

## **Secretly TBB 271**

### Chapter 271: The truth!

Caramel felt her head fly off at the announcement. She couldn't say anything for a moment as she tried to take in all the words that Alex had spoken.

Caramel shook her head briefly. "That's not possible. Why would that happen? Why would he die?"

Alex sighed, a bit angry at the word. "He killed himself, Caramel. He was guilty of impersonating Hercules and had to kill himself, especially after the news concerning the death of Hercules resurfaced," he explained.

Caramel's hands flew to her head in desperation as the tears started to stream down her face.

"No! That can't be! Grey can't be dead!" She yelled.

Alex sighed.

"You have to forget about him, Caramel. He's all in the past, you have to move on."

Caramel collapsed on the floor as she sobbed harder.

"Leave me alone, Alex."

"I will stay until you are fit enough."

"Don't bother, Alex. I can handle myself. Leave!" She said in a firm voice.

Alex regarded her for a moment, "I will check on you tomorrow morning," he turned around and left.

Caramel couldn't stop crying. She almost choked. How could Grey die? Why would he meddle in such a difficult task? Maybe Charles threatened him.

Giovanni killed her foster mother and Hercules's men killed her beloved man.

Caramel got up suddenly as her mind went to Beatrice. If anything was really wrong with Grey, then Beatrice would know. In fact, he would be able to confirm it.

She looked around for her car keys. She didn't even bother with changing clothes, she didn't even remember to do so.

She drove out faster towards Beatrice's house.

Her heart was beating really fast and she couldn't stop it. The tears were flowing really fast but she couldn't stop them. She couldn't imagine losing Grey.

Grey sighed as his phone rang suddenly. Caramel refused to answer her phone and Grey wondered if Alex had really gotten to her.

Would Alex try something like that so fast?

It was James calling and Grey wondered why that was.

"Hello, James."

"You haven't gotten familiar with Mattee?" He laughed.

Grey joined in. "Yes, how are you doing? Why are you calling so late?"

"Oh," there was a hesitation as Grey stepped out of the house. He moved to the garden. "I heard the news about you. You know, information flies faster."

Grey nodded once. "Were you worried I wasn't Hercules?"

"I was a bit if my father hadn't told me you were your father's double," James responded.

Grey smiled softly as he stared at the falling star. Grey had always seen falling stars as a good omen. It definitely meant that his plan would work out well.

"Great or I might have decided to fly to Italy tomorrow and show you my tattoo."

James laughed.

"Well, that's not necessary because I will be coming to Jacksonville soon. With the news currently circulating, you might need an appearance with your men. I will grace the meeting and let them know we are an alliance," he revealed.

"I will appreciate it so much, James. Thank you. I will let you know when that will be."

"Alright. For now, I will be in Jacksonville. Call me anytime."

"Alright," Grey said and the line went off.

Everyone seemed bothered about the news.

Grey turned around and walked inside the house. He hesitated as a soft voice reached his ears.

"Mom, where is Grey? Why aren't you talking?" Caramel sobbed.

"Please, tell me."

Beatrice didn't know if she was supposed to let Caramel know the current situation, so she kept mute as if expecting Grey to show up with a solution for her.

Caramel was really sobbing hard as if she had already heard the news of his demise. It was palpably clear to Grey that Alex had already met with Caramel that night. And he wondered what he told her exactly.

"Caramel," he whispered.

Caramel stopped sobbing all of a sudden as she turned around slowly to look at Grey. She went into shock for a moment before she eventually rushed toward Grey and she ended up in his embrace.

She sobbed as her arms went around him.

Grey pulled her back after some minutes.

"What did Alex tell you?"

Caramel was shocked at the question. She didn't expect Grey to ask her something like that.

"How?"

Grey smiled.

"I know he must have told you I killed myself after he left me to die."

Caramel's eyes went gobsmacked.

"But" she hesitated.

"Are you really impersonating Hercules?"

"You have stopped being inquisitive with me. Are you about to start?"

Caramel took in a deep breath.

"I Know, Grey but why? Why can't you tell me who you really are?" She blurted out.

"Why must I hear about you from others? I mean I should know you, can't I?"

"I'm not impersonating Hercules, Caramel. Everything Alex told you was all lies."

Caramel regarded him for a moment.

"Then who are you?"

Grey looked at her and slowly wiped off her tears. "I'm just me, Caramel. I'm just Grey, your boyfriend."

Caramel shook her head briefly.

"There's something you aren't telling me, Grey. Alex told me he requested the strand of hair from me so that he could see if it matched Hercules'. Why is that so?" She looked away as she tried to pull up an explanation. She was so confused and after the conversation she had with Alex, more questions were cuddling up inside her.

Grey couldn't say anything for a moment as he continued to look at her.

"Why aren't you talking?" Caramel felt more agitated and frustrated.

"Caramel, stop!" Beatrice called softly but Caramel shook her head briefly.

"No mom! I need the answers! And," she turned to look at Beatrice.

"I need to know what is between you two. How did you know each other and who are Grey's real parents?" She rushed the questions.

Grey was confused for a moment. He didn't know if he was supposed to tell her the truth or not.

Caramel said suddenly as she looked back at Grey.

"Are you Hercules?"

Chapter 272: Dead or not

Grey didn't reply.

Caramel regarded him for a moment. "If you don't reply to me, it's ok but I will find out on my own. I've seen your tattoo, just as I saw Alex and you were able to confirm who he was."

""Cara" Grey started but she cut him off.

"I know, you don't have to ask me. You don't have to tell me otherwise as well. Alex kept it a secret from me and he wasn't so careless. That aside, he has been in this game for a long time. You were the one that asked me if he had a tattoo and I confirmed it for you. You revealed Pablo!" She pointed an accusing finger at him.

Grey eyes twinkled but he said no word.

"I'm going to tell him you have a tattoo too. Then maybe I will try to send him the real strand of hair," she threatened, not that she was going to do it anyways. She only wanted to do anything to get Grey to speak. Though, if he really was what She thought he was, then maybe Caramel wasn't saved. But, she knew that Grey would not want to hurt her.

"What the fuck are you doing!" Beatrice yelled suddenly, angry now at her rudeness. "Caramel, you have to leave now!" She ordered.

"I will but I will do everything I've said," she affirmed and turned to leave.

"Caramel-" Grey called suddenly before she was able to step out. 'You will get to know the truth when it's the right time.'

Caramel face squeezed even harder. "I'm going to stop doing that, Grey. Because it's never going to get even better. There's never going to be the right time. You will always keep it from me. I trust you but you don't trust me! You don't think I'm going to keep your secret!" She yelled in annoyance. Grey sighed. Maybe she was telling the truth. He did trust her but it wasn't enough.

He almost went ballistic when he heard that Caramel could have been working with Alex against him. Doesn't that mean he didn't entirely trust her?

"I'm doing all this to protect you, Caramel. You have to understand."

Caramel let out a sigh.

"Fine then! I won't do anything with Alex and I was just bluffing. But there's something I want you to know, You can protect me, can't you? Even without me knowing. Even when I didn't know anything about you, I was still haunted, wasn't I?"

Grey sighed again. That was right again. Damn! Caramel was saying the right thing.

"As I said, I'm not going to do anything but we are totally done, Grey. We are!"

"Don't be like that, Caramel!" Beatrice scolded.

"Let her go!" Grey said quickly.

Caramel was on the verge of tears as she turned to look at Grey for the last time. She didn't believe that Grey would be willing to lose everything they shared and not be hesitant about it. It only shows her that she doesn't even mean anything to him. He doesn't even love her. The thought of it brought fresh tears to her face as she hurried towards the car.

Maybe she shouldn't have threatened him like that. Sure, Guys don't love it when they feel threatened. She shouldn't have tampered with their relationship but she was right. At a side, she was, wasn't she?

She cried bitterly as she drove off, with no destination in mind and she didn't want to go home. She just wanted to get wasted.

She pulled the car to a sudden stop and cried her heart out. She slept off and could only slightly witness someone scooping her up. She was really still feeling sleepy and the tears glued her eyes together.

But as he placed her on the bed, Caramel saw who it was vividly. It was Grey.

We didn't try to speak. She didn't even know what to say. She was sorry for speaking like that to him but she was still mad and sad that Grey told her something like that.

Grey strokes her hair slowly.

"Wait for me, Caramel. You will know who I am soon. You will get an invite. Stay quietly and wait for me," he soothed her until she closed her eyes and slept off.

Grey stepped out of the house as his phone started ringing. It was Don. Actually, he sent him out with Tiana.

"Hello, Boss!"

"Yes, any news?"

"Todd and Fred are dead!" he announced.

Grey smiled. "Great. Wait for the next order. Tell Tiana to meet me at Alfred's house tomorrow morning."

"Alright."

Grey hung up and dropped the phone on the seat before he drove into the street. He planned to tell her who he was. Well, Caramel has always been trustworthy. There was nothing else he expected her to do to prove her worth.

Alex thought for a moment, with his legs crossed. He hates to admit it but he should have killed Grey. If he had earlier, Caramel wouldn't have fallen so hard in love with him.

Caramel was supposed to be his. She should have fallen for him and not Grey.

'We need to start filling the news now. But before that, I need to confirm if Grey is really dead. Get the men to see if his corpse is in the water,' he ordered.

The men nodded and rushed out.

Alex found himself thinking back to how Caramel took the news. He was very annoyed about it.

Caramel loved him, alright before Grey showed up. It would have been very perfect and it would have worked right.

He got up and decided to go check for himself. He needed to confirm his death that night or he would go raving mad.

One of his men rushed towards him.

"Boss!"

Alex looked at him.

'Yes, have you found it?'

The man looked troubled.

"No Boss."

Alex gave him skeptical brows. "What's no? If you haven't found it, then continue searching. Why are you back?"

'There was no one in the car, Boss. There was no corpse around,' he revealed.

What!

Chapter 273: The plan

Alfred pulled up in front of Grey's house. It was morning already when Alfred remembered it was Hercules's anniversary.

Though the elders planned to visit his tombstone that evening he had to inform Grey that morning.

Grey insisted on going before he would sit to plan with the elders. And Alfred accepted.

Grey walked out of the house in black sweatpants and a grey t-shirt.

"Good morning, Hercules."

"Good morning, Alfred," he responded as he entered the passenger's seat.

"Let's go."

Alfred nodded once and drove out into the street. He didn't say anything until they got to the cemetery. When he looked at Grey, it felt like he zoomed out of the world.

"Grey," he called before Grey jerked back. He looked at Alfred and he saw a drop of tears. Grey was trying to act strong but he still missed his parents. It was a pity he lost them at such a tender age and to even think he wouldn't be able to take revenge because was one of the elders that caused the death of his father.

"Let's go," Grey said and got out of the car.

Alfred sighed and got out as well. He led him to the cemetery and showed him Hercules's tombstone. It was one of the biggest and most designed tombstones.

Grey fell to the floor in front of it. It was the first time after ten years that Grey was visiting his father and he felt like an unfilial son.

Grey stood still for almost an hour without saying a word. Alfred didn't want to leave him, so he stood still with him until he finally got up and looked at Alfred.

"Let's go. I'm ready," he finished and walked to the car with a straight expression.

They drove right to Alfred's house. Charles, Maria, Tiana, Don, Luciano, Jayden, and Jimmy were already in the house, waiting for them. Only Gregory arrived late after Alfred and Grey had entered the house.

"A minute's silence for the previous Hercules before we proceed," Alfred said suddenly and they all went silent.

It took a minute before a sigh of relief escaped them.

"It's CCS day. Are you attending?" Gregory asked.

"If you do, Giovanni and the rest would know that you are alive," Charles revealed.

Grey nodded briefly.

"Yes, I want them to know that. I will be winning the CCS award, thanks to James."

Charles already told the elders about James. Only Tiana, Don, and Maria don't know since they were among the elders.

Alfred nodded briefly.

'That's great. But what about the news that has already been spread about Hercules?'

Grey sat well and looked at the elders one after the other.

"Maria and Jimmy will be the ones to do this because it's only Maria I trust from Protos Pubblicita," he explained

"What plan do you have?" Gregory demanded.

"Instead of the tag name, we will be having a painless tattoo for all our men. A viper by the neck. It will be an identification for all our real men. Giovanni has already withdrawn his men. So, it will be easy to gather our men."

'What about the men that left because they thought Hercules didn't exist?'

Grey looked at Charles. "If one of my men is unwilling to continue with my legacy, even after my death, then they don't deserve to be called my man," he declared.

The men looked at themselves and nodded briefly.

"I will get one of my men for that. When are we meeting?" Jayden responded.

"Gregory will be the one to get us a ship. I'm going to buy one with my money and have my name on it. There will be a declaration today and it's happening very fast, after CCS. We mustn't give Giovanni the chance to send his spy before we confirm our men," he announced.

Gregory nodded once. "I will handle that then."

Grey nodded as well. "I'm going to be needing Don and Tiana to get a bitch for me. Jane should be in my estate as late as possible."

"Noted Boss," Don and Tiana chorused.

Grey nodded at that and looked at Jimmy.

"You are going to help Maria with this because she wouldn't be able to involve workers from Protos Publicita. I don't know who to trust yet."

"Alright Boss," Jimmy affirmed.

"I'm going to be having a short declaration to the public to combat the news going on about my existence," he expressed.

"Do you have what to say or will you give me hints and let me provide what you should say?" Maria demanded

"I have. Just get it prepared. You and Jimmy."

"You can choose a room to do that," Alfred said quickly and pointed in a particular direction.

Maria nodded and looked over at Jimmy. "We will need to get something. I think we should get it started now or," she turned to look at Grey.

"When will you be having it?"

"Before I go for CCS. You should get ready now as you've decided."

Maria nodded once and looked at Jimmy. They both stood and walked out of the living room.

'Wait Grey, are you going to show your face to the world as Hercules?" Alfred inquired.

Jayden and Luciano nodded briefly. 'That's a good question. I was going to ask you exactly that."

Grey smiled softly.

"No, I'm not going to do that. I have a nice plan but I'm not going to show it now until later. I will let you know," he assured them.

Gregory stood up suddenly, " I need to go ahead with the assignment that Hercules gave me," he looked at Grey. "I will give you a call when I'm done," he assured

Grey nodded once. "Alright."

Gregory walked out and Jayden stood as well.

"I will look for someone that can help us with the tattoo too," He brought up as well.

Grey nodded and he walked out as well.

Alfred sat well. "I will deal with other things, though I will be attending CCS as well and I'm sure Giovanni will be present."

The door opened suddenly and Richard walked inside.

Alfred looked at him.

"Any information?"

Richard shook his head.

"No. There's no news about the Boss's death," he revealed.

Grey smiled and looked at Alfred.

"I told you."

Chapter 274: The Video

Alex was at the bridge until it was fully bright in the morning. The men have been searching the water since morning for a piece of evidence that Grey was dead.

Alex didn't want to give his father a false alarm which was why he made the men search further into the water.

Could the sharks have gotten to him? Or other sea animals? Yes, that could have been the case but there would have been evidence. There should have been something that would indicate that Grey was really in the water, that he really died.

"Fuck!" Alex cursed severally as he stared up at the sky. It was too light. Cars were already moving across the bridge. It would take a few more minutes before they would notice them. "Why the fuck is he nowhere to be found!" He yelled with frustration.

'There's no shoe! No blood! No torn clothes! Nothing!' He paced restlessly.

One of the men hurried closer to him. "We need to leave, boss, it's already morning," he advised.

Alex regarded him for a moment with clenched teeth before he yelled again. 'Tell the men to withdraw!' He forced the words out and turned around to leave.

But he couldn't stop thinking. There was something else going on that he didn't know. Something must have taken his body from the water but what could that be?

Or- could Grey be alive?

The mere thought of it almost made him stop breathing but that was the only explanation he heard. There was nothing else that was making sense.

But how could it have happened? How did Grey escape?

Alex punched the wall angrily and watched the blood dropdown. He was so mad at everything. He watched the car drop into the water. What could have happened? How could he have escaped? Grey was within his grasp. He could have killed him by himself. It only cost him a few minutes. He could have hung him and watched him die. He could have squeezed the air out of him.

Alex placed a call to Giovanni. He needed to inform him about the progress. Giovanni didn't pick up. It was late anyway as the CCS was going to start very soon.

What if Grey shows up there? What if he won the award? His company has been topping and going against Hattie.

Alex was getting really furious at the fact that his father wasn't picking up. After several rings, he threw the phone against the wall.

If Grey was really alive, he was going to kill him. And this time, he was going to have to do it himself and watch him die. He wouldn't live until he was sure with his eyes and everything that he could use that he was dead.

Since Giovanni wasn't picking up, he would be making the plan by himself.

He turned to look at one of his men. "Get prepared, we are going somewhere and this time you guys have to be on full watch."

The guy nodded and was about to step out but Alex's voice stopped him. He turned around to look at Alex again.

"Send a man to my father and inform him of the situation. Meanwhile, send someone else to get me a new phone."

"Yes boss," the man bowed and walked out of the room.

Alex yelled and threw invisible punches around.

"I will be streaming the video online the moment you inform us to drop it," Jimmy expressed.

Maria nodded briefly.

"I will have to select a few of our most trusted workers to help me on this if we will be taking on so many magazines and filling the city with news of you," she explained.

Grey nodded once. 'That's fine. Just make sure they are thoroughly checked through.'

Maria nodded. "I guarantee it. It will go smoothly. I've already been watching a few people. So, you shouldn't bother about it," she assured him.

Grey nodded again and put on his suit jacket. Charles got him a change of clothes befitting his status as Hercules, the most expensive suit in the world.

Maria and Jimmy have set up the necessary camera and whatever they needed. The only thing left was for Grey to dress up so that they could start the video.

Grey relaxed in the seat and wore his face mask. The camera was supposed to take his eyes alone. As he had decided, he wasn't going to reveal himself just yet.

"So, we are set," Grey said suddenly and crossed his long legs.

"Ok, I'm going to start recording in three minutes," Jimmy announced as he moved closer to the camera. "One-," he started.

'Two- and three-'

"Hi everyone, my name is Grey Fox and I'm Hercules." Grey started in a deep voice to mask his natural voice.

Jimmy nodded briefly as a way to tell Grey he got everything in control and the recording was doing well.

"I heard about the news circulating concerning me. Some people think I'm dead or maybe I don't exist. It could be because I didn't show myself all this while. I did anyway, once but I don't know why the media are finding it very difficult to believe," he hesitated.

"I'm alive, hale, and healthy."

Maria was jotting down Grey's words so she could add them to their magazine.

"Hercules isn't dead. My father died ten years ago but not me. The reason why I'm not showing myself to the public is that I like to keep things private. I've been doing things like that for a while now and I'm not ready to change it, not so suddenly, not because I've been pressured." He looked at Maria as if waiting for her to finish writing.

"I'm coming out soon and I will be addressing the public soon. Soon, at least before the next red carpet day. I am and will still be the richest man in Jacksonville. Don't be deceived and stop fake news. I'm real and alive."

When Grey looked up, Leo was by the door staring at him with a scared expression.

#### Chapter 275: Almost caught

Grey didn't want to think about the fact that Leo was staring at him or the fact that the expression meant something else he couldn't figure out but he didn't want to talk to him. It was taking him every ounce of his strength not to do anything to him.

He wasn't going to kill Leo but they might as well stay off each other till the end of life. There was no way he wouldn't feel anger anytime he looked at him and remembered he was actually the one that killed his father.

"Done, Boss," Jimmy brought him back to the mundane world." I await your message."

"I will proceed with the assignment then," Maria informed and left earlier.

Grey took his previous clothes and moved out of the room. He went past Leo as if he didn't even see him. He entered another room and got changed.

When he walked out again, only Charles was in the room. Funnily enough, he was with Leo. They sat opposite each other in a way that showed that Charles was actually trying to initiate a conversation.

Grey went past them as if he didn't even know they were in the room.

The CCS program was starting very soon and he needed to arrive earlier to get the award for CCS.

He entered his car and placed a call to Richard. He picked it up immediately.

"Hello, Boss."

"Yea, Richard. I have an assignment for you. When the whole party stuff starts, I want you to get Caramel on the ship."

"Alright, I will do that."

Grey nodded and hung up. He drove right to the red carpet hall.

He drove into the garage and noticed that there were men scattered everywhere, especially at the entrance. It didn't take Grey a few minutes to discover what was going on.

It was either Giovanni or Alex. Someone was looking for him and going to stop him from entering the hall.

What should he do?

His car's engine was still running as his gaze searched around him, mentally counting the men and thinking of how to deal with them.

But one of the men noticed his car and started towards him, soon they were two.

Grey pulled out from the parking space as more attention was diverted to him.

"Pull over!" One of them yelled.

Grey sighed and pulled to a sudden stop. The men walked even nearer. They were up to six now.

One moved closer to the driver's side. "The window!" He gestured.

Grey smiled as he remembered that his window was tinted. Instead of responding to his instructions, Grey pressed on the accelerator. The car moved forward and then backward, hitting two men that the others yelled and brought out their guns. Grey dialled Charles' number immediately and let it continue ringing while he let disturbing the men.

A bullet was aimed at the body of the car but it was too strong to penetrate. And Grey knew he had to do something or they would definitely destroy the car.

Charles picked up at this point.

"Hi, boss."

"Alex had men around waiting to prevent me from entering the hall. I need backup."

"Give me some minutes, I will be right there soon." And the phone went off.

"Stop right now or you are going to regret it!" One of the men threatened.

Grey finally pulled to a stop and the men saw it as a cue to move closer to him. He let them and quietly aimed for his gun.

The men eventually moved closer enough. One of them opened the door slowly, with the gun dangling in the other hand.

There was no movement as Grey had moved to the passenger's seat. Just when he was trying to look inside the car, a bullet pierced his heart and Grey pulled him closer.

The men rushed rain of bullets at him, unknown that they were only shooting one of them. Grey crawled out of the car from the passenger seat towards a nearby car.

When one of the men eventually pulled the others back to their senses, they stopped shooting.

"Check him!" One of them ordered one of them.

He entered the car and discovered there was no one in the car.

"Look for him! Search the whole place!" The man who seemed like the leader yelled and the men scattered around to look for Grey.

Grey watched the men for some minutes until one was moving closer to him. Not that he saw him but he was obviously trying to look for Grey like the rest of the men.

Grey counted 1-3 mentally as the man moved even nearer for Grey to grab him and punched the gun off his hand.

He squeezed his neck, breaking his neck before he would say a word. Grey placed him on the floor gently and looked around to confirm there was no one coming for him before he started to strip the man off his clothes slowly.

Grey remembered that Charles might call him and quickly placed his phone in silent mode. It wasn't up to a minute when

Charles's come actually came through.

Grey picked it up. "Hello Charles, where are you?"

"I'm almost in the garage. Where are you?"

Grey smiled.

"Great! Perfect timing. Just give me a few minutes to get dressed. I will call you when I'm done so you can come. It will serve as a distraction for me," he explained.

"Alright then, I will be waiting," Charles responded and Grey hung up.

Grey searched around again to see that he was safe before he went ahead to wear the clothes.

Within a few minutes, he was done.

He placed a call to Charles but he hadn't picked it up when he felt something pointing at his head. It was cold and well, felt like metal. He knew what it was before he turned around. No- before someone told him to turn around.

'Turn around or I will blow your head off!' The speaker muttered from behind.

It was at that moment that Grey realised that one of the men was lying dead on the floor. If it wasn't for that, the men might not have recognized him.

"Hello, Grey," Charles said into the receiver but Grey didn't hear.

'Walk out or I'll shoot this bullet right through your head!'

Chapter 276: Surprise announcement

Grey turned around slowly, the phone still in his hand.

"Who are you? And what are you doing here?"

"Is something going on there?" A voice asked suddenly.

Just before the man could say something, a car drove inside, followed by another. And everyone got distracted including the man that was pointing a gun at his face.

Grey took the opportunity quickly. He punched the man by the hand quickly so that he would drop the gun before he squeezed his next.

He took to the run quickly while the other men attended to the cars that just drove inside. Grey didn't know if it was Charles or not but it was a great opportunity that he didn't want to miss.

"Hey! Get him!" someone said suddenly as Grey hurried towards the entrance. Some of the men turned towards

Grey but it was too late and he had slipped inside already.

Aman in a suit was speaking on the phone and walking towards Grey. Grey hid quickly and waited for him to move nearer. When he got closer, Grey came out and hit him by the neck and he slumped immediately. Grey pulled him into the darkness and changed into his clothes.

The MC on the stage was actually about to announce the winner of the CCS award. Giovanni has seen and met with some of the organizers before the program started. And the names have been changed. The MC was supposed to mention Grey only if he showed up. But then, it has been confirmed that he wouldn't. Well, Giovanni said he would see to it. That aside, he would be settling the organizers.

As much as some of the organizers don't want to go against Giovanni. They know the consequences of going against Norm. Grey Fox of Victoria Skincare was what was on the record but they could switch it up easily if Grey doesn't show up.

The MC's eyes searched around for another minute and when he didn't notice Grey anywhere, he decided to announce Hattie's name instead as the winner.

'The award for the CCS goes to" he stooped suddenly as Grey walked inside. Mc's eyes went wide with shock and the words he was about to say evaporated from his mouth.

Some of the crowds that were following him followed the path of his gaze toward the man in a suit that just stepped inside.

The organizers and VIP exchanged gazes and nodded briefly at the confused MC.

The MC cleared his throat, ".goes to Grey Fox of Victoria Skincare!" be announced and featured ahead at Grey Fox.

Alex turned around slowly to look at Grey. His eyes went wide and a dark frown spread across his face. What was Grey doing inside the hall? How did he even get there? Alex felt a surge of rage at the fact that Grey was walking alive as if he owned the place. How did he even survive?

Around of applause arose from the gathering as Grey walked towards the podium. Giovanni was furious and shocked. He had to keep calm with every ounce of his strength.

Grey climbed up on the stage with a smile on his face. He hesitated as his gaze met with Alex and a teasing smile spread across his face. Alex clenched his fist in anger at the sight of him or the fact that Caramel would be overjoyed somewhere when she heard the news that he was alive.

Well, that was if she didn't even know yet.

Grey took the gold award and smiled at Hattie who was about to turn red from where she sat.

"Is there anything you would like to say, Grey Fox?" the MC inquired?

Grey nodded briefly. "I have a lot to say," he murmured and the microphone was handed over to him. He cleared his throat meaningfully as the hall went eerily silent. "I want to use this opportunity to thank a role model, Hattie," he smiled softly as he looked at her again. "She taught me a lot in this business,

especially the fact that one has to be extra brilliant and tactical to win. Thank you!" he finished, handing the microphone to the shocked MC before he walked down the stage.

Some clapped for him but people like Alex, Giovanni, and Hattie didn't. They couldn't even stop foaming.

Grey found a nice seat to take before he took out his phone and texted Jimmy and Maria to go ahead. The two understood the assignment already anyways.

"Where is the woman you call your secretary?" Jane whined. Well, Grey was dead and Hercules was dead already. So, he could be back as the new secretary. Maria had to go. She had no business as a secretary of Protos Pubblicita, a work she had been doing for so long.

Maria was in her office with three of her most trusted workers. They had to hurry up with thirty copies. And they would continue with the rest that night. They just needed to distribute that when it was time to.

Her phone rang suddenly, just when she was done reading the message that Grey had sent. It was time to distribute the copies they'd made.

"Yes. What's this all about?" Maria yelled at Jones. "I told you I was busy and I didn't want to be disturbed," she said with distaste. She even cancelled all her appointments for that day because of the assignment but one of the workers was bent on disturbing her.

"Yes, I'm sorry but Miss Jane wants to see you. We have tried to make her leave all to no avail. I don't know what to do but call your attention to this," she explained.

Maria went silent for a moment.

"Jane? The ex-secretary?"

"Yes boss, she is. What should we do?"

Maria sighed.

"I will be there soon. Don't do anything," she hung up to look at the workers. "We are done here, guys. We will meet by evening ."

Then she took her phone and thought of what to do about Jane.

Chapter 277: Where Loyalty lies

Maria walked out to Jane having a chat with one of the employees.

"What do we have here?"

Jane turned to look at Maria, with a dark frown on her face. Yes, what do we have here? Who is this?"

"I should be the one asking you that. I am the one and only secretary here. When did they employ you anyways?"

Maria smiled softly.

"I will warn you for the last time, to leave when you can still do so or I will call the security guards on you!"

She warned.

Jane hesitated for a moment.

'You! Maria!" She took a step closer to her.

"Do you remember where you were? You were working at one of the lowest companies owned by Hercules. You aren't up to my standard!"

"Well, now everything has changed, hasn't it? You now work in the lowest company while I'm working in Protos Pubblicita."

Jane laughed.

"No problem. I'm coming back and when I do, I will be taking the seat that belongs to me," she turned around and left angrily.

Maria regarded her for a moment.

'That is if you can come back."

Just as Jane stepped out of Protos Pubblicita, her phone rang. She was still fuming with rage. She didn't know that Maria was going to be stubborn. She would have to deal with her as well. Anyways, Hercules was dead and Grey was as well. So, it would be very easy to do. she could even demand help from Giovanni. After all she had done for him, he would seriously help her. That aside, she might even be invited for a position in his company.

It was Tina calling and Jane picked up.

"Hello Tina, what is it? Why are you calling me?" She demanded as she flagged down a taxi.

'There's a problem, Tina. Where are you? Are you at a place where you can talk freely?" Tina whispered from the other side.

A taxi pulled up in front of Jane and she got inside.

"Yes, I can talk. What is it all about? What happened?"

"I just received a piece of urgent information that the red carpet just now. And guess who took the CCS award?"

Jane sighed.

"If you want to talk, just do so. I don't like all these guessing games," she stressed.

The car didn't move but Jane didn't even notice.

"Grey Fox did!" Tina announced suddenly.

Jane's heart suddenly made this news. "What did you just say? Are you sure about it?"

"I'm telling you. I don't know what Giovanni is going to do about this but I think you need to beware now that Grey is back."

"Where are you now?"

"I'm at home. I'm so scared right now. I'm only calling you because I don't know what to do. If Grey is really alive then Charles would have discovered everything already and I know what that means for us," she explained with a quaver in her voice.

"I Will get back to you soon. Just stay where you are," she instructed and hung up.

Her heart almost stopped breathing. How did Grey escape? And Tina was right. Grey could have met with Charles and explained everything to him and that would mean trouble for her. She would need to speak with Giovanni.

"Please, drive-," she stopped suddenly when she saw the gun sticking out at her. A man in black attire was sitting beside her and playing with a gun.

"What? Where are you going?" The driver asked, with a scary expression.

Jane's first instinct was to get out of the car. She aimed for the handle quickly but the car was locked already.

The man raised the gun.

"Try any other thing and I will blow your head!" He threatened.

Jane shivered, Caramel stared at herself in the mirror for a moment. She didn't know if she was supposed to believe Grey or not. The thought of it brought tears to her face.

She didn't know if she was really going to lose Grey. And the fact that Alex was after him amaze her. Why would Alex be after Grey? Does that mean that Giovanni was after Grey?

Everything actually looked confusing to her. She didn't go to work because of it. In fact, she didn't care about work at that stage. She has always been curious as to what Grey really was. It was what she had always been after and she had almost gotten to the root of it until she decided to stop.

Yes but at that moment, she didn't even know if she wanted to know anything at that moment. She felt anxious as to what would happen.

"Miss Caramel?" Someone called suddenly.

Caramel didn't answer as she continued to stare at the mirror. She didn't even feel like herself.

The door opened and one of the maids stepped inside." Miss Caramel, Your friend is here to see you."

"Where is he?" Alex asked suddenly.

It was at this moment that Caramel turned to look at him, baffled for a moment.

"I said-," the maid started but Alex cut him off.

"Get out!" He yelled.

The maid took a short bow before she walked out of the room.

Caramel regarded Alex for a moment. "What's all this all about?"

"Where's Grey? Where is he hiding? I know he must have been here! Where is he?"

"You can see that I'm alone, can't you?"

Alex was furious. Grey entered the CCS hall mysteriously and he disappeared before it ended. Alex had gone to his house but he was nowhere to be found. He had been looking around for him. He couldn't wait to get to him and hit him with his own hands.

"Yes, but he could have been here! And you must know where he is."

Caramel's hand shook slightly. Alex was sounding scary. But no matter what, her loyalty lies with Grey.

"You told me Grey was dead. Did he resurrect already?"

"Caramel!" Alex yelled in frustration and anger. "I will kill Grey! I will kill him with my bare hands! Just tell him to watch out for me!"

Chapter 278: A murderer on the ship

Gregory already got the ship ready. In fact, the men were already making their way inside the ship after getting tattooed when Grey arrived.

Alfred moved closer to him. "I need to ask you a question, Hercules."

Grey looked at him and nodded briefly. "What's it all about?"

Alfred sighed.

"I wanted to ask about Leo. Should we-," he hesitated.

"I mean, I don't know how you will take this in," he paused as he let out a sigh.

"Should we take Leo in?"

Grey clenched his teeth unconsciously.

"No. I don't want a murderer on my ship!" He muttered and walked away.

Alfred sighed and looked at him until he was out of sight. He knew that Grey wouldn't agree to it anyways. Though, he still needed to take it easy. But he knew it wouldn't be so easy to forgive a man that killed one father.

Alfred didn't know if it was good to leave him at home alone. He had no idea what Giovanni would be up to. What if they check his house, find him there, and kill him?

Well, Grey wouldn't care about this. He's sure he wouldn't be bothered if Leo dies. He walked closer to Gregory.

"I need to speak with you," he told him and watched him round off his chats with one of his men. The men were still having the tattoo and entering the ship.

"Is anything the matter?"

Alfred nodded briefly. Tm worried about Leo. Grey doesn't want us to bring him over and I'm worried about leaving him at home alone. I won't be having any of my men over there because they would need to be tattooed," he explained.

Gregory thought for a moment. "That's right. But do you think we should really be protecting Leo?"

Alfred huffed. "I don't believe what you are saying. Are you trying to say we should leave him to die?"

"Well, he's partially useless to us now."

"Fuck Gregory, he's one of us."

Gregory shook his head briefly.

"He's not. If he is, he wouldn't have killed Hercules."

Alfred sighed.

"But we don't even know what happened that day. We aren't sure of everything."

Gregory shook his head again.

"You are missing something here, Alfred. Grey saw him and Charles confirmed it. Why do you want another explanation? You know what, Alfred? I think we should forget about Leo."

"But I still think we should give him an audience. This is what Grey thought and why he let me keep Leo in the first place. He's just mad that he killed his father. We should talk to him about this," he tried

to make him see the reasons.

Gregory regarded him for a moment.

"How do you know he doesn't remember? For all I know, Leo might be trying to play us. He's always secretive and I thought it was because he was Hercules's right hand. What if he's trying to protect himself by lying that he doesn't remember anything?"

"Greg!" Alfred called in frustration.

"Don't Greg me, Alfred! I am mad about all this! I am as angry as Grey is. And I won't hesitate to kill the murderer of my friend. I know you won't either."

Alfred sighed. "But Leo used to be our friend."

'That-,' he stressed. 'That was why I haven't done anything to him all this while. But you know that friends can be enemies at any point in time. Though, I didn't believe Leo could do something like that. Yet, I'm not ready to find out,' he finished and walked away.

Alfred cupped his face for a few minutes of the thoughtful moment. He didn't know what to do.

Caramel stared down at the news on the internet. Her mouth went with shock. She couldn't believe what was currently happening.

There was news that Hercules was dead. Why was there news that he was suddenly alive. What was really going on?

Well, perhaps she was going to find out soon enough.

Perhaps that was what Grey was going to tell her. He had no choice anyways. She was going to know the truth, either forcefully or not. She could meet with Alex and demand the truth. The decision as to

what she was supposed to do was left to Grey and well, he did make a nice decision.

There was a slight knock on the door and Caramel walked out of the house.

"I'm sorry for disturbing but there's someone here to see you," one of the maids announced.

Caramel didn't say a word and instead followed her to the living room where Richard was, waiting.

He stood at the sight of her.

"Hi, miss Caramel."

Caramel regarded him for a moment. "Where's Grey?"

"He sent me to get you. We can leave now."

Caramel nodded briefly. "Do you work for Hercules or Grey?"

Richard sighed.

"I think it's best to follow me. If he doesn't want you to know the truth, he wouldn't have sent me," he voiced out.

Caramel reasoned it for a moment. He was right anyways. She shouldn't be too curious.

"But is Grey really alright?" She found herself asking again after she had entered the car. "Alex is looking for him and he promised to kill him," she revealed.

Richard smiled softly.

"You don't have to worry about anything. I'm sure he's fine," he seemed too sure and it amazed Caramel. Nevertheless, she relaxed and tried to stay cool. Richard pulled to a stop and Caramel

realised they were at the port. There was this big ship with the name Hercules around it.

And it looked like the ship would take off anytime soon.

Richard looked back at Caramel.

"We need to be fast. The ship will move soon." He said with an urgency in his voice.

Caramel was skeptical.

"What are we doing here? I'm supposed to meet with Grey and not Hercules. What's really happening here?"

Richard sighed, frustrated. "I can't explain and I'm not in the position to do so. Just follow me," he instructs.

Caramel doubtfully stared at him. What was really happening?

Chapter 279: Preparation

Grey looked down at his men from a corner. Even though they were worried about the fact that some of their men might pull back at the news, the turn-up was still massive. Hercules has a lot of men and Gregory got the right ship for it.

Grey's eyes searched around quickly for Caramel as if he would see her amid the crowds.

The ship has taken off already and Grey knew that she would be inside somewhere. He didn't know if he was doing the right thing by letting her in but he sure knew that he would lose her if he didn't. And well, Caramel might eventually find it out and the funniest part is that it might be clear to Alex sooner than later who he was.

And he wouldn't be able to harm Caramel. He wouldn't! There was no way he would order something like that.

Gregory walked closer to him.

"Boss! We are far from the shore already. I think we should start whatever you plan," he informed.

Grey let out a sigh and looked at him.

"Gather the elders, I'm coming out soon," he ordered.

Gregory nodded briefly and walked away.

Grey entered the dressing room.

The door opened almost immediately and Aphrodite stepped inside. Grey eyes went wide with surprise.

"What are you doing here? I thought you were in Italy?"

Aphrodite smiled.

"You didn't think I would miss something so important like this for anything? You are my first task, you should have called me," she complained.

Grey smiled softly. "I didn't want to disturb you. You were so busy over there."

Aphrodite moved closer to him and stopped in front of him. "I am your left hand. I am like your mother among the elders. This shouldn't have happened without me. I don't want to miss this either," she said softly.

Grey sighed and pulled her into a bear hug. "I'm sorry, Novia. Thanks for coming," he pulled back and grinned wildly. "Put a smile on me, Novia."

Aphrodite smiled and turned away. "You sure know how to get me. Let's get you dressed."

Grey hesitated. "With you here?"

Aphrodite laughed. "I'm not leaving Grey. Oh," she turned over to him again and there was a teasing smile on her face. "Are you worried? That I would see your nakedness? Never mind, I'm fit for it. I'm your mistress after all," she announced.

"But." Grey started, still skeptical but Aphrodite cut in quickly.

"I Know you and Avery have divorced."

"Yes, we have," he confirmed. "But I have a girlfriend already."

Aphrodite nodded briefly. "A girlfriend but not a wife. I still have a chance." She muttered.

Grey didn't understand what Aphrodite was talking about. He opened his mouth to say something else but Aphrodite was quick to talk.

"Oh, at least I forget, Matee is here," she announced.

Grey was surprised again, "what! He was?"

Aphrodite smiled and took a blue suit. "He said he wouldn't miss the whole thing for anything. He really likes you."

Grey smiled at this. "Yes, he does. He gave me a bulletproof t-shirt."

"Really? That's great! I'm glad you guys are working very well together. It would help you to take over as the king of this city."

She voiced out, dropped the suit, and pulled Grey's shirt slowly until it was off his body.

Grey thought about it for a moment. "If Giovanni doesn't try to kill me as Hercules, I will let him off. There are a lot of mafia lords in Italy. It wouldn't be bad if we have two here in Jacksonville," he pointed out.

"Do you seriously think that Giovanni has no hand in your father's death? I don't believe it," she announced and bent to pull off the trouser. It looked like Aphrodite was stylishly undressing Grey.

Well, he couldn't pull her off because she wouldn't leave. So, he let her satisfy herself.

"You were gone already when I saw Leo. And I'm sure none of the elders informed you."

Aphrodite hesitated and looked up at him.

"Inform me about what?"

"Leo killed my father. I saw him do it and Charles confirmed it. So, Giovanni has no hands in it," he announced.

It was Aphrodite's turn to be shocked.

"What! Charles' father murdered the previous Hercules? But why?"

Grey looked away.

"He wouldn't say, I mean that was what he made Alfred believe. Alfred told me he has temporary memory loss," he explained.

Aphrodite couldn't say another word. Everything continued in silence. After Grey had entered the shower, she couldn't stop thinking about the news. Could Charles have been in it all with his father?

The reason why that is, would be blaring them right in the face. After Hercules was dead and Grey was found lost, Charles took over everything. Well, they knew his father was close with Hercules. So, it was only normal that Charles would be Grey's right hand and the one responsible for the management of his properties.

If Grey hadn't shown up, Charles would have automatically inherited everything.

But another question lingered on. If Leo really killed Grey and he saw it. Why didn't he make sure that Grey died as well? In fact, Grey got missing. It looked as though Leo was keeping Grey safe intentionally.

And Aphrodite was going to find out about everything from Leo. She would see if truly Leo had lost his memory.

Grey walked out of the bathroom with a towel wrapped around his waist.

Aphrodite turned to look at Grey. "Where's Leo, Grey?"

Grey hesitated for a moment. "Why are you asking me? I mean I'm not his keeper, or am I?"

Aphrodite regarded him for a moment. "You didn't let him on the ship, right?"

Grey nodded briefly. "I didn't. Why would I let him on my ship? He should be grateful that I spared him."

Aphrodite shook her head briefly. "You shouldn't have, Grey! What if Giovanni gets to him? Wait," she hesitated. "If that happens, then there's more to this that we don't know."

Chapter 280: Shocked is an understatement

Grey walked to a raised podium. The room was seething with Hercules men while the elders were already waiting for Grey at the raised podium.

Grey moved closer to them. He was wearing a blue suit and a black mask. And he was followed by Aphrodite.

He hesitated in front of the crowd as they went silent in anticipation.

"Is Hercules truly dead?" Someone asked suddenly, from the audience.

There were a few minutes of dead silence as everyone thought over the question. It was palpably clear that they believed the news.

"It doesn't matter if he is. I will always be for Hercules!" Someone said suddenly, with a raised hand.

"Yes, me too!" Another person joined in and soon, they were all saying the same thing.

"I spread the news," Grey started suddenly. "About my death! " He added quickly.

The look on each man changed briefly at the announcement.

"Does this mean Hercules lives and you are the Hercules?" Another man demanded.

Grey didn't respond. Instead, Charles stepped out. "Here's the ring that belongs to the previous Hercules, his father," he stretched out and it soon appeared large on the screen behind them.

Awe escaped everyone as they read the inscription on the ring. It definitely belong to Hercules but it wasn't enough proof as anyone could hold the ring and claim he was Hercules.

"Hercules is alive, hale, and healthy," Alfred stepped forward. The reason for this urgent meeting was to show you to your boss. It's been a while and Hercules has been through a lot of things. It's time to protect him by ourselves, " he announced.

At these words, all the men went on one knee in worship of Hercules.

Grey could see everyone and the loyalty they plead. To even imagine a lot of men served him? Men that were ready to sacrifice their lives for him.

His gaze searched around until it found James. There was this nice smile on his face, and a little nod of the head to egg him on.

Then, he looked over to his left.

Grey's eyes went wide slightly as he stared at Caramel. She was really inside. It was the population of the men that was preventing him from seeing her.

But at that moment, only two people were standing, her and Mattee.

Grey let out a sigh. He had to do it.

The men got up again and Grey turned his back on them.

Aphrodite stepped forward and took the suit off slowly or maybe that was how it looked like to Caramel.

She saw the gaze that the man wearing the mask gave her and she couldn't help but think it was familiar. It was just like the gaze that Hercules gave her at the party. That was why she felt ok speaking to him about a job in Protos Publicita. Caramel felt as though she had known him for a long time.

The moment the shirt was slipping out of the man's body, Caramel held her breath. She and everyone around knew what was happening. The man was trying to show the audience the tattoo.

Alex had a tattoo and he was the son of Giovanni and his heir. So, that meant that Hercules would have a tattoo too.

And coincidentally, Grey had a tattoo as well. The fact that Caramel wasn't seeing Grey anywhere was starting to scare her. What if Grey was really connected to Hercules?

A gasp escaped her as a tattoo of a viper came to view, as if it was still alive. Its gaze was dangerous. Caramel was frozen to her feet.

"It's the Hercules!" Someone raised, with happiness in his voice. "Hercules lives!"

The frown that was initially on the men's faces evaporated and was replaced with a smile. Their boss was truly alive.

They yelled in excitement. "The king lives!" They chanted. The elders had a smile on their faces as they looked at them.

Grey turned around slowly as Aphrodite helped him with his clothes.

"Hercules has something else to show everyone," Alfred voiced out suddenly and the noise went down.

Grey nodded briefly. "It's time to let you know who I am and what I look like," he declared and looked at the anticipation on the men's faces. For ten years, Hercules has been missing. It was a pleasure for them to see who their master was, after so long.

His hands went slowly to his face, to the mask and he pulled it off.

Some of the men had shocked written on their faces because they'd seen him before but they didn't know who he was.

"I am Hercules and I am your master!" He announced in a deep voice.

There was another yell of excitement that sprang into the air. "Long live the king!"

"Long live the don!"

"Long live Hercules!" They screamed and the men went on their knees for the second time that day.

Ok, that gave him the opportunity to see Caramel again, to check how she was doing.

There was this shock written all over her face as she continued to look at Grey as if she had turned into a statue.

Grey looked away quickly. He couldn't afford to act weak in front of his men. "Spreading the news about my death, was my plan to clean this audience. I discovered that we had a lot of spies among you guys. Watch out for anyone that joins you after today especially if he or she doesn't have the tattoo. Though, I will still be watching. It's a cruise on my ship. You guys should have fun until we return to the shore."

"Let's drink to the safety of Hercules!" Alfred announced suddenly and raised a glass cup.

"Let's drink to the reappearance of Hercules!" Gregory voiced out, with a raised cup.

"Let's drink to the brand season!" Charles said suddenly, a smile forming on his face.

"Let's drink to the successful plan!" Jayden yelled in excitement.

"Let's drink in mocking of Giovanni," Luciano laughed.

"Three bows to Hercules!" Don ordered.

The men took to one knee at the same time.

Caramel was still there, looking with shock written over.

The men got up and went down again. At the third round, Caramel was suddenly nowhere to be found.