

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 488

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488

Sephle

We were all in Adrik's office, waiting for Viktor to bring Dario back. Everyone was still tired from our late night with Trino the night before, but we'd all been on edge about Dario ever since Stephen brought it up. 1, for one, was happy to get it checked off the list of things we needed to be worrying

about.

Viktor walked in with Dario a few minutes later. He looked much better than the last time I'd seen him. He had shaved his heard; his hair was neater, He looked a little happier than last time. I caught myself studying him more closely as he walked in the office. I watched Adrik as he shook hands with him, not seeing anything out of the ordinary.

Viktor had said that Dario had been grateful the entire time he'd been at the building. He never complained. He always asked the guards that were on him to send word to Adrik that he appreciated everything. He was really happy to get moved to a better room over the weekend, telling the guards he liked the bed better in the new room. He'd requested a few books to read, but otherwise, he was quiet and kept to himself.

The last time we saw him, he looked frightened. Scattered, even. He couldn't focus on one thing for very long. I was surprised when he wouldn't look at any of us in the eyes for very long. It took me a bit to get him to look at me when we talked to him before. This time, he seemed more confident again. Calmer. It seemed like his time away from Massimo had been good for him.

He greeted everyone politely, taking a seat across from Adrik's desk. I was on the cabinet behind his desk in my favorite spot to watch people. I glanced at Ivan when Dario sat down. He shook his head no.

"I can't see anything. He doesn't even have anything hanging around him," he told me.

Andrei shared what he was seeing. Surprisingly, his aura didn't look that bad. It was in need of repair, but compared to the man we'd seen before, 1 was surprised at how strong his aura was this time.

I didn't feel Misha's nausea, either, which was also a favorable sign for Dario,

"How are things working out with the other bosses?" Dario asked. He'd been kept in the dark about everything that had happened with the other bosses. He didn't know about any of it.

Adrik inhaled deeply. "There are only three left, along with Ricardo."

Dario chuckled. "What of Lorenzo?"

"Dead."

"What three are left, if you don't mind my asking?"

"Niko, Vito, and Sal."

Dario was quiet for a few moments. He looked visibly relieved to learn that Massimo was no longer among the living. "What happened to Massimo?"

"Trino lit him on fire and threw him off a cliff," I said, flatly.

Dario clearly didn't believe me at first. He thought I was joking.

"She's telling the truth. I can show you the video if you like," Adrik said.

"I would, actually, I think that's a fitting end to the horrors that man caused during his life," Dario said.

Adrik scrolled through his phone to find the video and tossed it to Dario. He replayed it several times, obviously enjoying it."

"I never thought I would outlive him," he said, almost in a whisper.

"What do you know about Ricardo De Luca?" Adrik asked.

"He's close with Armando. Always has been. I think Sal has done business with him as well. There was always something about him that Massimo didn't like, so we kept our business with him to a minimum. He was never into the illegal side of things, from what I know," Dario said.

"Did Massimo ever say what it was he didn't like about him?" Ivan asked.

"No, not specifically. It was much the same as with Sal. It

like Massimo didn't want competition. He enjoyed knowing he was the most evil."

"What do you know about Anthony? Did you know his mother? Was Sal with her or was she just a fling that resulted in pregnancy?" I asked.

Dario looked directly at me for a moment before he answered. "You already suspect something or you wouldn't be asking me. Anthony wasn't Sal's kid. He was Massimo's kid. Massimo was married at the time that his mistress got pregnant. She tried to break up his marriage, so he cut her off to get back at her. Sal found out and took her in. Raised Anthony as his own, just to have insurance against Massimo. He told Massimo he would kill Anthony if he ever tried to move against him."

"But how did that work? If Massimo cut Anthony's mother off, why would he care if Sal killed Anthony? Misha asked.

"It was more the principal of it for Massimo. Not that he had any love for Anthony. He just didn't want to live a life knowing that Sal had killed one of his children," Dario said.

"Wow," I said, under my breath. "Did Anthony know Massimo was his real father?"

"That, I don't know. He should've at least suspected. He didn't look anything like Sal's other kids. He did look like Massimo's other kids."

"How many other kids did Massimo have?" I asked.

"Two others beside Anthony. One girl, one boy. Neither were interested in the business, Last I knew. Both are spoiled completely rotten and just want to spend money without having to work to earn it."

"What about Sal? How many kids does he have, besides Anthony?" Ivan asked.

"Sal has a lot of kids and grandkids, too. He started having kids when he was still young, so he has quite a few with a few kids of their own now." He thought for a moment, like he was counting in his head. "I think he has 10 kids, unless I've forgotten one. Anthony makes 11,"

"No, he has 10 kids. Along with the one less brother," I said.

"Really?" Dario looked to Adrik, who confirmed my statement. "Huh. How did Sal take that?"

"Not well. He fled to Italy, with Niko and Vito close behind him," Adrik said.

"What of their underbosses?"

"They've basically abandoned the bosses they work for. They stopped collecting taxes very shortly after the three bosses left. They all heard what happened to Anthony, Lorenzo, and Massimo. They all knew that no one has seen you or Armando in months. They're scared," Adrik said.

"Is Armando dead too?" Dario asked.

"Yes," Adrik said. We decided it would just be easier to tell everyone that he was dead rather than come up with an excuse for what happened to him. Saying "he's locked in his body with a demon being horrifically tortured until his body dies" just didn't seem like a plausible answer to the question of where Armando was,

"You work quick," Dario said. "I can't say I'm disappointed about that."

"Anything strange?" Adrik asked everyone silently.

"Nothing from me. He doesn't even have anything hanging around him," Ivan said.

"Nothing from me. I checked. He really will live a quiet life if we let him go. Nobody will ever see him again," Misha responded.

"He could use Viktor, but I found nothing that warranted worry. He's actually much better this time than he was last time we talked to him," Andrei said.

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"I agree with Andrei. I think giving him hope again helped him cope with everything he's been through. I don't get anything had from him at all. Bubba, can you check with Stephen?" I asked, since Andrei was sitting close to Stephen. He leaned over and brushed Stephen's arm. Stephen shook his head no. He looked to me, giving me a quick thumbs up.

"You're still going to be able to leave once this is over. I can't tell you how long it will take, though. Ricardo is a different sort of monster. It's as much for your safety that I'm keeping you here as it is anything else," Adrik said.

"I can get information from Sal, if you need it. He'll think he's going to get my area of the city if he helps me. I can tell him I got away from Trino and have been in hiding. I'm happy to help speed this process along as much as I can, Dario said.

"He really does want to help, not just because he wants to disappear. He wants payback from Sal. I'm not entirely sure why yet though," Andrei said, silently

I started to fish further in Dario's head, looking for the answer to that question.