

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 185

## Chapter One Hundred Eighty-Five

Sephie

Adrik started, “tell me what you know about Sal’s plan.”

Andy sighed. “I don’t know everything. Sal has been suspecting me for months of working with you. Ever since that bracelet was a dud, he’s been accusing me of not being loyal. Well, he was right, but still. He would keep other guys with him more than me. I was rarely in the room when he would talk to Anthony or Lorenzo, but I still overheard parts of his heated conversations with them. Italians,” he said shrugging his shoulders. Adrik remained silent, allowing Andy to continue. “I happened on the warehouse where they’re making the brawn somewhat by accident. One of the other guys was supposed to make a delivery there, but he got called to go with Sal somewhere else. They needed that delivery at the warehouse to continue production that day, so he found me and asked me to do it instead. Sal didn’t know, I didn’t know what I was delivering, but as soon as I walked into the warehouse, I knew what was going on. Sal was one of the biggest producers of brawn a few years ago when it first came out. It takes a very specific setup to make. I remembered the setup and recognized it immediately. They’ve greatly increased the scale this time, though.”

As Andy talked, I could see he was somewhat nervous, but it wasn’t directed at Adrik. He was at ease with Adrik. There was another reason for his nervousness that I couldn’t place yet.

“I knew a couple of the guys guarding the warehouse, so I asked them a few questions. Told them that Sal had brought me in to oversee things, but he got called away before he could properly brief me on the operation. Most of those guys were unaware that Sal had been distancing himself from me lately, so they were happy to fill me in.” He stopped to rub his face with his hands. He leaned forward in his chair, his elbows resting on his knees. “They’ve revamped it. Made it even more dangerous.”

“They wanted to increase the aggressiveness with this formula. That’s what the guys that attacked Misha and Sephie said,” Ivan said.

Andy nodded. “That’s right. They’ve been quietly working on it for more than a year, from what I could tell. A few test runs here and there. A few people died. Those guys that were sent on Misha and Sephie, we never heard from again, so we didn’t know how successful that test was.”

“Sephie broke one guy’s face. That’s what happened to them,” Misha said, winking at me. All the guys couldn’t help but smile, like proud older brothers. I glanced at Mike, who was visibly surprised.

Andy looked at me, a look of surprise on his face as well. “Really?”

I shrugged my shoulders. “The thing about this edition of brawn is that it initially makes you aggressive, but it’s so lethal that your body is fighting to stay alive after a short period and that’s all you can focus on. It’s really only effective for a very short window and then the person either dies or passes out because they’re trying not to die. That makes you slower and gives chances for the victim to get away. Or break your face. You know, whichever. The old edition was actually much more effective. While it kept the aggression to a lower level, it was a sustained aggression over a much longer period. More damage that way.”

Adrik turned his chair toward me and opened his arm for me. He was still looking at Andy. I got up and climbed into his lap, facing Andy so I could keep watching him. There was still something he hadn’t told us yet that I was trying to figure out. Adrik wrapped his arms around my waist as I leaned back against him.

Andy laughed, shaking his head. “That would’ve been valuable information to them. From what I can tell, their plan is to replace the supply of all the other drugs with this formulation of brawn. They used to make it in pill form, but now they’re packaging it in powder form too, to pass it off as other drugs.”

“What happens when you inject it?” I asked. My fingers were starting to fidget with Adrik’s as this conversation was bringing up all the things I didn’t want to talk about normally.

“I’ve never seen it, but apparently it makes the person highly aggressive for a longer period of time before their body shuts down. It’s a quicker reaction time. Zero to rage in a minute or two. When they take the pills, it takes about half an hour for it to kick in. Those guys that attacked you had taken the pills,” Andy said. He almost looked apologetic, like it was somehow his fault for the attack on me and Misha.

“What about the plan to put it in the water in Armando’s area? How is that going to work?” Ivan asked.

Andy exhaled loudly. “Much of the product that’s at the warehouse is for Armando’s area, from what they told me. They’re planning on dosing that whole area with as high of a dose as possible to get the most chaos.”

I said quietly, “they’re planning on giving it to women and children then?”

Andy nodded his head. “One of the guys at the warehouse was against that part of the plan, but he said Sal almost killed him when he objected. He said if everyone died in Armando’s area of the city, all the better. Sal’s completely lost it. I’ve never seen him like this. He’s turned into Anthony. Anthony has always been off the rails, even as a kid. He was a mean little fucker and it just got worse as he got older. But Sal has never been like that, until recently. I don’t know what changed, but it wasn’t good, whatever it was.”

We all sat in silence as we absorbed what Andy had just told us. I felt Adrik’s anger, without even needing to look at him. I kept fidgeting with his fingers, lightly, trying to keep him as calm as possible.

“What about the dealers? Do they know what’s going on?” Adrik asked.

“I’m not sure. I think they’ve talked to a few of them in certain areas, but not many. I think they’re planning on just replacing the supply, thinking no one will notice. The warehouse is at the docks, where the normal shipments come in. They’re planning on hijacking the normal shipment and replacing it with theirs. They have it packaged to look like the normal shipment so no one will be the wiser,” Andy said.

“What else is around the warehouse?” Adrik asked. He had moved one hand partially under my shirt, where no one could see, and his thumb was lightly rubbing back and forth on my bare skin, trying to keep himself calm.

“Not much that’s being used, from what I saw. It’s in a mostly abandoned section. The thing about manufacturing brawn is you need to be isolated. Part of the process produces a unique smell that’s unmistakable, but it’s also highly volatile until the process is complete,” Andy said.

Adrik looked to Ivan at the same time that Ivan looked to Adrik. I knew they had the same thought. I looked at Ivan, then turned to look at Adrik. “You boys are going to ask nicely, aren’t you?” I asked them both, in Russian. All the guys laughed while everyone else looked confused.

Andy still looked like he was holding something back. While the guys were somewhat distracted, I looked at Andy, “there’s still something you’re not telling us, isn’t there?”

Andy looked at me, then looked at the floor. The mood suddenly shifted in the room, as Ivan sat up straighter and so did Adrik.

“That day that you think Massimo’s guys tried to grab you? It was ret Massimo’s guys. They were Sal’s guys, made to look like they belonged to Massimo. I was part of that operation.