her side. I didn’t know if I believed her but I was also too distraught to care or hear Michael’s side of the story. All I could do was slowly crawl to the floor in the hallway and sob my heart out in front of the girls.

“Ana, it’s ok. I believe her.” Jasmine said.

“I don’t know if I do.”
“He loves you. He would NEVER cheat on you, especially with HER of all people.”
“I can’t believe anything anymore. I just lost my baby and now I lost him.”
“You didn’t lose him. He’s still yours.”

Chris came out into the hallway and gently picked me up. He said Michael was just as traumatized as I was, if not more. He explained to me that Michael was miserable and did nothing but rehearse for two days in a row without eating or sleeping. He was worried about me and all he could do was think of me. I wanted to believe him but all I could see was Michael’s nude body next to hers. I asked where he went and he said he didn’t want to stay in that suite and went across the hall to Chris’s room where he would be staying for good.

“Ana, go talk to him. You two need each other.” Jasmine said.
“We’ll go with you.” Marie added.

“I don’t think he’ll want to see anyone. I just want to say what I have to and leave him alone. He clearly isn’t himself right now and neither am I.”

They escorted me across the hall and Chris led me to where Michael was sitting. I saw him profusely shaking as he sat on the black leather couch trying to calm his mind. I gripped the brown envelope in my hand as I walked over to him and sat on the floor in front of him.

“Michael…”

He didn’t say a word. It seemed like he was purposely trying to ignore me.

“It’s me. I’m here.”

He remained silent. I tried to grab his hands but noticed he was holding onto something. I opened them and saw an empty bottle of prescription medication in between his palms.

“MICHAEL! LOOK AT ME!”

He resisted me.

“MICHAEL! DID YOU OVERDOSE ON THESE?”

He shook his head no but said he was tempted to.

“Why are you holding onto this bottle then?”
“I took these every single day when I didn’t have you in my life.”
“What does that have to do with now?”
“After what you just saw, I know I’ve lost you again. I need to re-fill this bottle so I can go on with my life without you.”

I stood up and grabbed the vial from his hands. I threw it behind me and it landed across the room somewhere. I hugged him and all he could do was grab onto me and apologize repeatedly.

“Diana, I’m sorry.”
“It’s not your fault.”
“I thought she was you. I had no idea what she was doing to me. I don’t even know how she got in my room. I have never been so scared in my entire life. She was trying to seduce me and I couldn’t fight her off. I swear she drugged me somehow--”
“She told me that. Nothing happened between you two.”

“I knew something bad was around me. I felt it all day.”

“It’s ok, Michael. We’re together now.”
“I’m so glad you’re here. I wish you hadn’t seen that.”
“Shhh. Please be quiet and hold me.”

We stood there in each other’s arms trying to comfort one another. I had my own pain and now Michael had his. I knew this wasn’t the right time to tell him about what happened to me. As hurt as I felt, I knew he needed me now more than ever. I put my feelings aside and devoted all of my energy to him. My love for him suddenly grew deeper in that moment and I knew there was only one thing that would turn this whole thing around for both of us.

“Michael, I have something I need to tell you.”

“What is it?”
“Sit down with me.”

He and I sat on the leather couch facing each other closely. I reached down and picked up the brown envelope from the floor and held it firmly in my hand.

“I’m sorry but I have to do this now.”
“Do what?”
“There’s something I need to give back to you.”

His eyes widened. He knew what was in my hand.

“You know I’d never do anything to hurt you on purpose.”
“Diana, don’t do this to me.”
“I know you will continue to have a great life after this.”

“Diana…”
“I want nothing but your happiness.”

“DIANA, PLEASE DON’T LEAVE ME!”

I pulled out the document from the brown envelope and handed it to him.

“If I wanted to do that, I’d have to file for divorce at this point.”

He looked at the bottom of the document with the most glorified look in his eyes:

Diana Elizabeth Dean

Diana Elizabeth Dean