

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 87

## Chapter Eighty-Seven

Sephie

Once we all sat down at the table, Armando's staff started bringing us food. I've never been more excited in my life. I'd been able to eat so little over the past month, I just wanted to eat all the food in front of me. Conversation was optional, as far as I was concerned. I was grateful that the men did most of the talking, allowing me to listen, observe, and most importantly eat.

Adrik was comfortable with Armando. More comfortable than I'd seen him with other bosses. He was tense with other bosses, but not with Armando. Maybe it was their closeness in age that made him more relatable. Adrik was still barely 30, compared to Armando's early 40s. Adrik had taken over from his father when he was very young, making it even more impressive that he'd kept order as long as he had. Maybe it was that Armando was just a good human. He was as much a legitimate businessman as he was a mobster. He used the profits from his illegal ventures to fund his legal ones, just like Adrik did. He helped his community, he gave back to the people in his area, and he cared about their well-being. He had strict rules that he lived by, which was admirable.

This situation with Anthony, Lorenzo, and Salvadori bothered Armando deeply. He looked stressed when talking about it with Adrik. He looked bothered by their actions, bothered that the two other bosses had gone to Salvadori's side.

"I can mostly understand Niko siding with Salvadori. He's always been a bit of a snake and only looks out for himself. But I was troubled by Vito siding with them," Armando told Adrik.

"I think they have something over Vito and that's why he went with them," Adrik responded. "Vito has never been very strong-willed. They're likely lying to him about whatever it is, but Vito is easily scared. Therefore, he's easily controlled."

My curiosity was piqued. "Vito is middle-aged, black hair, clean-shaven?"

Armando and Adrik both nodded. Armando added, "he always sat closest to the door at the meetings. He insisted on that spot every time. He's very OCD about these things."

I remembered Vito. "He taps his fingers together, like he's counting, when he's talking and when he's listening. Five taps for good outcomes, three taps for bad outcomes," I said. "When he's especially nervous, he taps continuously with one hand and will obsessively scratch his head with the other."

Adrik smiled at me, knowing I was right, but also knowing it was something that no one else had likely ever noticed. Armando looked at me, surprised. "How do you know this?"

Adrik answered before I could. I happily shoved another forkful of pasta into my mouth. "Her observation skills are next level, Mando. She told me what both Salvadori and Niko do when they're lying. She was 100% correct."

Armando swore under his breath. "I could use your services for my business deals. I've been screwed by a couple of politicians because I found out too late they were lying to me."

Adrik chuckled. "I've threatened to give her a job doing just that."

I cut my eyes over at him, remembering how I responded the last time he brought it up. I raised my eyebrow, wondering if he also remembered. He added, laughing, "she's not sure I can afford her, though." I grinned at him, while chewing my next bite of pasta.

Armando, his eyes slightly wide, added, "I'll pay you whatever you want. You should come to my business meeting in two days. This project is one that will benefit the city, but it needs approval. I have a feeling they're going to try and screw me over once again."

I just looked at Adrik. He looked at me, a question in his eyes. I knew he was wondering if I wanted to do it. I held his gaze but said nothing. It was his decision, as far as I was concerned. I wasn't sure I would be of any real help meeting someone just once anyway. He looked to Armando, "she doesn't go anywhere without me."

Armando nodded eagerly, "of course, of course. Your men will be there too. I can bring you in as a business partner. It's a lucrative deal. But I need to know what their intentions are, otherwise, I'm going to lose money again and I don't want that happening."

Adrik glanced at me once more. I shrugged my shoulders. He glanced at Misha, raising an eyebrow, silently asking for his thoughts. Misha nodded his head, meaning he didn't have a bad feeling about it. Adrik looked to Armando and agreed. I looked at Misha, who had a look of surprise on his face. I winked at him, grinning.

After dinner, I asked Armando to show me around his villa. He was so close to the water you could see the sea from his back patio. I wanted to walk along the beach, but tonight was not the time for that. I felt a moment of sadness at not being able to torture Misha with a run along the beach while we were here.

Adrik was by my side the whole time. He was normally quieter around people outside our little group. I noticed it about him early on. The less he talked, the more others would talk. It's a great strategy to get people to tell you too much. Armando was happy to fill the silence, telling me about his place, what his plans for this city were, as well as back home. He always seemed like such a genuine man, who clearly cared for the people in his city. It was easy to see why the people loved him.

We got back to our room later. I was exhausted from the ride down as well as the walking after dinner. As soon as he closed the bedroom door, I pulled my shirt off and threw it on the floor. "Give me your shirt," I said. He raised his eyebrow, that sexy smirk on his face. "Please?" I added, smiling at him.

He walked toward me, unbuttoning his shirt. He slipped it off as he stood in front of me. He held it out behind me so I could slip my arms in it, then he buttoned it up. "I feel like I'm doing this backwards. I'm supposed to be taking your clothes off, not putting them on."

I ran my hands over his chest. "This was really just a ploy to get you to take your shirt off. If pants didn't hurt to wear right now, I'd make you give me your pants too."

He clicked his tongue. "Are you hurting, solnishko? Did we walk too much after dinner?" He led me to the bed. He unbuttoned my jeans, unzipping them, but then waited for me to carefully slide them over my hip. He pushed me gently onto the bed, carefully pulling them the rest of the way off. He ran his hands lightly over my legs, as he leaned over me. He gently kissed me, his hands in my hair.

I really wish I didn't hurt in every part of my body right