

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 273

Chapter Two Hundred Seventy-Three

Stephen

While it was somewhat macabre, I got enjoyment from counting out loud whenever I took out one of the guards. “One...two...three...” So far no one else in the warehouse had noticed. “Four...five...” Still business as usual in the warehouse. “Six, seven, eight...that last group shouldn’ta been f**king around on duty, but I appreciate them making my job easier.” I heard quiet laughter over my earpiece. “Aaaaand...nine. Almost to a personal best, folks.” More laughter through my earpiece. “Oh, number ten found number nine. That’s not helpful, number ten. But wait, there’s more. Eleven...twelve...go. Now.”

I could see everyone moving from my vantage point. The people inside the warehouse were slowly becoming aware that something was going on. I was trying to pick them off as they came out of the building. Andrei and Oscar were systematically moving around the building, setting up the explosives. The two guys that went with them for the first two warehouses were moving in the opposite direction around the building. Everyone else was providing cover for them.

I kept an eye on as much as I could through the scope of my rifle. Things were happening quickly, I caught sight of one guy that had taken cover as he came out of the warehouse. He was on the phone. His call ended abruptly, thanks to me. “We may have a problem. Someone made a call. Everybody watch your 6.”

“One wall to go,” Andrei said.

The people inside the warehouse had barricaded themselves inside, thinking that was going to save them. I took a moment to find Sephie. She was between Adrik and Ivan, her gun pointed at the warehouse like she belonged here. She was one of us now.

I checked the alley leading to the warehouse. Quiet, so far. I could hear gunfire at the back of the warehouse, where Andrei and Oscar were. “Remind me to thank Trino for sending Oscar. He just saved my a ss,” Andrei said. “All charges set. On our way back.”

I did another sweep of the perimeter. This time, there was movement up the alley. “We’ve got company. Their backup just arrived. Don’t know how many yet, but I’ll try to get as many as I can. They’re coming up the alley,” I said.

I counted five guys trying to quickly make it to the warehouse. They were being smart about moving up the alley, so I couldn’t, get a clear shot. Whoever made the call must’ve warned them I was here. “They’re on to me. It’s difficult for me to get a clear shot on any of them.” I looked further down the alley to see more guys coming. “More guys coming too. I count 15 total. So far. I need help drawing them out so I can get a clean shot. They’re using cover as much as possible. Oops. Make that 14.”

Misha and Viktor moved closer to the alley, along with several of the security detail guys to try and keep the new group from advancing any closer. The alley was the easiest entrance point. The pressure from Misha and Viktor caused the new arrivals to make mistakes, which gave me a clear shot. “Down to 11. I haven’t seen anymore coming yet. I also haven’t checked the other access points. Be careful down there.” As soon as I said that, I heard Ivan say, “we’ve got more coming from the west side.”

Shi t. That’s directly beside where Ivan, Adrik, and Sephie were. “How many? Can you tell?” I asked.

“Looks like just a handful. We should be able to hold them off. Andrei’s back,” he said.

There was steady gunfire in both directions now. I was slowly working on picking off the guys in the alley. I checked on the group coming from the other direction, toward Ivan. I couldn’t get a clear shot on any of them. I went back to the alley just in time to see more guys arrive. “Shi t. We’ve got more incoming up the alley. At least 20 this time.”

“Almost clear this way, but I don’t like that more are showing up. We need to get out of here,” Ivan said.

“We can go around the warehouse,” Andrei said.

“I can’t cover you that way,” I said.

“You won’t need to. I can blow the building as soon as we’re clear. Bait the rest of the guys toward the building, we won’t have to worry about being followed,” Andrei said.

“We’ll do it. Ivan, get Sephie out of here. Stephen, cover Ivan and Sephie as far as you can. The rest of us are going around the warehouse. Andrei will detonate as soon as we’re clear,” Adrik said.

No one had time to object. Ivan grabbed Sephie’s hand and was moving quickly toward the exit to the west. It was clear. There was a bike close, so they’d be able to leave quickly. Misha and Viktor were falling back toward the rest of the group, drawing the guys in the alley toward them. Everyone moved together, slowly, toward the back of the warehouse. I covered Ivan and Sephie until they got on the bike, then I lost sight of them. I went back to covering the alley. I managed to get a few more guys, but I would need to move soon or I’d be caught in the blast.

“Stephen, get out of there,” Adrik said as they neared the back of the warehouse.

“You ain’t gotta tell me twice,” I said, laughing to myself.

It went quiet as I broke down my rifle. It took me exactly 45 seconds to get it broken down and ready to move. I was on my way down the stairs within a minute. As soon as I hit the ground floor, my bike was waiting on me. I’d pulled it inside the building to hide it from sight. “Clear,” I said as I pulled out of the building. I was one block over from the warehouse, so the street was quiet. I still didn’t waste any time getting out of there.

“3...2...1...” Andrei said. I felt the explosion when it happened. I expected it to knock out our earpieces, given that there were explosions throughout the city at the same time, so I wouldn’t know that everyone made it out until we were back at the penthouse. The plan was to regroup at the building, then we were going to grab Dr. Moretti in the wee morning hours, so he wouldn’t know what hit him.

This was the worst part of any plan. The waiting. The not knowing. I expected Ivan and Sephie to be waiting on me when I got to the building. Then we’d wait for the rest of the group to show up. I tried not to be nervous, but I always failed miserably.

I pulled into the parking garage. No bike. Shi t. Ivan and Sephie should be here. Where the f**k are they?

I only had to wait a few minutes and the rest of the group showed up. “We’ve got a problem. Ivan and Sephie aren’t here,” I said as they pulled up. Adrik went nuclear right away.

“They should be here already. Where the f**k are they? Did you see anything before you left?” he asked, His anger, much like my own, turned him into a beast. He wasn’t Adrik anymore. He was his anger personified. I knew his anger wasn’t directed at me, but he was still a sight to behold. The dealers were visibly apprehensive. They’d never seen this side of Adrik. He looked like he was ready to snap at any moment. Every muscle in his body was flexed, every vein engorged with blood. If I really was a vampire, I’m sure I’d be able to hear his heartbeat loud and clear. His eyes had an intensity to them when he was angry that made you feel a sort of primal fear. You felt like he was a predator and you were definitely the prey.

“I covered them until they got on the bike. I lost sight of them after that. The explosion knocked out the earpieces so I didn’t hear anything either,” I said.

Viktor pulled his phone from his pocket. “I gave Sephie a tracker just in case,” he said as he checked his phone. “I’ve got a location. She’s moving ”

Misha had gone to one of the SUVs to grab new earpieces for everyone. “What direction?” he asked as he handed us all new earpieces. It was easier than waiting for them, all to reset themselves. Faster, too. We didn’t have time to waste.

“They’re headed to the north end of the city,” Viktor said.

“That’s Sal’s area of the city,” Andrei said, a clear look of worry on his face.

“He’s a dead man.” Adrik said as he grabbed a helmet and climbed on a bike. We all followed quickly. Even the dealers jumped into two SUVs, ready to help us out once more. Looks like taking care of Salvadori was getting bumped up on the schedule.