

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 343

Chapter Three Hundred Forty-Three

Adrik

“We all hate her, but oddly enough, most of my hate for her died with Tori. I can’t explain it, but I’m pretty apathetic toward Giana since the night I killed Tori. I think I’m the only one that can objectively talk to her and find out what she knows. Everyone else is still carrying heavy anger toward her. Rightfully so, don’t get me wrong. Not judging anybody else here. I just can’t say the same now,” he said.

Sephie and I both looked at Misha, expecting to get confirmation. We could see the look of disgust on his face. “You’re not getting anything from me on her. Sorry,” he said.

Sephie laughed. “Bubba’s right. Misha’s clearly not over her yet.”

“I’m not saying she deserves to be passed around like she has been, but she still deserves most of what she gets,” Misha said.

“I rest my case,” Andrei said, crossing his arms across his chest. I looked at my watch. It was still early enough that he could go talk to her. I looked at him and Viktor. “Go. See what you can find out,” I said. They both nodded once, leaving the penthouse.

“Before they get back, who’s got her knowing what’s been happening all along? Show of hands,” Stephen said, raising his hand. Ivan and Misha also raised their hands. Stephen looked at me and Sephie, asking, “so, you two think she’s just a pawn, then?”

I’m so

“She might’ve known part of the plan. Like I’m sure she knew she was supposed to try and get close to me. Which, sidebar, I have to say grateful to not be a normal girl. If I would’ve had to listen to her divulge details about her and Armando’s s*x life, I might’ve stabbed myself in the eye. But I don’t think she knew she was being ‘given’ to Armando and I don’t think she knows she’s being ‘given’ to Martin either,” Sephie said.

“I agree with Sephie. I think she only knew minimal details. I don’t think she realizes she’s been a pawn this entire time. I think she thinks she has more control over her destiny than she actually does,” I said. “The bigger question is what we do with her, especially if she hasn’t known she’s been a pawn. It’ll be easy if she’s known all along, but I’m at a loss on what to do with her if she hasn’t.”

“Normal people don’t have to deal with these kinds of questions,” Sephie said under her breath. She looked at me, grinning. Her eyes were clearly all green. She recognized the look on my face. She closed her eyes briefly. When she opened them again, they were normal once again. She was already beginning to get a handle on their new tricks. The only one that seemed to still catch her off guard was when she felt fear. She’d always struggled to control that emotion when she felt it, but I had a feeling it was because she never really let herself feel it.

When you’re fighting for your life, you can’t let the fear take over. She’d gotten so good at ignoring her fear in order to get through whatever was happening to her that now she didn’t know what to do with the fear when it would come up for her. That’s likely why it was such a strong reaction and why it changed her eyes to a completely different color. She had years of fear bottled up inside, waiting to be expressed.

It seemed silly to think about, but it made me happy that she finally felt safe enough to be able to feel her fear. While I never wanted her to fear anything, I wanted her to know she was safe enough to feel anything she needed to feel. That included fear, as odd as that seemed. She was safe.

She quietly walked back to me, noticing me lost in my thoughts once more. She wrapped her arms around my waist, smiling sweetly at me. “I know what you’re thinking again,” she said. As she looked at me, I saw her eyes turn completely blue. The normal deepest depth of the ocean blue that was always present when her eyes were normal. The same blue that meant she was thinking about how much she loved me. I stood there, completely lost in her gaze for a few moments. I brushed a few curls from her face, feeling completely overwhelmed with just how much she meant to me.

While everything around us seemed to be completely falling apart, I had never been more sure about her. About our relationship. About her feelings for me. Or about my feelings for her. She was my anchor in the chaos. I knew, without a doubt, that she would be by my side through every single thing I had to endure. Until my last breath.

She grinned at me. “Plus infinity. Plus one,” she said, pressing her lips gently to mine. Of course, she read my mind. I wrapped my arms around her, picking her up off the floor. She smiled against my lips. “I love you,” she said quietly, giggling softly.

“I love you, Sephie. More than I ever thought possible,” I said, as I set her down. Andrei and Viktor walked back into the penthouse. It was difficult to read their expressions.

“What’s the verdict?” Ivan asked.

Andrei sighed. “I don’t think she knows she’s been used this whole time. It’s actually kind of sad.”

“How do you know for sure?” Stephen asked.

“I didn’t want her to know that we know about Martin, but I figured Armando was fair game, I also figured it would be fun to f**k up their plans just a bit, so I told her Armando was dead. I asked her where she wanted us to send her,” he said. “She did get emotional about Armando. She hasn’t asked about him, but at least to me, it looked like a genuine response.”

“She might’ve been worried for her own fate more than sorry about Armando, but there was emotion there, at the very least,” Viktor said.

“Once she got over that, she got excited. She asked us to send her back to Italy and she wanted to know how soon she could leave. She started talking about seeing her family again and how excited she was to be going back,” Andrei said.

“Given that she switches to Italian when she gets excited, I recorded her so Sephie could tell us what she said,” Viktor said, pulling his phone from his pocket. He started the recording so we could all hear, handing the phone to Sephie so she could replay anything she needed to hear again.

We could hear her get emotional after Andrei lied to her about Armando. Then we heard her excitement when he asked where she wanted to go. She started speaking quickly, half in English, half in Italian before she switched completely to Italian. Sephie stopped the recording. “She’s saying that she’s going to Italy and that Martin can meet her there, although she never says his name. She calls him ‘mio amato. Um, it’s like saying ‘my beloved,’ she said. “Unless she has someone else she’s sending risqué texts to, I’m going to assume she’s talking about Martin.” She started the recording again, listening to the last bit of the conversation. “She’s saying how happy she is that no one is going to get hurt and once he comes to Italy they can disappear from there. F**k, she actually thinks he’s gonna save her,” she said.

I could feel Sephie’s fear coming on strongly again, although I couldn’t figure out why. I reached for her, just as she looked up at me revealing her almost white eyes again. Ivan was standing next to me. He moved closer to her, almost like he wanted to protect her, and caught a glimpse, but she quickly looked at him and shook her head no, discreetly. He looked away immediately as she buried her face in my shoulder. I suspected that Ivan was beginning to be able to feel her fear, even at lower levels as well, as she didn’t give any outward signs of anything being wrong, but I could feel she was inwardly in complete turmoil. She kept her face hidden against my shoulder, but said, “what if she finds out and refuses to go to Martin? What if they sell her to teach her a lesson?”