

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 86

Chapter Eighty-Six

Adrik

I was looking forward to seeing Armando again. He was always a pleasant man. Honest, ton. He came to me straight away after Salvadori had approached him. Sephie liked him best out of all the bosses, too. She said he was always the most respectful of her. A few times he had even helped her clean up after the meeting was over. She had a feeling it was because he wanted to set her up with one of his sons, but she appreciated the help anyway. She did say his sons were the least obnoxious of all the bosses' children.

He was closer in age to me than he was to the other bosses. Maybe that's why he felt more loyal to me. He was instrumental in helping to sway the people's opinions of my organization. He said he didn't see a need for violence when keeping the peace was so much easier.

Most importantly, I asked Sephie what his tell was before we went to dinner. She thought for a moment, as she was getting dressed. I enjoyed watching her lost in thought, still half naked in front of me. She pulled her shirt over her head, slowly. "He doesn't have one. He's the only one. Maybe that's why I always liked him. I always thought he was honest and genuine. Like you are."

"You're sure he doesn't have one?"

"I'm sure, but I'll pay attention at dinner to make sure I just haven't forgotten something. My brain isn't exactly operating at peak performance right now."

"You do seem better since you started taking the ibuprofen, though. We should've done that after you were attacked instead of those pain pills."

"Yeah, I don't know why I couldn't think of it then. Guess I hit my head harder than I thought."

I frowned, thinking about the abuse this poor woman had taken over the last few years. She was so flippant about it sometimes, but she had survived very serious situations that any of us would've struggled to get through. And she was smiling and telling jokes through it all.

She caught me frowning and walked the few steps toward me. She still had a limp, but it was better when the superprofen was fresh. She started to button my shirt, leaving the top two open how I liked. She placed her hands on my chest and stood on her toes to kiss me. I wanted to pull her to me. I wanted to kiss her passionately. I wanted to skip dinner and lock ourselves in this room. As if she knew what I was thinking, her hands grabbed mine and she wrapped my arms around her waist. "It doesn't hurt when you hold me here," she said, moving her arms around my neck. I pulled her to me, kissing her. I was still timid at first, but she deepened the kiss, giving me permission. I held her tighter, kissing her like she was the air I needed. She moaned softly in my mouth, her breaths coming quicker. She pressed her body even closer to mine, causing me to groan. I wanted her so badly. She broke the kiss, pressing her forehead to mine, trying to calm herself down.

"We should go now. Or we're not going to leave this room for a few days."

I cursed under my breath but grabbed her hand and turned toward the door, knowing she was completely right.

Armando was waiting for us when we went out for dinner. The guys had already arrived. They were all waiting for us.

Sephie walked in, looking at Armando. "Please forgive us for being late. I'm a little slow right now." She had that smile that could melt hearts of stone on her face as she said it.

"Oh, my dear. You take as long as you need. The guys here told me what happened." His hand went over his mouth, trying to cover his laughter. "I can't believe you broke my guy's face. He's never going to live that one down."

"Tell him to work on his communication skills next time and that won't happen," she said, folding her arms across her chest. Her smile fading quickly, replaced by a very serious look on her face. She may have forgiven all of us, but she clearly had not forgiven Armando's men.

Armando burst out laughing. "I will personally see to it that he gets that message." He walked to her, offering his hand. She took it. He kissed the back of her hand. "In all seriousness, my dear. How are you? Do you need anything? I hear you've had quite the time the last few days."

She smiled at him once again. "I'm okay. Thank you, though. And thank you for your hospitality. Your house is lovely."

He smiled broadly. "Ah, this house is one of my favorite places. I must show you around after dinner. This is why I spend almost as much time here as I do in the city," he said, winking at her.

"I would love that, thank you."

Afmando looked to me, extending his hand for me to shake. "Boss, I'm honored to have you here, sir. Come, let us feast!" he said, showing us the way. He had a long table outside in the courtyard set up for all of us. His staff waiting to take care of every need.

I glanced to Sephie. The breeze was light, but almost constant. I was worried about her getting cold again. "Do you want a jacket, my love? I can run get you one."

"Yes please," she said, smiling sweetly at me. I excused myself and ran back to our room. When I came back, they were all laughing, and her cheeks were flushed. "What did I miss?" I asked, holding my jacket open for her so she could easily slide her arms in.

Andrei said, "Armando said he had wanted to hook Sephie up with one of his sons, but he didn't believe his sons were smart enough or strong enough to handle her. I told him what she did to all of us on the plane to really drive his point home."

"A redhead named for the queen of the Underworld is not for the faint of heart, Armando," I said, smiling. "She can walk through hell unscathed, taming monsters to her will as she goes."

Sephie looked up at me, somewhat surprised at my words. I meant every word. Her eyes were searching mine as I smiled at her with every ounce of love I had for her. Armando glanced between us. "I see now that my attempts to set her up with my son were futile. She was always meant for greater things."