

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 258

Chapter Two Hundred Fifty-Eight

Adrik

I found my mind wandering during the afternoon's meetings. I slept great the night before, thanks to Sephie forcing me to take a bath with her before bed. I still couldn't get over her reaction to me telling her that I was thinking of getting rid of the other bosses and running things on my own.

It was something my father had tried when I was much younger. It was one of the reasons I had multiple attempts made on my life before the age of 10. My father eventually relented and divided the city between the six bosses that were now trying to usurp me. Relations had been mostly good throughout the years between my father and the other bosses. Then, when I took over, things had been quiet until this year. The city was thriving and the bosses were thriving, so it didn't make sense that they were trying to grab more power from me. Greed does strange things to people.

My mind kept returning to the thought of running the entire city with Sephie by my side. I would finally realize what my father had tried to do so many years ago. And do it in a way that would save the people of the city, rather than sacrifice them as collateral damage.

My last meeting of the day was over. When Stephen returned to my office, I could tell by the look on his face that I was not going to like what he was about to tell me. "Boss, I just heard from Keith. Armando left early for his house, with Giana. Keith said he moved all his meetings there for tomorrow instead of staying here."

I inhaled deeply. While it didn't make me happy that he had chosen to not come clean with me, it did mean that we would get a chance to listen to more of his meetings, since Keith would have an easier time recording him at the house.

Viktor walked into the office. "Chen called. I told him Sephie would call him back in 5 minutes. Do you want to go upstairs or should have her come down here?"

"I'll go up. I need a change of scenery. She promised Andrei she would cook his favorite meal tonight since he saved her from having to cook yesterday. She's likely busy anyway," I said. My stress from the day already starting to subside at the thought of having her in my arms.

Viktor's smile made it clear he was happy about this news. He really did love it when Sephie cooked. We all did, but for some reason, it was an extra special treat for Viktor. "Apparently, I owe Andrei one," Viktor said as we walked to the elevator. I raised an eyebrow at him. "Andrei's favorite happens to be mine as well," he said. He was practically drooling as he thought about it. We really had become quite spoiled with her cooking for us. Even takeout didn't taste as good anymore.

As soon as we opened the door to the penthouse, we could smell her cooking. My stomach growled in anticipation. Viktor laughed, as he'd heard it. "At least I'm not the only one overly excited about this," he said as we walked in. Sephie saw us, her eyes landing on me quickly. Her smile made the room even brighter. She had her hands full, so she couldn't drop everything and come to me the way I'd grown to adore. Instead, I went to her, standing behind her while she finished what she was doing. I leaned down, pressing my cheek to her neck, my hands on her hips, kissing her lightly. She freed up one hand and pressed her palm to my cheek for a moment before returning to what she was doing.

"Sestrichka, Chen called earlier. I told him you'd call him back in a few minutes. Can you talk now or should I tell him a few more minutes?" Viktor asked him.

"If someone can hold the phone for me, I can talk to him now. These raviolls aren't going to stuff themselves, Papa Bear," she said smiling at him. He dialed the number, putting it on speaker, then handed me the phone to hold for her.

"Yay, teamwork," she said giggling as we waited for Chen to pick up.

"How did you call exactly 5 minutes later? Like were you guys just fucking with me and making me wait 5 minutes for no good reason?" Chen asked when he picked up the call.

Sephie laughed at him. "No, Chen. They had to find me. Sometimes I play hide and seek to keep them on their toes. You know, ongoing training and what not," she said. We all laughed quietly.

"For real?" Chen asked. He clearly believed her.

"Oh, totally. I once climbed out one of the windows onto the ledge. Took them 6 hours to find me. Most peaceful day I've had in a long time," she said. There was silence on the other end. She couldn't contain her laughter any longer. "No, Chen. I'm only messing with you."

"At this point, I put nothing past you," he said.

"What do you have for me, my favorite French person?" she asked.

"I did hear from the people in Vito's area of the city. They're down to meet. They said name the place and time and they'll be there. DJ finally got back to me. He apologized for the delay, but he said one of his kids has been really sick. The people in charge in Sal's area of the city are also down to meet. I don't know if you guys want two separate meetings or you want to combine them, but let me know when and where. I'll make sure everyone knows," he said.

"You're such a professional public servant, Chen." She glanced at the guys, then tried to turn around far enough to look at me. I surprised her by kissing her cheek. I looked at Ivan, who was holding up one finger, as was Viktor. I nodded in agreement and looked to Misha, who confirmed meeting with everyone at once would be fine. Sephie saw everything and responded to Chen. "We can meet with everyone at once. Same as last time, we'll get in touch about when and where. Thank you, once again, for being our go-between," Sephie said.

"You got it, my girl. Hey, I talked to Max last night. I stopped by the restaurant. He told me what happened. Well, most of it. I'm pretty sure his dumbass left out some important details. I don't know everything about your relationship with him, but you did the right thing. Sephie. You were always a way better friend to him than he was to you," he said.

It took her a second to respond, but she thanked him and the call ended. I handed Viktor his phone back, my hands once again moving to her hips. I felt her sigh quietly as she continued what she was doing. I kissed her neck, whispering "I love you" in her ear. She leaned her body back against me, leaning her head on mine.

"It's less likely that anyone will recognize civilians coming to meet with you. That's a normal occurrence. Should we have them come here?" Viktor asked.

"If we do, it needs to be while Armando is gone, I want him left out of all plans for the time being, until we have a chance to find out more on him," I said.

"Is he still leaving tomorrow?" Sephie asked.

"He left today. Keith let me know he had changed plans. He's moved all his meetings tomorrow to his house," Stephen said.

"Hmm. That's weird," she said.

"Did Ms. Jackson have any insight about Giana?" Viktor asked.

"Not much, but she did say she was just as ambushed as we were that day when Giana pretended to apologize to me. She's also been suspecting that Giana's been on something for a while now and she feels like Armando has to know. She said they've had dinner with her and Mr. Turner a few times and it was really obvious she was blitzed out of her mind," she said.

"She also said Glana told her that they were planning on going to Italy at the end of the month," Misha said. "So, either Armando is planning on leaving, or that's when Giana is planning on robbing him. Or both, I don't know yet."

"He's really not doing himself any favors by leaving early and he'll essentially be cutting himself off from any favor if he thinks going back to Italy right now is a good move," I said.

Sephie had come to a stopping point and wiped her hands. She turned to face me, smiling at me. "Have you talked to them about what you told me last night yet?" she asked me quietly enough that only I could hear her. When she turned to look at me, I felt her warmth spread over my body. I leaned down, kissing her quickly. I stood up, still looking at her gorgeous smile. "I think you should," she urged. She held her arm up in between us, showing me the goosebumps that were clearly visible. I kissed her once more, overcome with just how much I loved her.

I looked to the guys. "I've been thinking I should do away with all the bosses, Armando included, and run the city myself. With Sephie and you 5, I think it's possible," I said. They were silent for a few moments as they thought about what I'd just said. I was most curious about how Misha would react, honestly. As was Sephie. She turned to look at him so she could see his reaction. He had his faraway look in his eye, but then we all saw his upper body shudder as he shook off the reaction.

Sephie laughed at him. "Same, Misha. Same," she said.

Ivan's sly smile spread across his face. "Trino called this one, you know." The other guys looked to him, curious as to what he was talking about. Sephie must've told him what Trino said when we were at his island house, because I don't remember mentioning it to anyone. I felt Sephie laugh quietly. Ivan said, "This was suggested when we were at Trino's island house. Trino said the city already had their rightful King and Queen and didn't need anything else. I happen to agree with him."