

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 265

## Chapter Two Hundred Sixty-Five

Sephie

Viktor walked in first, with Dario behind him, and Ivan and Stephen behind Dario. “Any problems?” Adrik asked Viktor.

“None. Everything was quiet. Only your people at the airport. They put a different flight path on the paperwork, so no one will know that plane came from Colombia,” Viktor said. He walked past Adrik to sit down with Andrei, Misha, and I. I stood up quietly to hug him. They were only gone for a short time, but I was always relieved when they came back safe. The smile on Viktor’s face when I went to hug him told me that he felt the same relief. He hugged me tightly, kissing the top of my head, before sitting down.

Ivan and Stephen had walked around Dario, who was talking to Adrik. Each of them hugged me before finding a seat as well. Stephen whispered, “it’s bad,” in my ear as he hugged me. I looked at him, surprised, but said nothing. I took my usual spot behind Adrik’s desk so I could see Dario as he talked.

He looked like he’d aged at least ten years since the last time I saw him. His once salt and pepper hair was now much more salt than it was pepper. Dario had always been clean-shaven before. He was an older man, probably in his 60s, but I never thought he looked bad for his age. Now, however, he looked much older than 60, especially with his white facial hair growing in. He had a nervous look to him, like he was legitimately afraid for his life.

Dario had been a quiet man in the meetings. He rarely argued with the other bosses, but they rarely argued with him. I was never sure if it was because they were scared of him or Massimo. He exuded a quiet confidence in the meetings. The man sitting before us now was in no way confident. His eyes darted around the room like he was waiting for something to happen.

Adrik noticed the change in him and caught my eye as I walked past his desk. My eyes went wide as I walked past him, knowing no one else could see me. He gave me a knowing look as he looked back toward Dario. Adrik usually liked to make people nervous by staying quiet, but he chose to speak first this time, trying to put Dario’s nerves at ease. “Dario, Trino tells me you’d like to get out,” he said quietly,

Dario looked to Adrik, then glanced around the room again. His eyes never stayed on one thing for very long. He looked to me, then back to Adrik, then the door, the couches, each one of the guys, back to me. He nodded his head, his eyes still darting around the room. “I just want to be left alone. I won’t bother anyone. I can disappear. I’ve been planning it for years. No one will find me,” he said.

“You’ve been planning it for years?” Adrik asked. “How do you know no one else knows about it if you’ve been planning it that long?” Adrik’s tone of voice was similar to one he’d have with a young child.

“I haven’t told anybody where I’m going. They can try to look for me, but they won’t find me,” he said.

“But you’ve told people you’re going to disappear?” Adrik asked.

Dario nodded his head. “I told Sal. My kids don’t want any part of the business. They’ve been estranged from me for years. After they found out what Massimo did to my parents and that I stayed with him after I found out, they left. I haven’t spoken to them in years. I don’t even know where they are now,” he paused, like the weight of what he’d just said was hitting him. He started to speak, but stopped himself. Instead, he just sighed. “I was going to turn my part of the city over to Sal and disappear.

“Why didn’t you come to me or my father about what Massimo did to you?” Adrik asked.

Dario’s eyes darted to Adrik. He looked scared. “Massimo would’ve found out. Sal told me that you wouldn’t do anything anyway. He was very adamant that I shouldn’t come to you. He told me you would punish me.” He looked to the floor quickly. He stared at the floor for a few moments.

“Apparently Massimo isn’t the only one that’s been f—king with his mind,” I said in Russian.

“Dario, I wouldn’t have punished you. You did nothing wrong. Massimo is the one that killed your parents. Why would you get punished for that?” Adrik said.

“Sal was very adamant,” Dario said quietly.

“Did Sal threaten you against coming to me, Dario?”

Dario’s eyes darted up to Adrik. He didn’t need to answer. The look on his face told us everything we needed to know. I heard Adrik curse quietly under his breath. I knew exactly how he felt in that moment.

“Dario, do you know anything about what Sal has been planning in the city?” Ivan asked. While Ivan usually sounded like he was low-key threatening you with his words, his voice was soft when he spoke to Dario. He sounded like he did when he would talk to me, especially when I was upset.

Dario was quiet for a moment. He looked like he was having an internal struggle. His leg started bouncing up and down. He chewed on his nails. I knew he was anxious, but I honestly didn’t know how to give him any comfort right now. I stood up and moved closer to him. I thought maybe the fact that I was the only woman in the room, it might help him to feel at ease. I moved to the front of Adrik’s desk, in front of Dario, but still so Adrik could see him. “We can protect you, Dario. We can give you a safe place. No one knows you’re here. Not even Sal. We know that Massimo hurt you. He’s a very bad man. Sal, too. They’re both bad men. We want to protect you from them,” I said. I felt like I was talking to a child, but by the looks of him, he couldn’t handle much more.

His bouncing leg slowed. His gaze was fixed on a spot on the floor beside me, but I considered it progress that his eyes weren’t darting around the room. He slowly lifted his gaze to me, like he was seeing me for the first time since he came into the office. “I remember you. You were always at the restaurant. Sal and Armando were fighting over you when Ghost came back,” he said.

I tried to keep my own anger from rising to the surface at the thought of Sal and Armando thinking they had any kind of right or access to me. “The delusions of Sal and Armando thinking they ever had any kind of chance with me aren’t important right now, Dario. Do you know anything about Sal’s plans? What he’s planning with Anthony and Lorenzo?” I asked. I glanced behind Dario at the guys. They were all tense at this new revelation.

Dario nodded his head. “Yeah, I know. Sal brags a lot. Almost as much as Massimo,” he said.

“Will you tell me what his plans are?” I asked, still trying to be as soft and quiet as I could. Dario looked at me once more. This time, he actually looked at me. He studied my face, my hair. For a few minutes, he just looked at me. I felt Adrik getting tense behind me. He was not a fan of other men looking at me, but I didn’t get the feeling that Dario was having any kind of inappropriate thoughts. It felt like he was stuck in a memory as he looked at me. I discreetly motioned to Adrik to stay calm and to let it happen.

“You remind me of my daughter. She doesn’t have red hair, but she’s about your age. She’s beautiful like you though. At least she was the last time I saw her. You know, I’m glad she got away. I’m glad she’s not in this life. Sal was starting to look at her, too. You know he traffics girls, right? He blamed it on Anthony, but it was his idea. Lorenzo got him into it. Sal is a dirty old man. Anthony is just like him. Sal puts on a show in front of people, but he’s just as bad as Massimo. That’s how he knew about Massimo all these years. They recognize the evil in each other. Sal wants to take over the city. The only good thing about his plan is that he wants to get rid of Massimo. All the other bosses are helping him. You know that, right?” Dario asked. He was looking at me the whole time he was talking. I wanted to keep him talking as much as I could,

“Even Armando? He’s helping Sal?” I asked.