

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 187

## Chapter One Hundred Eighty-Seven

Adrik

I felt a pull in my chest as my heart swelled listening to Sephie laugh in front of me. It was one of my favorite sounds, especially when it helped my anger subside. I was very happy that she had gotten up to leave the office after Andy's admission. It gave me a reason to do the same. I think the guys also needed a reason, as they all went after her as well. I noticed the looks "on Armando's guys' faces as we went after her. They don't understand the special relationship we all have with her and it was clear that at least Mike was struggling with it. Of course Sephie already knew and I fully supported whatever she wanted to do to make him even more uncomfortable about it.

When it came to my guys, I never had a moment of jealousy or doubt regarding them and Sephie. I trusted her and I trusted them. I knew she looked at me differently than she looked at them. It was clear that she had a role in each of their lives. She was helping each of them to fully realize their potential, just as she was helping me to realize mine. I wasn't going to stand in the way of that. My guys were my family. We'd been through hell together. I was closer with them than I was with anyone. It made me happy to see them with her and to know that she was safe when I wasn't around, because they would be there. I could see how someone on the outside of our little family might struggle to understand the dynamic, but that was their problem, as far as I was concerned.

"We should probably go back. At least so the guys don't get anxious and murder Andy to make me happy," Sephie said, her fingers lightly running over my facial hair. She still had a wide smile on her face.

I sighed. I really could use a minute or two longer away from them. "Not yet, but I'll make sure they don't murder him just yet," I said. I wrapped my arms around her waist, pulling her off the floor and walking to the elevators. I set her down and looked at the guys. I jerked my head toward us to indicate they should come to us. They all quickly walked to us. I knew they were waiting by the office door to make sure no one decided to leave. This way, we could still ensure no one would leave, but we could have a moment to ourselves. I valued their opinions, always. Especially if it involved Sephie. I knew they had her best interests in mind always, just like I did.

Once they were all standing next to us, I said to them in Russian, "Sephie was worried you were going to murder Andy just to make her happy before we went back into the office."

"Say the word, Sephie," Stephen said, his voice dripping with anger. It took me by surprise, as he was usually the quiet one of the group, but I could clearly see his anger. She stepped away from me to give him a hug.

"Aww, Stephen. You're all soft and nougaty now too," she said as he held onto her tightly. I knew he was using her to calm down. I'd honestly only ever seen him that angry a handful of times and it never ended well for the other person. Stephen was a dark horse. He was the shortest out of all of us. He was still tall comparatively, but at 6'2, he was visibly shorter than the rest of us. Compared to the other guys, Stephen looked like the weakest link, but he was anything but. He could be a monster, just like the rest of us. I'd seen him get pushed past his limit before. It wasn't pretty. He admittedly took the longest to warm up to Sephie, but those two had gotten closer lately. I think she recognized that he was the loner type and let him come around when he was ready. Clearly, he was just as attached to her now as the rest of us.

She stepped back from him, smiling sweetly at him. It made his cheeks flush slightly. She moved back to my side, as I pulled her to me. "Now," she said, still speaking Russian in case we were overheard, "I still don't fully trust Andy. He was definitely holding back when he first got here, but I don't know if it was only the kidnapping attempt or if there is something more. He's genuine in everything he says. His face is an open book. I just want to make sure he's not holding anything else back from us, because that's the biggest feeling I get from him. He's telling us the truth when he speaks, but I don't think he's giving us everything." She paused, but then added, "and I'm still not completely sure about Mike either. I thought checking him last night would solve it, but he still seems to have a problem with me, especially when he sees me with you guys versus my boyfriend who happens to be the Lord King Boss of the underworld. There's a lot to unpack there, if I'm being honest."

I chuckled at her description of me. Stephen spoke up again, "I have some insight into that, but we can talk about it later. I think the more important situation is what Andy just told us and what to do about the warehouse."

"Noted, but follow-up question: is it worthy of an appearance on the white board? Because we're gonna need to know about that right now if it is," Sephie said, grinning at him.

We all laughed. Stephen shook his head no. "Not white board worthy. It really can wait," he said.

"Priorities, people," Sephie said like she was conducting a business meeting. It made us all laugh even more.

Ivan said, "I think, as Sephie put it, asking them nicely to stop distributing is the way to go."

I nodded. "I agree. But I don't necessarily want to let the others in on that plan just yet. Mike isn't making me happy right now. I don't know how much I trust that guy."

Viktor looked apologetic. "He wasn't like that when I interviewed him."

"Papa Bear, it's not your fault. He has some weird women issues that he's projecting onto me. It wouldn't have come up in an interview. I'm not even sure it would've come up if he just had to deal with Giana. It seems directed at me. Maybe he hates redheads, I don't know," Sephie said as she went to Viktor, wrapping her arms around his waist. She rested her head against his chest as he kissed the top of her head, his giant arms engulfing her.

"How does anyone hate redheads? You're all feisty and shit," Misha said, grinning at her.

"It's a real thing, my adorable Russian guardian. It's a clear love/hate situation. Men either love us or hate us. There's very rarely an in between. I just figure the ones that hate me are descended from the men who burned my kind hundreds of years ago, so I don't want to be around them any damn way," she said, walking back to me.

Armando came out of the office, looking somewhat concerned. He walked up to us, "everything ok, Boss?"

I nodded my head. "We were just coming back in. We just needed to discuss a matter privately first." I knew Armando wouldn't question me. I felt a slight pang of guilt for taking advantage of that. I would tell him the plan, if my mind was changed about Mike, but not before.