

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 262

Chapter Two Hundred Sixty-Two

Sephie

I walked through the bedroom into Adrik's office to find him at his desk. He was engrossed in the papers in front of him, so he didn't notice me. I stopped at the doorway. We'd been able to feel each other enough lately that I wanted to experiment with it, just to see what would happen.

He had a hatred of shirts when we were at the house that I happened to love. I stood in the doorway, watching him contemplate whatever he was thinking about, my own thoughts turning to just how much I loved him. I felt the warmth start to spread through my body that was present anytime I thought about him and I pushed it to him, seeing if he would notice,

He inhaled sharply, then immediately looked up to find me. He noticed. I was still leaning against the doorway, a small smile on my lips while I experimented. As soon as he looked at me, the warmth grew to an intense desire for him, which I also pushed toward him. His sexy smirk told me he could feel it, loud and clear.

He stood up, closing the distance between us quickly. "Why do you pick right now to do this to me?" he asked. One arm went around my waist, as he pulled me with him. He closed his office door behind him as he walked us quickly to the bathroom. I couldn't help but giggle. "I don't like time constraints with you," he said, his voice husky. "But I do like any chance I have to see you na ked."

"We've already established that I'm terrible at denying you," I said as I pulled my shirt over my head.

He cursed under his breath as I continued to shed my clothes. He walked to the shower, turning it on for me. "How was your run, love?" he asked as he jumped onto the bathroom counter to watch me.

"Good. We both needed it, I think," I said, stepping into the shower.

"Yeah? How so?"

"Misha's still mad at Giana and I'm mad at Armando. We needed the stress relief," I said.

"It surprises me how angry Misha got with Giana. He's normally such a happy guy, but he's clearly still angry with her. He's very protective of you, solnishko," a sly smile creeping across his face. "Are you still angry with Armando because of what we talked about last night or is there something more?"

I sighed, but didn't answer right away. Instead, I put my face under the water. When I finally turned to look at him, he said, "there's more, isn't there? Did Misha tell you about his inappropriate comments in Italy?" I nodded my head. "How bad was it?" he asked. I could tell he was trying not to get too upset.

"It doesn't make me like him any more at the moment. I'm sure there have been worse things said

Hit me before, but it does make the theory that he was thinking he had a chance with me seem more plausible," I said. I turned the water off and was met by Adrik who had a towel for me once I stepped out of the shower. He wrapped the towel around me, saying, "new technique to keep my anger in check. All bad news must be delivered while you're na ked from now on."

"That's going to make it awkward in a meeting, but okay. If you insist," I laughed.

The guys were waiting in his office when we walked in. Ivan looked at me curiously, wondering if I'd told him exactly what Armando said. I shook my head no. "Co ward," he said, laughing at me. I readily agreed with him.

Adrik had a hold of my hand and pulled me toward one of the couches. He sat down and then pulled me into his lap, so I could lean back against him. It seemed to be one of his favorite ways to have me near him. I wasn't going to argue as he kept me

WASTIL.

"I think it's time we stop all this nonsense for good. We have good intel on the brawn operations, so we know how to hit them. I want to do away with all the bosses, as well. Armando included. I haven't decided how exactly I'm going to run the entire city by myself, but I'll figure that out later. But I'm done dealing with these children," Adrik said. As he said it out loud, I felt the goosebumps rise over my entire body once again. I glanced at Misha quickly, curious how he would react as well. I saw his upper body shudder slightly. I squeezed Adrik's arms around me, knowing this was what needed to happen.

"I love a good planning session in the morning," Ivan said.

We spent the next few hours planning and talking about every possible scenario we could think of. We talked through Armando still being loyal, Armando not being loyal, and everything in between. I spent most of the rest of the morning and into the afternoon listening to the guys talk about how they were going to hit the brawn operations. I was curious how everything was going to work, but I was also worried where I fit into those plans. I'd gotten so used to never being alone. At least one of the guys was always with me. Now, I was faced with the very real possibility of having to be alone while they took care of the brawn operations. My mind was so focused on that and the sudden fear of being alone that I didn't notice my legs start to shake until Adrik pulled me closer to him. "Solnishko, what's wrong? I can feel your fear, my love. What's going on?" he whispered in my ear. I was so lost in my thoughts that it jarred me back to reality. I heard him laugh quietly as I glanced around the room. The guys were talking amongst themselves and not paying attention to us. "Talk to me," Adrik said as he leaned down and kissed my neck gently.

I shifted in his lap so I could more easily see him. As soon as I looked at him, I saw the concern grow on his face. He searched my eyes for a moment, then a small smile spread across his face. "You won't be alone, love. I haven't figured out the details yet, but I know for sure you won't be alone," he said as he kissed me gently.

"You're getting better at that," I said quietly. My fingers moved to the collar of his shirt, then to his neck. He closed his eyes briefly, enjoying my touch. When he opened them again, his deep blue eyes were sincere. "This one was easy. I have the same fear. In case you hadn't noticed, I'm afraid to leave you alone," he said. I felt the pull in my chest that he feels as I smiled at him. I rested my forehead against his as the relief washed over my body.

"Sestrichka, can you translate this for me?" Viktor asked, handing me his computer. The conversation had shifted from planning to gathering more information on Armando and his associate that I'd overheard him arguing with. Viktor was trying to find as much information on his associate as possible, but that meant much of the information was in Italian.

"Of course, Papa Bear," I said as I moved next to him on the couch. I scanned over yet another article, trying to find the valid information in it. We'd spent much of the afternoon looking for information on Armando. Viktor was now also looking to see if he'd made deals with any of the other bosses. "This one is about a housing project outside Naples. Um, looks like possible vacation rentals, as well as residential. Mando seems to keep the same investors around him. Giana's father is on this one." I kept reading and came across a new name. "Oh, well, that's interesting," I said. I looked up from the computer to find everyone waiting for me to finish. "It seems Salvadori is branching out into Italian real estate."

There was a collective groan, along with quiet cursing as they all tried to contain their anger at finding out Armando had made at least one deal with Salvadori.

"If they've made one deal, there's a good chance there's more," Viktor said. I handed his computer back to him.

"If anyone can find more deals, it's you, Papa Bear."

Stephen's phone beeped, then beeped again, then beeped again. He looked at the incoming messages. "It's Keith. He's sent over what he was able to get today at Armando's house," he said. He got up to hand me his phone, along with a pair of earphones. "Here, these might help you hear the conversation better," he said. "You know, since your human hearing is inferior to mine."

"This is why you're my favorite senior citizen," I said as I moved to the table so I could write more easily.,

I went through all the recordings, listening to each one multiple times to make sure I was hearing everything correctly. I listed all the projects that Armando spoke about on the recordings and gave the highlights about what was said to Adrik. He knew

about all the projects. None of the conversation that was recorded raised any red flags. There were two meetings that Keith wasn't able to record, because Armando shut the door, but Chris was able to get a picture of the men he met with. One of them was the man we now knew as Ricardo, the man that I'd overheard Armando arguing with.

"Viktor, what if Ricardo is the missing link?" I asked. Viktor looked at me, somewhat puzzled. "What if he's the go-between. Can you find any deals he's made with the other bosses? Like what if he's the silent partner in all this? It might not look like he has a hand in the illegal side of things, but he invests so much in the legitimate side that he has a say in the illegal side." Viktor just raised his eyebrow as he thought about the question, then returned to his computer and started yet another search.