

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 226

Chapter Two Hundred Twenty-Six

Adrik

“Are we taking bets on whether Chen is going to pi ss himself tonight?” Stephen asked as we were preparing to go to Sephie’s old apartment to meet with the dealers in charge.

“I think he’s ruined at least three pairs of pants since he had to talk to Boss the other day,” Ivan said. We all got a little too much enjoyment out of Chen’s fear.

“You guys better be nice to him. He’s helped us out,” Sephie said, trying to make sure they weren’t going to haze him in some way during the meeting.

“We’re always nice, princess,” Ivan said, pretending to be offended.

Stephen left first, with two other guys, to set up across the street from the apartment building. They had good vantage points and could see everyone coming and going. I did not like surprises, especially when Sephie was involved. It helped to ease my worry to see Stephen growing closer to Sephie. I knew he would do whatever was necessary to make sure she was protected. She’d helped him come out of his shell over the past few months. Like Ivan, he was so much funnier after having been around Sephie. I was convinced we’d all laughed more since Sephie showed up than we had our entire lives. I never wanted it to end.

On the elevator down to the parking garage, I pulled Sephie closer. She looked up at me, her eyes smiling at me. “You stay close to either me or Ivan the entire time, got it?” She smiled her sweet smile up at me, causing my heart to skip in my chest.

“I promise,” she said. She’d told us all over the weekend, a couple of times even, that she was eternally grateful to all of us for making her feel safe. It was a feeling she’d been missing in her life since her m om had died. She said she never realized how much she had missed it until she had us to make her feel safe once again. I could see it plainly on every guy’s face that they would do whatever it took to make sure she always felt safe with us, in any situation.

She stood on her toes, her lips finding mine. It was these little moments, the ones that seemed insignificant, that I found myself enjoying more and more. These moments made me think I’d never get enough of her, never get tired of her, never want to be without her.

We pulled into the parking lot of Sephie’s old apartment building. We were early, but Chen was already there. Sephie giggled. “Stephen, you might be right. He might pi ss himself tonight,” she said. She knew that even though he wasn’t physically with us, he could hear us through his earpiece..

“Stephen said he was here even before they got here. He’s worried. He’s been checking outside constantly,” Ivan said. “If he’s only worried about Boss, that’s one thing. But if he’s worried about something else, I don’t like it.”

“I’ll talk to him. If he’s checking outside, he’s probably looking for us,” Sephie said.

I extended my hand to her to get out of the vehicle. She put her hand in mine, climbing out. I pulled her to me, looking at her seriously, “with Ivan. Then bring him up. I’d like to speak to him before everyone else gets here.” I leaned down and kissed her gently.

“Consider it done,” she said, grinning at me.

Ivan walked around the vehicle, his game face on. He put his hand on the small of her back, directing her toward Chen’s apartment. I caught Misha’s eye, “go with them,” I said nodding toward Ivan and Sephie. He couldn’t keep the smile from his face as he jogged to catch up to them.

Viktor walked up the stairs first, with Andrei behind me. Sephie’s old apartment was just how she left it, just without her

clothes and mementos. All her furniture was still there. I kept the apartment in the beginning, just in case she ever decided she didn’t want to be with me and wanted to go back. I knew now that was highly unlikely, but I still kept the apartment and kept it cleaned regularly. It was proving to be useful tonight.

We could hear Sephie’s conversation with Chen through the earpieces. Poor guy was terrified to meet me. Sephie was trying to calm his nerves before they came upstairs. She eventually got him calm enough to come up. His eyes went wide when he walked into the apartment to see me standing with Viktor and Andrei.

“Is there like a height and weight requirement to be a part of this? Because I feel inadequate,” Chen said to Sephie. He tried to say it quietly, but we all heard him. Sephie had her own earpiece.

Before she could answer him, I stepped forward, extending my hand to Chen. I was trying to put him at ease. He had done us a huge favor by gathering information and I wanted to make sure he knew I was appreciative. “Chen, it’s nice to meet you in person. Thank you for everything you’ve done so far,” I said.

He looked scared, but he shook my hand firmly, looking me in the eye. That was a good sign. He was trying to be bold.

“Yes, sir. Uh, happy to help, sir,” he said.

“What can you tell me about the other dealers? I’m not worried about Trino’s guy. He’ll take care of him should his loyalties waver. But what of the other two? Three?” I asked.

Chen looked shocked about my statement about Trino. He looked at Sephie. “You told me the Colombian was a nice guy,” he said.

“He is. Super nice guy. Has a flair for the dramatic, which I greatly appreciate. Just don’t cross him or he’ll use that dramatic flair in ways you don’t want to see,” Sephie said.

Chen cursed under his breath. “Alright then. Gus is Trino’s guy. He’s the one that the other dealers defer to, so he’s kind of in charge of everything. The other three guys are DJ, Smith, and Chucky.”

Ivan and Sephie looked at each other. They both said, “shi t” at the same time. I could see Ivan bristle. Chen was about to pi ss himself.

“Tell me about Chucky. Is he an older guy? Is he a dealer or a pimp?” Ivan asked. His voice had an edge to it, but I could tell he was trying to rein in his intimidation as much as possible.

I glanced at Sephie, who was clearly worried, her entire body tense. I waited for Chen’s answer before I asked more questions.

“He’s both. He works for Niko. Been working for him for a long time, too. I’m not sure about that guy. The other two dealers are good, as far as I can tell, but I think Chucky might be a little off, if I’m being honest,” Chen said.

“He’s more than a little off,” Sephie said. She looked at me, her anger now clearly visible on her face. She said, in Russian, “he’s the one my uncle called the night of my forced procedure. He was a pimp back then, but he could’ve been my uncle’s dealer and I just didn’t know it. I never stayed around when he came to the house. He looked at me like he wanted me to be one of his girls. He could’ve changed his ways, but I doubt very seriously he has. I wouldn’t trust him. He’s the one who took me and my uncle to the doctor.” She said the last sentence quietly, her gaze dropping to the floor. I was immediately angry. It seemed like she couldn’t escape having to relive her past lately.

“Oh, shi t. You can speak Russian too? Shi t just got so real.” Chen said quietly.

Ivan was also clearly angry. Chucky might not make it out of the apartment tonight. Stephen asked, “what does he look like. Seph? I can happily take care of him before he ever sees you.”

She looked to me, almost like she was asking permission. I nodded my head. Not only did I not want him to even see Sephie, I would never be able to trust him. She looked at Chen. “Does he still keep his hair longer? Like the doll he took his name from?”

“No shi t? He for real named himself after a murderous doll?” Chen asked. “I can’t believe I never pieced that one together, but he totally has the same hair as that fuck ed up doll.”

She asked, in Russian, “do you know what doll I’m talking about, Stephen?”

“Yep. Is his hair red too?” he asked.

“Net. It was black the last time I saw him,” she said. She looked to Chen, asking in English, “is it still black?”

“Yeah, but he’s going gray too. Still same haircut though. Can’t believe I never caught that reference,” Chen said, shaking his

head.

Stephen said, “I’ll take care of him.”