

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 196

Chapter One Hundred Ninety-Six

Andrei

A couple of hours had passed and Sephie still hadn't come back down from the penthouse. Viktor called Adrik to check on her. He told us to come up to the penthouse. We weren't sure what to expect when we walked in, but she was curled up, half on Adrik, half beside him on the couch, sound asleep.

He put his finger up to his lips, indicating we should be quiet, but he motioned us to come and sit. "She didn't sleep well last night and after we showered, she said she was really tired. I think her adrenaline wore off. We came in here and it didn't take long at all before she passed out. I don't want to move and risk waking her up right now."

"She's not having nightmares, is she?" I asked, suddenly concerned.

He shook his head no. "Not so far." He pointed to her fingers, which were lightly moving on his chest. "She only does this when she's dreaming happy dreams. I think she's playing the piano, it's always rhythmic when she does it," he said. He couldn't help the smile that crept across his face as he watched her sleeping against him.

"That's quite possibly the most adorable thing I've ever seen," Misha said.

"How was she when you guys came upstairs?" Viktor asked.

Before he could answer, Ivan said, "I told them about her uncle. They know."

Adrik nodded. "She said she feels much the same now as she did with her uncle. Completely void, I think were her exact words."

We all looked at Ivan, who gave us all a smirk. Viktor spoke first, "what does she need from us? We want to make sure that she's okay with what happened today. I don't want it to set her back at all, either in her training or otherwise."

Adrik looked to Ivan and said, "what Ivan said to her seemed to do the trick. I think we might need to remind her of that a few times, but I also think she knows this was the only outcome today." He looked back to Viktor. "Did you tell them what she said right after?"

Viktor nodded. "I think she knows, too. I just want to make sure she believes it. We want to make sure she's okay."

Misha spoke up, "she said she missed the gardens at the house when we got her flowers the other day. Maybe she needs a day or two at the house. She seems like she can relax there. I think being able to go to the lake helps her recharge somehow."

Adrik nodded. "We can go after tomorrow for the rest of the week. My schedule is empty the rest of the week. We can still keep working on the warehouse situation from there. Did we ever get a chef?"

Viktor laughed, but looked at the floor. "Nope. That's my bad."

We all laughed quietly. He really did love it love it when she cooked for us. Even Adrik laughed.

"What about Armando?" Viktor asked. "I don't want this to cause problems between you and him. Mike was his guy, after all."

"It won't. Armando won't question me and as much as I don't want to take advantage of that, I'll use it if I have to in this case, Adrik said. "I'm more worried about Chris and Keith. How were they?"

Ivan said, "I don't think either one of them will be a problem. They both readily admitted that they weren't at the same level as Sephle. Both said to please start them at the beginning because they both knew Sephle could kick their asses easily."

Viktor said, "neither of them wanted Mike's position, either. At least not yet. They said they were happy to defer to us until they caught up in their training. We can have that discussion with Armando and find out what he wants to do about filling Mike's position."

Adrik ran his hand through Sephie's curls as he thought about what Viktor and Ivan had just said. She made a muffled noise and snuggled into him closer. He looked down at her. "She's probably going to be here a while." He looked at Viktor, "can you reschedule my meetings this afternoon for tomorrow? I'm not leaving her today."

I couldn't help but smile at their relationship. My mind drifted off, wondering if I would ever find that kind of love in my lifetime. I'd never seen anything like it before, but I knew I wanted the same kind of love.

Sephie

Mike was on his knees in front of me. He could barely see. I think I broke his nose, based off the amount of blood gushing down his face. He still wouldn't give up. "Wanna reconsider your opinion of me yet?" I asked, giving him one more chance.

He took a shallow breath. I know I broke his ribs. I heard the crack when I kicked him. He used all his breath to spit blood at me. "Fuc k you, wh ore." I knew it was Mike that said those words. I was looking right at him when he said them. But my brain heard my uncle's voice. He was coughing up his own blood, in between trying to take shallow breaths because of his broken ribs. He looked at me and said one last thing, so quietly that I almost didn't hear him. "Sicario."

I don't even remember moving to kick him, but I know I did because now I was standing over his motionless body. It didn't even look like he was breathing. I just stared at him, completely numb. I glanced at my knuckles. They were sore. There was blood on them. Was it mine or his?

Viktor walked to me, handing me a towel to wipe Mike's blood off me. He also handed me my shirt. I only vaguely remembered taking it off. Guess Chris and Keith are in the club now. I felt Adrik next to me, but I couldn't see much except what was directly in front of me. I felt like I did the day that Misha and I were attacked, like I was waiting for the darkness to come. I knew Mike hadn't landed a square hit, so I didn't know why I felt like that.

I heard Adrik tell Viktor, "he's done here. If he wakes up, make sure he understands he won't next time if I ever see him in this city again."

I stared at Mike's body. He still hadn't moved. It still looked like he wasn't breathing, but nobody was checking to see if he was still alive. I looked at Adrik. I saw the surprise in his eyes when his eyes met mine, but it quickly turned to...lust? He held my gaze for a moment before he forced himself to look away. I looked to Viktor, then back to Mike's motionless body. "He's done on this earth. He's not going to let this go, ever. He'll either spend the rest of his life trying to get to me or he'll run to Sal to tell him everything he knows about us. Or both. He can't walk out of this building," I said, in Russian, since Chris and Keith were still around.

Viktor looked at me, every bit the proud older brother. A slight smile crept across his face, like he wanted to beam at me, but was trying to hide it. "You both are assuming he's going to wake up. Ten bucks says he's already dead."

I noticed Chris and Keith walk into the ring. Chris was the one that finally went to check Mike's vitals. He seemed to be the only one concerned with that, but he waited several minutes, so he clearly wasn't that concerned. Keith said something, but I honestly wasn't paying attention. I was watching Chris.

"I hated that guy," Chris said, looking up at me.

"Hated? As in past tense?" I asked.

He nodded his head. "No pulse. I think that final kick to the head did him in," he said.

Huh. So, I just killed a man and I felt strangely fine about it. Maybe it would hit me later, but right now, I felt very much the way I did when I killed my uncle. Completely void of everything. I feel nothing-

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I looked to Viktor. "I guess I owe you ten bucks, Papa Bear."

I could see that the guys came into the ring, but I was still struggling to see correctly. I kept staring at Mike, like I was expecting him to get up and curse at me for kicking his ass. He's not getting up. He's never getting up again.

I heard Ivan's voice, but it took me a second to find him. "Sephie, he sealed his fate the second he called you a whore. If you hadn't ended him, we would have. There was no walking out of here alive for him today. You just delivered his sentence, Princess." His voice softened when he said that last sentence, like he was trying to coax me out of the log he knew I was in. It worked. I could see more clearly. I walked quickly to him, just wanting to hide. I buried my face in his good shoulder as he held me tightly against him. He kissed the top of my head and whispered, "do you believe us now that what's said in anger is the truth?" I nodded my head, but kept my face hidden. I felt the tears coming now. He squeezed me tighter, then whispered, "I'm just glad no broccoli was harmed today."

I couldn't help but laugh. I looked up at him, his handsome smile across his face, clearly relieved that I had laughed. They knew if they could make me laugh, it was generally going to be okay. I stood on my toes and kissed his cheek, thankful he knew what to say to snap me back to reality. Then I remembered what Mike had said to me.

"Oh God I'm using my sexual charms again!" I said as dramatically as possible. "Somebody please stop me."

And just like that, we were standing over a dead body, laughing like it was the most normal thing ever, forgetting completely the severity of the situation. "Normal is completely overrated anyway. *