

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 188

Chapter One Hundred Eighty-Eight

Adrik

“Is Andy trustworthy?” Armando asked Sephie.

“I haven’t completely decided yet. I want to say yes, but I need to make sure before I make up my mind definitively,” she said, her sweet smile on her face as she talked to Armando. She really did like him, but she also knew not to say too much. It was a tricky situation.

Armando ran his hand through his hair. “What a mess. We still need to ask about my water district guy and what he knows about that. I’m really concerned about that. I can’t have the people in my area exposed to that much brawn.”

“I would like to know if he knows anything about Anthony’s ex-girlfriend, as well,” Sephie said.

“Come, let’s go find out,” I said, as I pulled her toward the office.

When we walked back in, Andy was clearly worried. I remained silent, as did Sephie, as I sat in my chair. She hopped onto the bookshelf behind my desk once more. I looked to Armando, giving him the lead for questions about his water district.

“Andy, what do you know about the guy in my water district that they approached?” Armando asked. He was clearly stressed about this situation. He looked like he hadn’t been sleeping very well. I caught myself wondering if Giana was as good at comforting him as Sephie was at comforting me.

“That guy’s name is Brian, I think?” Andy asked. Armando nodded. “Brian’s sister used to date Anthony.” Andy looked at me.

“That bracelet Sal gave you the day you banished Anthony?” I nodded. “That bracelet was made for Brian’s sister. Jennifer is her name. Anthony was sure she was cheating on him, so he gave her that bracelet so he could listen in on her conversations. She was pregnant at the time, too. Turns out she was cheating, but she swore the baby was Anthony’s. She could never get him to submit to a DNA test to prove it, but she always remained constant that it belonged to him. When Sal was looking for ways in, he remembered that Brian was Jennifer’s brother and that he worked at the water district in Armando’s area of the city. He went to Jennifer and agreed to have his DNA tested against her kid. If the kid was Anthony’s, it would share DNA with Sal. Once it was proven that the kid belonged to Anthony, Sal went to Brian and agreed to take care of the medical expenses for the kid and to support Jennifer as well, but Brian had to give his people access to the water supply. He didn’t tell him why, but he said the deal was completely dependent on that. Brian was in a tough spot. He’d been supporting his sister and now with the kid being diagnosed with cancer, he was struggling to keep up with medical bills. He agreed,” Andy said.

“How much do you know about the relationship between Anthony and Jennifer when they were dating?” Sephie asked. I could still hear an edge to her voice, as could the guys, but she was trying to control it. Ivan looked at her, still concerned. I assumed she smiled at him, as I saw his expression soften slightly and he winked at her.

“Anthony is much like Massimo. I would more readily believe that Massimo was Anthony’s father than Sal, to be honest. Anthony is a psycho. Like it didn’t surprise any of us one bit what he did to you at the restaurant, Sephie. That was just the first time he’d gotten caught and suffered the consequences of it. Jennifer would show up with fresh bruises regularly. She would have choke marks on her, too. One of Sal’s underbosses was concerned for her. He thought maybe her father was beating her. It never occurred to him that it could be Anthony. He’s the one that started a relationship with her while she was still with Anthony,” Andy said. I could see the fear flash across his face again.

“Did Anthony kill him or did Sal?” I asked.

“Sal did. Once they found out she was seeing him, Sal called him into his office and shot him point blank. Anthony had convinced Sal that he was trying to steal his woman and child from him. But after the underboss was dead, Anthony abandoned Jennifer and his kid. Completely cut her off. She had nothing.”

“S ick fu cks,” Sephie mumbled under her breath behind me. I was the only one that heard her.

“I couldn’t agree more,” I said quietly, in Russian, so that only she could understand me.

“What do you know about Anthony’s plans once he gets back to the city?” Ivan asked. “What’s the end goal here?”

“I’m not entirely sure, but I know he can’t stand Ghost since that night at the restaurant when he got his ass handed to him multiple times in one night. Anthony is a petulant child in a grown man’s body. He doesn’t take reprimands well. Even worse that they were public. I’ve seen the look on his face that he had when Ghost yelled at him for slapping Sephie in front of everyone. He won’t stop until he destroys her to get to Ghost,” Andy said.

“What’s Sal’s relationship like with Anthony? I got the impression he’s scared of his own son,” Viktor asked.

Andy nodded. “He’s definitely scared of him. He always has been. Even when Anthony was young. He learned as a small child that he could throw a fit and he’d get anything he wanted. It’s only gotten worse as he’s gotten older. I’ve seen him choke Sal before. Sal basically does whatever he wants. Even Anthony going to Sicily was Anthony’s idea. He just didn’t expect you to banish him there. He was expecting to go there, take care of business with Lorenzo, and then be able to come back. In his mind, he’s untouchable.”

That was good. When you get cocky, you get sloppy. He’d be an easier target that way.

“What do you know about their talks with the Colombians?” Ivan asked.

“I don’t know much about it, but if the Colombians don’t play ball with Anthony and Lorenzo, they’ve been making their own plans to completely bypass the Colombian supply. They’ve been talking to the Mexican cartels in secret,” Andy said.

Sephie laughed behind me, causing everyone to look at her. I knew where she was going before she said anything. “Do those dumb fucks not know the Colombians are the ones that supply the Mexican cartels with product? They can try and bypass the Colombians all they want. They’ll just cut off the supply completely. No nothing. You can’t even make brawn that way. Jesus these people are stupid.”

I felt the smile creeping across my face as I watched the rest of the room, outside of our group, realize what she had just said.

Clearly, no one else had thought about that except the Russians in the room and Sephie. I couldn’t help but feel proud that she was mine.

“How do you know that, Sephie? I didn’t even know that,” Armando asked, clearly surprised.

“I thought everyone knew that it takes the specific climate of Colombia to grow the plants. You can grow it further south, as well, but the yields aren’t as high and the quality isn’t as good. Colombia is the prime location for growing the plant that makes the drugs,” she said, somewhat flippantly.

Ivan grinned at her, saying in Russian, “they were today years old when they learned that you could run the organization better than they can.”

She laughed, hopping down from the bookshelves and going to him. She sat down in between him and Misha, so she’d be on Ivan’s good side. He put his arm around her shoulders, letting her curl up beside him. He kissed the top of her head. I glanced in Mike’s direction, who had a strange expression on his face. I couldn’t tell if he was shocked or angry or both. I glanced back toward Sephie and caught Misha’s eye, who had also seen Mike’s expression change. Without a word, he reached over and grabbed one of Sephie’s legs and stretched it across his lap, keeping his hand protectively on her leg. “This is definitely going on the white board,” she said in Russian. “This might replace the creative ways to die as my favorite white board addition, even.”

Of course, we all laughed, forgetting for a moment about the severity of the situation.