

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 166

Chapter One Hundred Sixty-Six

Sephie

Adrik spent most of the afternoon talking with Trino, Martin, and Armando. They discussed options for how to take care of the other bosses, as well as how to restructure the organization to get rid of the need for the other bosses. The more that they talked, the more that I liked Trino. He was cut from the same cloth as Adrik.

Massimo's name came up in the conversation. I looked at Adrik, who gave me a slight nod, I took a deep breath and looked at Trino. "Trino, I know what happened to Mateo." I started to fidget with my hands as I continued. "All of the bosses used to meet once a month at the restaurant I used to work at. They always requested me to serve them, so I would overhear, well, everything. Regularly, Dario and Massimo would stay after everyone else was gone and have their own meeting. I overheard them talking about Mateo and I was curious, because I'd never heard that name before. Massimo told Dario that he'd had Mateo taken care of and dumped in the normal spot. For what it's worth, it was the only time that I ever saw Dario get angry with Massimo. He was scared. At the time, I didn't know about you or even Ghost, so I don't know if Dario was scared of Massimo, you, or Ghost. Or all of you."

Trino was silent for a few moments. I could see the emotions as he felt them. He went through all of them, quickly. He stood up, walking straight to me. I tensed, as I didn't know him very well. He offered me his hand, as he knelt in front of me. "Sephie. I can't even begin to thank you for the closure you've just given me. And his mother, my sister. The not knowing was eating her." He took my hands in his and kissed each one. When he looked at me, there were tears in his eyes. I couldn't help it. I leaned forward and hugged him.

Adrik broke the silence. "Not many people know of her knowledge about the organization, but Massimo and Dario both do. That's why Massimo's people tried to grab her last week. I would like to keep it to not many people knowing about her knowledge of the organization."

Trino stood up and looked at Adrik very seriously. "Jefe, you have my word. No one will know how I came across this information outside this room."

"If you keep Sephie out of it, you're free to do whatever you like to Massimo," Adrik said.

"I kind of think this will separate Dario and Massimo, if you tell Dario that you know Massimo killed Mateo. Dario isn't as bad as Vito, but he's got a fragile psyche. You could easily shatter it. And there's a weird dynamic between Massimo and Dario. Massimo is the one that runs the show between those two, but somehow, I don't think he'll be as bold without Dario as his

cover," I said.

Trino, now returned to his seat, looked at me thoughtfully, then looked to Adrik, then back to me. "Please tell me you have a sister that loves Colombian men."

I laughed. "Sorry to disappoint. I'm an only child. But I can offer my vetting services if you'd like me to interview potential girlfriends for you."

Armando said, "I can vouch for her professional skills. I'm going to pay her to be at as many of my important meetings as possible."

Trino laughed, but that serious look came back over his face that he had while we were on the beach, like he was lost in thought, I caught Adrik's eye, to see if he noticed it as well. He nodded discreetly, pulling me closer to him.

Viktor walked into the room, looking very serious. "Boss, we've got a problem."

Adrik

We found Trino and Martin, as well as Armando, and found a quiet spot to discuss business that afternoon. Most important, was trying to come up with a plan for how to handle the other bosses in the city. I was beginning to think that I didn't need any of them, other than Armando. They were becoming more of a headache than they were a help to the organization.

"What do the people of the city think of the other bosses, Jefe?" Trino asked.

I thought for a moment. "It depends on which one, really. Armando is well liked, as he does a tremendous amount of work for the people in his area of the city. Up until recently, most of the other bosses were mostly the same, but I'm hearing reports now that Salvadori's area of the city is not happy with him. Same for Dario and Massimo's areas. Vito's people seem to be happy with him, but I'm not sure they'll stand behind him if a war breaks out in the city like they're planning. Niko's area of the city is mostly quiet now, but same as Vito. I'm not sure his people will stand behind him.

"Trino, the people of the city favor Ghost over the other bosses. Hands down. If it comes down to it, they'll stand with Ghost over any of the other bosses," Armando said. I felt Sephie squeeze my hand that was across her lap, resting on her thigh.

"This is good. If you have the support of the people, that goes a long way. That's how I inevitably took over in Colombia. The people loved me. They helped me fight the other guys that were trying to take over. There's something to be said for the popular vote, if you will," Trino said, a small smile on his face. "What about the police? Are they with you or against you?" he asked.

"Most of the precincts in the city are with me. I've made sure that the other bosses maintain order in their areas, keeping crime to a minimum. Given that we're still heavily involved in illegal businesses, the city is quite peaceful, which makes the cops' jobs incredibly easy. Violent crime is kept to a minimum. They get their cut, of course, but I have a good relationship with the commissioner. They've come to me before with funding issues and the like that I've helped them solve," I said.

"Just you or the other bosses as well?" Trino asked.

"Mostly me, when it comes to the commissioner. The other bosses deal with the local police chiefs in their areas," I said.

"I've never had a conversation with the commissioner, but I have a great relationship with the police chief in my area of the city. They would back us, I think, if it was needed," Armando added.

"I got the impression that Anthony and Lorenzo were planning something big in the city as a way to get back in. They were trying to convince me that there was already disorder in the city, with you being gone. They also tried to convince me that Mando had been killed overseas. I knew for sure that you were still alive when I met with them, jefe, but I didn't get word on Armando until a few days later when my people saw him back in the city," Trino said.

I noticed Armando was slightly surprised at this revelation. He didn't know that Trino had people in the city. None of the other bosses knew. Trino was never concerned about Armando, but he was about the other bosses, so I agreed to let him have people in the city. He was also in regular communication with some of my people. It's one reason that he's stayed so loyal to me. I'm as transparent with him as possible. I recognize his value and he recognizes mine. Mutual respect goes a long way.

I sighed. "We think they're planning on creating chaos in the city. They had a test run where they gave two guys brawn and sent them on Sephie and Misha. They've been working on a new formulation that increases the violence even more."

Trino and Martin both cursed under their breath. "I do not like this new drug, brawn. It's dangerous. It's also lethal if you take too much. Why would you want to kill your customer base? That's bad business," Martin said.

"Most of the bosses had cut it out of the city. It hasn't been around for a few years now. The dealers were forbidden to make it. Apparently, Salvadori has been quietly working on this new formulation undetected. Or maybe Anthony was working on it. That kid is off the talls," Armando said.

"Is it true he's been trafficking girls? Trino asked.

I nodded my head. "It took me a while to get confirmation on it, but he has been for some time now. He was smart about it and very discreet about it, so I didn't find out right away. He runs that operation from outside the city, with help from Lorenzo in Sicily. Apparently, when my father banished Enzo, he went to Sicily and that's how he made money and built his fortune back up. He's got networks throughout Europe."

Both Trino and Martin looked disgusted. It was a big problem, worldwide, but they wanted no part of it.

"It fits Anthony's profile, if I'm being honest. He needs to...compensate for a very significant shortcoming. He can feel powerful when he's determining someone else's fate," Sephie said