CHAPTER SEVEN:

*The Love Triangle*

I screamed and started to panic when I realized he wasn’t breathing. I ran to the entrance door and informed his security who immediately alerted his medical team. Within seconds, they rushed through the door and asked me to wait outside the room. A team of paramedics went inside and closed the bedroom door. I couldn’t stop shaking and tears wouldn’t stop flowing. I wanted to call Jasmine but I didn’t want Michael’s staff to think I was trying to alert the media about him.

After what seemed like a half hour, I heard the medical team say he was still unresponsive. “CALL HER! SHE KNOWS WHAT TO DO!” I heard one of them yell. **Who is her**? I thought to myself. Within seconds, a woman who looked about the same age as Michael came through the entrance door and ran in the bedroom with a huge medical bag. As I wondered who she was, I kept trying to calm myself down hoping and praying that he would pull through. **God, you took him from me once and then took our child away, PLEASE don’t do this to me again.** I kept saying those words repeatedly in my mind until that same woman told me he was finally alright.

“He’s ok now. He relapses and suffers from extreme cases of exhaustion, fatigue, dehydration and a few other things. He asked to see you right away.” “Thank you. I thought I was going to lose him again.” “Again? Are you Diana?” “Yes, and you are?” “Michelle. I used to be Michael’s mother’s care aid about 8 years ago. I’ve been taking care of him since then.” “I’m glad to know he has such a caring team to help him.” “He’s told me a lot about you.” “HE HAS?” “I’m glad you two found each other again. He calls you his soul mate.”

I was surprised that Michael told his nurse about me. “That’s nice of you to say. I know it’s none of my business but are those vials of medication his?” “I’m not allowed to disclose that information.” “I understand. I’m just really worried about him. I don’t want him taking pills. They are dangerous and highly addictive.” “What I can tell you is that he has a habit of constantly overworking himself.” “I know. I’ve seen him do it.” “If you can get him to reduce working so extensively, take regular breaks, go to sleep at a decent hour for a reasonable amount of time and eat normally, he will start to improve. I used to make him protein shakes and they worked really well for him.”

“He stopped drinking them?” “No, he still does just not as often as before. I can give you instructions on how to make them and you can give them to him as well.” “I’d love that, thank you.” I ran to the couch where my purse was and gave her my business card. “Please keep in touch with me. I want to make sure he’s always okay.” “He will be now that you’re back in his life.” “It was so nice to meet you.” “Same here.” “I can see why he loves you so much – you are VERY beautiful.” I thanked her as she gave me a hug and headed for the door with the rest of the medical team.

“Are you sure he’s ok?” “Yes. Please see that he takes his medication before bed. I’ve left it on the nightstand in the bedroom for him.” “I will, thank you.” When they were gone, I went to the room feeling afraid he’d look weak or different and I’d react in a way that would make him feel worse. I opened the door and saw him lying on his side with his eyes closed. I went over and kneeled on the floor watching him sleep.

I ran my hands through his hair and he slowly opened his beautiful eyes. He took my hand in his and kissed it as he moved aside and asked me to lie next to him. “I’m sorry.” He whispered. “I’m not that same person I was when you first met me.” “I know. I feel responsible for that.” “Don’t say that. It’s my own doing.” “No, it’s not. If only I had told you the truth from the beginning…” “It was meant to happen that way, Diana.” “I know. You’re right.”

“Please don’t ever scare me like that again.”

“I didn’t mean to.”

“I will do my best to take care of you but you have to start listening to me.”

“You sound like my nurse Michelle.”

“She is very sweet.”

“You met her?”

“Yeah, a few minutes ago.”
“She’s great. She looks after mother a lot.”
“She told me. She seems like a good nurse.”
“She is. I trust her with my life.”
“What about me?”
“You ARE my life.”

I hugged him as his words touched my heart.

“Don’t EVER leave me again, please.” He whispered.

“Believe me, I won’t.”

“Diana?”
“Yes?”
“Will you really take care of me?”
“Yes, I promise.”

“ALL the time?”

“Of course.”

“EVERY part of me?”
“Yes, why are you—WAIT A MINUTE!”

He giggled cutely to himself.

“I know where this is going!”

“I’m teasing you.”

“You should get some rest. I have to get going.”

“Don’t leave.”
“I’ll stay for a while but I have to get back to work.”
“I asked the girls to take care of your things while you were here with me.”
“I know. Jasmine said you gave them both work to do to keep them busy.”

“Just some things for the tour. Was she able to get them done?”
“Yes. I left them on the table for you to review.”

He thanked me as I got up from the bed and gave him some water. I made sure he was comfortable and tucked him in while I sat next to him waiting for him to fall back asleep.

“Michael, you are so angelic.”

“You think so?”

“Of course. I just wish you wouldn’t exhaust yourself so much.”

“I like to keep busy. I hate being off stage.”

“I’m sure you won’t feel that way anymore.”

“There’s a lot of complexity in my life, Diana. No one knows about it.”

“I can’t even imagine. I know it’s hard on you. I can feel it.”

He smiled as he cuddled me on the bed next to him.

“Please stay here with me.”

“I will until you fall asleep. Then I’ll leave.”

“Do you have to?”
“Yes, Michael. I have a business to run.”

“I really want to see you when I wake up.”

“I’ll come back and check on you.”
“Promise?”
“Yes, I promise.”

I stroked his beautiful dark hair until he fell asleep. All I could do was stare at his beautiful face as he lay peacefully. “Sleep well, baby.” I whispered as I kissed his head and carefully got up from the bed. I put my shoes on and left him a note with my business card on the nightstand:

***“Had to go back to work. Call me later. Love you, D.”***

When I got back to the office, I expected the girls to tease and make fun of me. Shockingly, they didn’t say a word. “Welcome back.” Jasmine said as she saw me come out of the elevator. “How did it go?” “Fine. I have the signed documents for Marie to type. Don’t forget to attach the company agreements with our letterhead and insert both signatures electronically like always.” “Yes, boss lady!” “And please make sure you don’t book any new appointments, we’ve got our hands full with preparing Michael’s second leg tomorrow.” “We’re starting ALREADY?” “Yes, Marie. When you read the proposal, you’ll know why. Did you book the flights?” “I sure did. The agency will be faxing you the itineraries later today. “Fabulous! Thank you.”

As I turned my back to go to my office, Jasmine started cracking up laughing.

“What is it?”
“I knew you couldn’t control yourself.”
“What are you talking about?”
“Your dress is crooked.”
“IT IS NOT!!”

“Oh, yes it is!”

She asked Marie to check and she agreed that it was. “How can a dress be worn crooked?” “When you wear it like THAT!” Jasmine said. The two of them couldn’t stop laughing. I ran to the bathroom to see for myself but I wasn’t able to tell. “What are you two talking about? It is NOT crooked. It’s perfectly fine.” “Ana, look below where the seam is.” Sure enough, I realized she was right. I hadn’t zipped it on completely which made it look slanted against me. “OH MY GOD! YOU’RE RIGHT! Jas, help me with my zipper please!”

“I can’t believe you! You couldn’t resist the man for ONE DAY?”

“Nothing happened.”

 “Right.”

“I’m serious. I told him I didn’t want to.”

“And how do you explain your dress looking like this?”

“You better not tell anyone.”
“I promise.”
“We took our clothes off.”
“REALLY? HOW DOES HE LOOK NAKED?”
“LIKE A GOD.”

“I WANT DETAILS!”

“That’s all I’m telling you.”
“COME ON!!!”

“Forget it and if I find out you told Marie, I will beat the crap out of you!”

“I won’t say a word.”

Once Jasmine helped me straighten my dress, she told me I had a few calls to return and several last minute things to sign off on. “I’ve left some important papers on your desk that need your immediate approval for the tour.” “Thanks. I need to get myself organized now that the hard part’s over.”

“Speaking of HARD….”

“CUT IT OUT, JAS!”

“PLEEEASE, TELL ME!!”
“Nothing happened.”
“Why did you stop?”
“Because I don’t sleep with my clients.”
“But this is MICHAEL. The poor guy must’ve begged you for it.”
“HE DID. You should have heard him.”
“I wish I had. I would have slept with him!”
“JAS, YOU’RE MARRIED!”

“I know, I’m kidding. So everything went ok?”

I explained what happened when I arrived and how I broke down in front of him. She told me it was good that I finally released all of those negative feelings and was able to be at peace with myself again. I also told her about the medication and how sick he became. She too couldn’t help but worry about his health issues.

“We should do something, Ana. We have to help him.”
“I know. But HOW?”
“I’ll think of something. In the meantime, now that you’re back in his life, I’m sure he’ll have every reason to stay happy and healthy.”

I knew she was right but something kept telling me there was more to his story then just me not being in his life. I figured I should find out the whole truth before leaving for Europe. I wasn’t about to get caught up with him again like I was years ago. Even though I told him we’d be together, I definitely owed it to myself to find out what he was really up to and why his health became the way it did.

“Ana, you need to tell him about you know what.”
“I can’t do that yet.”
“He needs to know the WHOLE truth about why we all moved here, Ana.”
“I know. The thought crossed my mind today. I just don’t think I can.”
“You can and you WILL.”

“Jas, he’s going to flip out.”
“Yes, but in a good way.”
“I hope so.”
“Tell him before we leave.”
“No way! If I do that, Michael will cancel his tour for sure.”

“But it’ll be for a good reason.”
“I know but I can’t do that to his fans, especially now.”

“Fine, but you WILL tell him.”
“Yes. I swear I will.”

**\*\*\* LATER THAT DAY FROM MARIE’S POINT OF VIEW \*\*\***

The phone was ringing at Marie’s desk and she wasn’t paying attention as she was too busy watching Michael’s Ghosts film on the TV in the lounge. I walked by her desk to get some documents from Jasmine’s office and heard the phone ringing constantly while she was in la la land. “MARIE! THE PHONE!” “Oh, right!” She finally answered and tried to sound professional. Of course, that only lasted about ten seconds before she turned into her usual, crazy self.

“TSG Productions, Marie speaking.”
“Hi, beautiful.”

“OH MY GOD! MICH—I mean \*ahem\* hello, sir. How are you?”
“Why are you so formal?”
“I have to be. It’s company policy.”
“It’s just me.”
“JUST you? I should be EXTRA formal with you.”
“You’re sweet. How are you?”
“I’m good. Yourself?”
“I’m ok. Where is your boss?”
“In her office. Would you like me to transfer you?”
“Do me a favor please?”
“Anything.”
“Don’t tell her it’s me, ok?”
“Are you trying to be sneaky?”
“Always.”

“Hehe, ok. I won’t tell her.”
“Thank you.”
“You know, I’m the only one who hasn’t seen you yet. I’m sad.”
“I’m sorry. I saw you the day I came in. I wanted to say something but I couldn’t.”

“It’s ok. I’ll see you in Europe.”
“Yes, you will. Will you watch me perform?”
“YOU KNOW IT!”
“Which dance move is your favorite?”
“ALL OF THEM.”
“Pick one, silly.”
“Ummm, I’d have to say it’s a tie between the moonwalk and the baby step.”

“Ok, I’ll teach you how to do both.”
“REALLY?”
“Sure.”
“You’re the best, sir.”
“Call me Michael, please.”
“I can’t. Ana will get mad.”
“You leave her to me. I know how to handle her.”

“I’ve noticed that.”

“Are you still watching me on TV?”

“Of course, it’s what I do best!”

“Marie, if I had met you first, I would have been yours.”
“REALLY?”

“Of course. You are the sweetest girl in the world.”

“I love you.”
“I love you more.”

Just then, Jasmine walked by Marie’s desk and couldn’t help but wonder who she was talking to that way. “Marie! Who the heck are you saying that to?” “Our newest client. Who else?” Jasmine screamed and ran to Marie’s desk. “GIVE ME THE PHONE!!” “NO WAY!” She then yanked Marie’s headset right off her head and put it on.

“MICHAEL? \*ahem\* I mean, hello, sir.”

“Oh god. Why are you all so formal there?”
“It’s Ana’s policy. I can’t wait to see you perform in Europe.”
“Will you watch me from backstage too?”
“OF COURSE. I won’t miss one single step.”

“In that case, I’ll be sure to work twice as hard.”

“You’re such a sweetie. Would you like to speak to Ana?”

“I was going to transfer him when you came and interrupted the call!”

“Shut up. Can’t you see I’m on the phone?”

“You two make me laugh.”
“Sorry. I will transfer you to her now.”
“Thank you.”

“By the way, will you please come by one day and sign one of our office posters?”
“Sure. I’ll sign the wall too.”
“YAAY! I love you, Michael.”
“I love you too.”

“ANA! You have a call.”

“Who is it? I’m busy!”

“They didn’t say their name.”

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

 “Hi, Michael.”

“How did you know it was me?”
“EVERYONE who calls tells me who they are first.”

“I’ll remember that next time.”

“How are you feeling?”
“Much better but I’m sad that you had to leave.”
“Are you staying at that hotel?”
“Just until tomorrow.”

“Will you be going to Neverland afterwards?”
“Yes, would you like to join me?”

“I don’t think that’s a good idea.”
“Why?”
“Don’t you remember what kept happening the last time I was there?”
“Why do you think I’m asking?”
“STOP. I’ll visit you at the hotel after I’m done my work.”

 “I love you, girl.”
“I love you too, baby.”
“Do me a favor?”
“Sure.”

“Wear something old.”
“WHY?”

“Just please do it.”

“Michael, I don’t have anything old.”
“Then wear something you won’t mind getting rid of.”

“Why?”
“I have an idea.”
“Oh god. Ok, I’ll do that.”

“What time will you be here?”
“Sometime after 8.”
“Perfect. I’ll see you then.”

“Michael, what are you going to do to me?”
“You’ll see.”
“You better not be planning something crazy.”
“Girl, I’m Michael.”
“I KNOW.”

He laughed so beautifully it put a smile on my face.

“I love hearing you laugh.”
“You do?”
“Yes. It makes my heart happy.”
“I love hearing you when we don’t have our clothes on.”
“MICHAEL!”

“I’m kidding. I’ll see you later?”
“Of course.”
“I love you, Diana.”

“I love you too.”

We both hung up and the girls ran into my office. Once again, the phones were ringing at Marie’s desk and she didn’t have a care in the world.

“SO? WHAT DID HE WANT?”

“He wants to see me again.”
“Are you going?”
“Yeah I guess.”
“YOU GUESS?”

“Hey! How come I’m the only one who hasn’t seen him yet?”
“I’m sorry, Marie. You can drop me off at his hotel and meet him then.”

“REALLY?”
“Just don’t tell anyone where he’s staying.”

“I promise, I won’t.”

Once the girls left, I was finally able to get most of my work done without being distracted. After a long day, I left work just before 8 and had enough time to go home and change. “Something old…something old….” I really didn’t know what Michael had planned so I chose the oldest thing I could find. I knew there was a possibility of me having to change clothes so I packed a few extras just in case. I also knew he would talk me into spending the night with him.

I packed my necessities then drove back to the hotel. Once I arrived, one of Michael’s guards saw me and escorted me upstairs to his room. I was excited yet nervous to see him again. I kept wondering what he had planned. “I hope you’re wearing old clothes.” The guard said. “YOU KNOW?” “Of course. I’m sure you will love it” “TELL ME PLEASE!” “Sorry, it’s a secret.” Michael always loved to keep me in suspense. Leaving people at the edge of their seats was definitely one of his many great qualities.

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

“Sir, you have a phone call.”
“Who is it?”
“I love that song.”
“No, Chris. Who is on the phone?”
“It’s her.”

“What does she want?”

“She said she needs to talk to you.”

Michael then takes the phone from Chris and answers it.

“What do you want?”
“I miss you, Michael.”
“I don’t care.”

“Please don’t give up on us.”
“There is no US.”
“I want another chance.”
“It’s not going to happen.”

“I know we can make this work.”
“There is nothing to work out.”

“I deserve a second chance even if it means flying all the way to Europe just to get it.

“Stay away from me.”

“You don’t know what I’m capable of doing.”
“You could never harm me.”
“But SHE could and knowing her, she WILL.”
“SHE WHO?”
“Do us both a favor - forget about me.”
“I can’t. I love you.”
“I’m hanging up now, Lisa. Don’t call me ever again. We are OVER.”