CHAPTER FIVE:

From Lashing to Loving

I saw a few crystal gemstones on the ground with the petals. As beautiful as they were, I was afraid I would break them with my heels so I walked towards the other side of the patio overlooking the water. The view was so beautiful. I then heard footsteps approaching me from behind. The wind was still blowing fiercely. I tried staying calm. I closed my eyes and just stood there, frozen like a statue wondering what was going to happen next.

My arms were crossed and my legs didn’t move. My breathing became still. I immediately sensed his presence behind me. I inhaled his cologne. It was the same scent as before. I then felt him gently kiss the back of my neck sending chills down my spine. He touched my back lightly and moved closer towards me. “Diana…..” Hearing his voice say my name made me feel unsteady. I didn’t have the courage to move. I felt his fingers touch my arm as he spoke to me again. “It’s me. Please turn around.”

I couldn’t say a word. Hearing that voice after so long brought back such painful memories. Memories that I thought were gone forever. He wrapped his arms around my waist and continued talking. “I’ve missed you so much. I’m so glad I finally found you.” As soon as I felt him touch my body, all of the anger I had buried inside of me suddenly decided to come out. “GET AWAY FROM ME!” I yelled as I pushed him away. Without facing him, I ran to the other side of the patio with tears pouring down my face.

“I thought I could handle this but I can’t!” I kept my back towards him. Without saying a word, he came behind me and tried to comfort me. “Diana, I know you can’t look at me and that’s ok. I won’t force you to. I just want to thank you for coming to see me. I know it wasn’t easy. It wasn’t for me either. I have always kept you in my heart. What we had was special—“

“EXACTLY!” Out of nowhere, the five years of resentment I had for him came out attacking him:

“I GAVE YOU ALL OF ME, MICHAEL! I GAVE YOU EVERYTHING I HAD IN ME TO GIVE AND YOU LEFT ME! YOU LEFT MEALONE FOR FIVE YEARS! YOU NEVER EVEN LOOKED BACK AT ME ONCE TO SEE IF I WAS DEAD OR ALIVE!”

“Diana, listen to me—“

“NO! YOU LISTEN! I LOST OUR BABY. I LOST MY MEMORY AND YOU TURNED YOUR BACK ON ME AND MARRIED SOMEONE ELSE! HOW COULD YOU? HOW?”

“Diana, wait—“

“I THOUGHT YOU AND I WOULD BE TOGETHER FOREVER! YOU WERE THE FIRST MAN I HAD EVER BEEN WITH AND BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU DID TO ME I NEVER ALLOWED MYSELF TO GET CLOSE TO ANYONE ELSE! YOU HAVE BEEN ON MY MIND EVERY SINGLE DAY FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS AND EVERYDAY I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT YOU ARE NOW WITH ANOTHER WOMAN. A WOMAN THAT ISN’T ME!”

“Diana, you’re screaming at me and other people can hear you out here. Let’s go inside please.” He tried to hold my hand but I refused to let him touch me. “DON’T come near me! I ran inside and he followed me closing the patio doors behind him.”

I stood at the opposite end of the room trying to keep my distance from him. “Come sit with me please.” “NO! I don’t want to be anywhere near you.” “Diana, please let me tell you my side—“ “I KNOW YOUR SIDE, MICHAEL.”

“No, you really don’t.”

“I WILL NEVER TRUST YOU AGAIN. YOU BETRAYED ME. I LOST MY PARENTS ANDYOU STILL DIDN’T GIVE A DAMN TO FIND ME.”

“Diana, I tried. It was YOU who disappeared.”

“YOU OBVIOUSLY DIDN’T LOOK HARD ENOUGH. I NEVER CHANGED MY NAME!”

“Diana, please stop yelling. You will hurt your voice.”

“Don’t talk to me like you care.”

“If I didn’t, do you think I’d bring you here?”

“I came here to discuss your business deal with MY company. I had no idea this side of me would come out at the first feel of your existence around me.”

“Come here, sit next to me.”
“NO!”

“Please?”
“I don’t want you anywhere near me.”

“Please?”

“NO!”
“I love you.”
“I HATE YOU!”

I couldn’t handle myself anymore. I fell to the ground and wasn’t able to stop myself from crying impulsively. Michael ran to me and held me as I sat on the ground. I didn’t have the strength to push him away and having his loving arms wrapped around me made me feel like I was protected by him. He slowly rocked me back and forth like a parent does to a child and told me repeatedly that everything was ok. “Diana, you once told me that you love hearing me speak and you really love the sound of my voice, so please listen to me. I NEVER stopped looking for you. I NEVER gave up on you and I NEVER, EVER stopped loving you. Not even for one second of my life.”

He continued talking and rubbed my back vigorously to get me to relax and stay calm. “I got married but it didn’t work for me. I thought if I moved on with someone else I’d have a reason to forget you but I never could. I kept thinking of you every day that I was with her. I spent hours and hours searching for you every day in New York. I sent so many people there to look for you. My family even contacted the police hoping they would tell us something but they didn’t.”

“I moved to LA a few months after you and I separated.”
“Why?”
“I got accepted into university here and enrolled right away. I graduated a year ago. My parents died while I was in school. My mom had a stroke and my father had a heart attack a year after. My twin brother and sister also graduated from out of state schools but never moved back home after my parents passed away. I had no reason to live in New York anymore. As soon as I got my inheritance, I used that money to move here, buy a house and start my own business.”

“You accomplished so much on your own.”

“I had to. It was the only way for me to forget you.”

“Diana?”

“Yes?”
“When did you get your memory back?”

It was then that I realized my anger had told him the truth. The things I wanted hidden subconsciously came out. “I won’t lie to you – I regained my memory the day you came to see me at the hospital.” He let go of me and looked me in the eye. “You knew who I was that day and you never told me?” “I didn’t know right away. It came back to me afterwards. Michael, I’m sorry. I wasn’t ready to face things back then. I was stupid and let you believe I had forgotten you so that it would be easier for the both of us to forget each other. “Why would you do that to me?” “I didn’t mean to. I wasn’t ready to have a baby and become your wife and have the whole world spy on us and take away my privacy. I was a simple girl back then with parents to think about. I wasn’t ready to give all of that up at the time.”

Michael’s face changed completely. He seemed very disturbed. “I can’t believe you knew.” “I’m sorry. Please forgive me. I never wanted to tell you but it came out. I’m glad I don’t have to keep hiding it anymore.” “You have NO idea how I lived my life these past five years. I thought that you would never remember me again. I lived in fear wondering if you would ever come back to me.” “But we DID come back to each other and I remember EVERYTHING.” Feeling incredibly stunned, Michael stood up as if he was about to leave the room. “Where are you going?” “I want to show you something.”

He helped me up and took me to a bedroom. I knew he was angry. As I stood by the doorway, he went inside the room and opened a briefcase showing me hundreds of letters, poems and drawings addressed to me. “I wrote these to you. I wrote pages and pages of letters to you every single day. I wrote my first letter to you the day I left you at the hospital in New York. Then when that didn’t feel like it was enough, I started drawing pictures of you to remind myself what you looked like because it ended up being too difficult for me to look at your photos. Even as a married man I NEVER stopped writing and drawing.

It seemed like he too had feelings buried inside of him. “Your face has been engraved in my head. I tried to forget you but I just couldn’t do it. One of my new songs was for you and I had to make it seem like it was for Lisa. I even did the film with her and had it released.” “Are you talking about you are not alone?” “YES.” “Michael, you wrote that for ME?” “Someone else wrote it but I sang it. I couldn’t even write my own lyrics because I was so consumed by your memory.”

I didn’t want to interrupt him so I let him continue. “You think you’re the only one who suffered from us separating? I had to tell my mother that you were no longer a part of my life. She blamed me saying it was my fault and I did something bad to you and that was why you left me. I let her believe that because I didn’t want her hating you once she knew the truth. I always had faith that one day, I would bring you back to her as a daughter in law.” I couldn’t hold myself back and started to cry again.

“I was alone. I was sad and very lonely. I missed you every single minute of every day. I asked God to remove you from my memory just like he removed me from yours so I could try and go on without you on my mind.” He then started to cry. “I went through my whole trial without you. A trial that left me humiliated and completely gutted. My entire house was searched, my parents’ home was searched and every part of my body was searched and violated for something I didn’t do.” He then started to really fall apart. “Michael, stop. You will make yourself sick.”

“I’ve been sick for years, Diana.” “This is nothing. I was trying to find Lisa in you and I couldn’t do it. Even when we were intimate, thoughts of you were always running through my mind. Every time she came near me I saw your face. I would hear your voice and I would remember all of the times you and I spent alone together.” “Michael, that’s enough.” “Now to find out you NEVER had to live your life these past five years not knowing who I was makes me feel deceived.”

“Michael, that wasn’t my intention at all. You’re the biggest entertainer in the world. I knew that you would move on and find happiness with another woman. Your art and your singing would eventually allow you to meet someone else and start over.” “It wasn’t the same.” “I know that now. I had no idea you were going through all of this.” “I had no way of telling you. You never allowed me to find you.” He was right. “If it means anything now, you have to know that even though I wanted to run away, I was actually trying to get closer to you.”

“I never admitted that before but I am now. From the day we were separated, I decided to make something of myself and become successful so that one day you would come back for me. I got accepted into UCLA and received an honor’s degree in Performing Arts and a second degree in Events and Fashion just so I could become someone you’d eventually hear about on TV or in magazines. I NEVER let any other man touch me or get close to me since you and I separated. I’ve also worn your ring every single day for the past five years hoping that one day I’d get the chance to show you and tell you proudly that I haven’t removed it from my hand. I moved to LA and started my business here because I knew YOU lived here. I left my entire life in New York just to be closer to you. And lastly, do you know why I named my company TSG?” He shook his head no. “I named it after you, Michael – The Sparkling Glove Productions.” He tried to smile through his tears which gave me a sense of relief. “That’s very sweet. Thank you.”

“We both definitely had our share of struggles these past five years.” He said as he sat on the bed. I went and sat next to him gently touching his hand. “Did you really think of me that much?” “Every time I breathed.” “Michael, I’m sorry. I never meant to hurt you. I wasn’t even going to tell you at all because I was too ashamed of myself. I told Jasmine I would tell you but I still wasn’t going to.” “I’m glad to see that you’re doing so well. I always prayed that one day you’d achieve your dreams.” “God must’ve heard you because I did.”

“Did you really think of me when you sang that song?”

“Yes.”

“Do you still love me?”

“Do you?”

“Do you really think I’d get this dolled up for you if I didn’t?

He finally laughed.

“I missed that laugh.”

“You look beautiful. You’ve grown into a gorgeous, mature business lady.”

“I’m YOUR business lady now.”

“I know. I saw your name in your office boardroom.”
“So THAT’S how you found out!”

“And I saw you walk by me.”
“Oh right when you dropped that gold cloth.”
“I knew you’d see it.”

“I did. I will keep it forever.”

He looked at my hand and saw the ring with his birthstone in the middle.

“I still remember when I gave that to you.”

“So do I. It’s never been removed from this finger and it never will be.”

“That’s sweet. I’m sorry about your parents.”

“Thank you. They never knew about our baby.”

“Really?”
“Marie doesn’t know either.”
“Will you ever tell her?”
“I guess I have to now that you’re back in my life.”

“I am?”
“Would you like to be?”

“You think I’d blindly sign your legal documents if I didn’t?”
“You didn’t READ them?”
“I was in disguise, I couldn’t see a thing.”

“But you signed them anyway?”
“Of course.”
“WHY?”

“I saw your name and knew that was the perfect way to see you.”

“Michael, you haven’t changed a bit when it comes to being sneaky.”

“Neither have you, Miss CEO.”

We both laughed and wiped each other’s tears and held each other.

“Michael?”
“Yes?”
“I love you.”
“Do you?”
“Are you doubting me?”
“A bit.”
“WHY?”

“There’s one thing you haven’t done yet.”

I let go of him and looked in his beautiful eyes.

“Michael, we just met after five years and you’re already thinking about doing that?”
“Why do you think I brought you to the bedroom?”
“OH MY GOD, I’M LEAVING!”

He laughed adorably then grabbed my arm and pulled me towards him.

“I’M KIDDING, GIRL!”

“I don’t believe you.”
“I really am. I wasn’t thinking about that.”

“You weren’t?”
“Ok, I was but I was referring to something else.”

“Which is?”

“Come here…”

He took my face in his hands and kissed me. I could feel my body temperature increasing from normal to very warm. His kiss felt romantic and full of love. Just like I remembered it to be. I thanked him as he let go and asked me to lay down with him.

“I don’t think that’s a good idea. It will lead to something else.”

“Don’t you want it to?”
“NO! I came here to discuss business with you.”

“I know that. I just want you to be close to me. Please?”

“You are still VERY hard to resist.”

“I’m Michael.” He said as he winked at me.

“You still do that?”
“Only to you.”

I took off my shoes and jumped on the bed next to him.

“Are you comfortable?”
“Yes. Are you?”
“I am now.”

“Good. Come here.”

I pulled him closer towards me. He held my waist as I stroked his long, beautiful curly hair. “I remember this.” He whispered as he closed his eyes. “So do I. Remember that day at the museum, Michael?” He giggled. “Of course. That was the best day of my life.” “Mine too.” “Did Marie and Jasmine move here with you?” “Yeah. After my parents died I didn’t really have a reason to stay in New York and they knew how alone I was here. Jasmine and her husband David decided to move here to keep me company. It worked out perfectly because David works for the government and he transferred to an office here. I then made Jasmine my personal assistant and she enjoys it. As for Marie – she couldn’t live without either one of us so she told her parents she wanted to move here too and they were glad to get rid of her.” “You’re kidding, right?” “Yes. They allowed her to because they knew I was opening my own business and she would work for me.”

“Diana?”

“Yes, baby?”

He giggled cutely to himself.

“I missed hearing you say that.”
“You’re my baby, Michael.”

He gently put his hand on my stomach. I knew he remembered his child at that moment.

“Michael, I’m sorry.”

“It’s ok. I know he or she is waiting for us in heaven.”
“What would you like it to be?”
“Mine.”
“I KNOW THAT, SILLY! I meant what gender.”
“It doesn’t matter to me. I love both.”
“If you had to choose?”
“A boy.”
“Your mother said the same thing.”
“She did?”
“Yes. I once asked her what she wanted and she said a little Michael Junior.”

“I would love him so much.”
“I know.”

“I adore children. I want my own so badly.”

“Michael?”
“Yes?”
“There’s something else you have to know.”
“About?”
“Us.”
“What is it?”

“I told the girls I wasn’t going to let you get to me this time.”

He couldn’t help but laugh.

“Diana, I wasn’t even trying.”
“HEY! What does that mean?”
“It means you fell for me on your own.”
“I did NOT. I was mad at you and then the whole thing turned around.”

“Isn’t that good?”
“Yes, but I don’t want the girls to find out. They’ve been teasing me about you for days.”

“Does this mean we’re together again?”
“You have to ask me first.”

He pulled away and looked me in the eye, running his hand down my face.

“Diana, will you be my girl?”
“I’m not a girl anymore, Michael.”
“Will you marry me?”

“I have the ring on, don’t I?”
“You want a new one?”
“That would be nice.”
“Forget it, they’re not cheap.”
“BUT YOU ARE!”

He laughed then tickled me. After I tickled him back, we fell on top of each other.

“Michael, you haven’t changed.”
“Neither have you.”
“I grew up, you didn’t.”

“I love being like this with you. I could never be this way with Lisa.”

“Really?”
“She was too serious.”
“Were you happy with her?”
“I thought I was in the beginning but I learned quickly that she wasn’t the one for me.”

“Why is that?”
“Because she wasn’t you, Diana.”

I couldn’t help but cry again as he said those words. He hugged me so tight making me feel even more attached to him.

“I love you.”
“I love you more.”
“Does this mean we’re together?”
“You didn’t answer me.”
“Yes, Michael. I’ll marry you.”
“You will?”
“Yes.”
“After my tour?”
“Ok, we’ll do it.”
“You’re serious?”
“YES, Michael.”

He was so happy he ran out of the room and started yelling outside the patio that he loved me.

“WILL YOU STOP IT? You’re going to attract fans down there!”

“I don’t care. I’m so happy.”
“Me too.”

He kissed me right on the patio for the whole world to see. “Ok, that’s enough.” I said. “We need to start talking business.” “Oh, yeah that stuff.” “It’s not STUFF! It’s YOUR EUROPEAN TOUR!” “Yeah, right. Whatever it is.” “You’re so silly. Come on, we have to get started.” “So soon?” “THAT’S NOT WHAT I’M TALKING ABOUT!” “I know. I’m teasing you.” I dragged him inside and we both sat on the couch discussing the tour information. Of course, that didn’t last long. Michael started touching and biting me all over.

“Will you pay attention?” “I am.” “Not to ME, to the details!” “Ok, I am now.” “Are you sure?” “Yes, talk.” We finally discussed business then Michael and I both signed all of the papers making it official that the girls and I were going to launch his tour in Europe. “I’m excited to work with you.” “Will you be there with me?” “Absolutely. Me and the girls.” “For the entire 5 months?” “Of course.” He was so happy again his face lit up like an angel. “I can’t believe you will be with me.” “Every step of the way. I heard you have a new gold wardrobe.” “Want to see?” “YES, PLEASE!”

“Come with me.” He took me to the room again and showed me a few of his outfits. “I have a few things still being made, but these are some items I’ll be performing in.” He showed me several jackets and his new gold ensemble. “Can you put it on?” “Now?” “Please? I’d love to see how it looks.” He agreed and I waited in the living room while he put it on. He came out a few minutes later wearing the entire set, including the helmet and leg pads. “You look amazing!” “You like it?” “YES! It’s so cool.”

What he didn’t know was that I had an ulterior motive in mind. I went up to him and pulled him towards me. “Michael, you are the sexiest astronaut spaceman guy in the world.” He burst out laughing as he removed his helmet from his head. I gently kissed his lips and lowered his head towards mine. “Michael, will you please invade my spaceship?” He smiled and bit his bottom lip turning me on instantly. “You really want me to?” “I haven’t been invaded in five years. What do you think?” Without giving it a second thought, Michael scooped me up in his arms and took me to the bedroom with his body all wrapped in gold….