

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 101

Chapter One Hundred One

Adrik

With the time difference, we landed in the city in the early afternoon. Plenty of time to get Vinny's. I smiled to myself, still amazed at Sephie's reaction to us on the plane. I knew it before today, but I could clearly see that each of them loved her almost as much as I did. We would never be the same without her.

As we got everything from the plane, I noticed that her limp was barely noticeable today. Ivan caught me watching her as he loaded bags into the SUVs. "Her limp is better today," he said, a sly smirk on his face.

I cut my eyes to him. "I was just thinking that. She was practically jumping around the bedroom this morning. I just don't know if she's that excited to get a sandwich or if she really feels better today."

"Let's get her a sandwich and then we'll see if the limp comes back. Process of elimination," he laughed.

"Solid plan." I had to admit that I was also looking forward to stopping by Vinny's. We'd find out more about her hip tonight when we changed the bandage. I was hopeful that it wasn't just her excitement over her favorite sandwich.

We were greeted by Vinny as we walked in the sandwich shop. "Boss! I've never been happier to see you! I told them you weren't really gone! And Miss Sephie! You've never looked more beautiful, amora."

"You're a sight for sore eyes, Vinny. I can't even begin to tell you how happy you're making me right now," she said as he walked to her, embracing her in one of his hugs. I remember her apprehension the first time he hugged her. She was now completely at ease with him. I might still be slightly jealous of him, but I couldn't help but love the way everyone loved her.

"You want the usual, bella?" he asked, walking back behind the counter.

"You know me so well, Vinny," she grinned at him.

Misha leaned into her shoulder. "We'll have to come back everyday this week, so I can make good on that promise."

"You ain't gotta ask me twice," she said dryly.

Once we were all sufficiently stuffed, we went to the penthouse. I had a few things work-related to take care of that afternoon. I was hoping that Sephie would want to come with me. I could use her opinion, for one. I had also gotten used to always being with her and the thought of being away from her right now did not sit well with me.

After the guys got off the elevator at their floor, I pulled her to me. "How are you? Are you happy now that you've had at least one sandwich? Are you tired?"

"My stomach is so happy right now, but I'm not that tired. What do you need?" she asked, placing her hands on my chest.

"I need to meet with Dario and Massimo this afternoon. I was hoping I could talk you into coming with me," I said leaning down to kiss her lips. "We can go back to Vinny's after," I smiled against her lips.

"I would do it even without the offer of more Vinny's," she said as the doors to the elevator opened. "I've become very accustomed to being with you the entire day. I'm not ready to give that up yet." She turned to leave the elevator, her hand finding mine. I felt that pull in my chest as I realized she had read my mind yet again.

Viktor let Dario and Massimo into my office that afternoon. They were surprised to see Sephie sitting on the edge of my desk.

"Are we interrupting, Boss? We can come back later," Dario asked. Sephie stood up and moved behind my chair, sitting on the cabinets behind my desk.

"She stays." I motioned for them to sit. Viktor caught her eye before leaving, winking at her. She grinned at him.

"Gentlemen. Tell me what's happened in my absence," I said, sitting in my chair.

They both looked like they were scared to speak in front of Sephie. Shifting uneasily in their chairs, the silence lasted for an uncomfortable amount of time.

"Now you're worried about speaking in front of me? I'm sorry, should I serve you a drink so you'll think less of me and feel more comfortable talking then?" she asked. I could hear the anger just below the surface in her voice. I was struggling not to smile in front of them. I had to bite the inside of my cheek to keep from laughing. I knew that Viktor and Ivan were enjoying this just outside the door. They could hear everything, as I had the intercom on. "You boys are a little late to that party, considering I know where the bodies are buried."

Both cursed under their breath. I very much enjoyed the looks on their faces. I waited for one of them to speak. Massimo was the first to break the silence. Dario still looked too stunned to speak.

"Boss, forgive us. We didn't know."

"Clearly," Sephie said quietly.

Massimo continued. "Salvadori has been mostly quiet since you've been gone. We did have a chance to speak with Vito. It doesn't make sense that he's siding with Sal. Vito is an odd man, but he's usually pretty neutral. Sal is holding something over him, but we don't know what. We've got guys looking into it. If we can get Vito to abandon Sal, that will make him weaker. Vito might not be the strongest boss, but he's got great men working for him. We think Sal is after Vito's men more than Vito."

I counted the number of times Massimo blinked while he was talking. So far, so good.

Dario finally composed himself enough to speak. "We got word that Anthony and Lorenzo were supposedly coming to the city, the day before you got back, Boss. However, they changed their flight plans at the last second. They flew to an airport further south, refueled, then kept flying south. We can't be sure, but we're thinking they're meeting with the Colombians."

This was a disturbing twist. I had a good relationship with the Colombians. We had a very lucrative deal worked out. It was concerning that they would meet with Anthony and Lorenzo without consulting me first, but they might be under the impression that I'm still dead. Even still, I wasn't sure how far Anthony and Lorenzo would get with the Colombians. Interesting.

"Why do you think they're meeting with the Colombians?" I asked.

"Why do I think they're meeting with the Colombians?" Dario asked. I raised my eyebrow, waiting for him to answer. "I'm not sure, sir. The existing deal with the Colombians is a beneficial one. None of us have a reason to meet with the Colombians," he said. Interesting.

I looked to Massimo, expecting him to answer, waiting to count the number of times he blinked when he answered. "I'm not sure either, sir. I can't imagine why they would need to meet with the Colombians." Not a single blink.

Have you spoken with Armando?" I asked Massimo, trying to see if I could get him to blink more than anything.

"Not for a few days, no," he said, without blinking. I looked to Dario, who simply shook his head no.

I stood up, "gentlemen. You will tell me when you hear anything on Anthony and Lorenzo." Viktor opened the door, waiting for them to exit my office. He and Ivan would escort them out and come back. Once the door was shut again, I paced the floor.

Sephie was still sitting on the cabinet, watching me. My anger was threatening to come to the surface. It appeared that Armando was the only one I could trust at the moment, and he was the only one not in the city. I was suddenly worried for his safety. I ran my hand through my hair, exhaling.

"Do you think Armando is safe? I suddenly feel like he should've come back with us," Sephie said, still sitting on the cabinet, I looked at her, somewhat stunned. "How do you do that?"

"Do what?"

"You just read my mind. Again."

She smiled, shrugging her shoulders. "It's a gift."

Viktor and Ivan walked into the office and sat down in the chairs across from my desk, both looking at Sephie with smirks on their faces.

"What? They were rude first," she said, crossing her arms over her chest.

Both of them just shook their heads, laughing. She did a great job of keeping us all entertained.

Viktor looked to me. "We couldn't see, but I'm guessing they were lying at the end there? At least about talking to Armando."

I nodded my head. "I'm worried for Armando's safety now. Sephie just said she thinks he should've come back with us. We need to contact him immediately and get him here. He never thinks he needs security. He's too exposed there."

Ivan nodded his head. "Agreed. A couple of us could go back and get him. If Dario and Massimo are lying, then Armando is the only one you can trust at this point. You need him here."

"Get a fresh pilot and you two get back there. I'll call him and let him know you're coming. Take Andrei if you need to," I said.

"What about the Colombians?" Viktor asked.

"I have a good relationship with the Colombians, but they might be under the impression that I'm dead. One call will fix that, but I want to give them time to meet with Anthony and Lorenzo first, if that is indeed where they're going. I want to know what their next play is."

Both Ivan and Viktor nodded. I heard Sephie say, "diabolical" quietly behind me. I could tell she was smiling when she said it, without looking at her. Ivan winked at her, grinning.