

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 156

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Six

Sephie

Both Ivan and Andrei made considerable progress the rest of the week and chiring the weekend. Amtrei stopped wearing his sling a few days after coming home from the hospital. He said being able to move his arm and shoulder felt better than keeping it still all day long. I would still yell at him for trying to use it too much too soon, but he really was healing remarkably fast.

Ivan was slightly slower, but his wound was also considerably worse. He was still heavily bandaged because of the extensive stitches. Before he left the hospital, they told him to have his bandage changed and the stitches checked over the weekend.

Clearly, that was going to be an issue for him.

“I don’t know, Ivan. I can change your bandage, but I’m a little paranoid about checking your stitches. You had so much damage.

What if I miss something important?” I asked, trying to figure out if he could handle seeing a doctor one more time,

He laughed. “Says the girl that misses nothing.” I squinted my eyes at him. “You’ll be able to tell if there’s something going on in there that needs to be looked at. If it looks bad, I’ll go to a doctor,” he said, reluctantly. He paused, then added, “as long as you go with me.”

Smiling, I rested my chin on his good shoulder. “I’ll always go with you, Ivan He rested his head gently on mine. “Do we have everything we need to wrap you back up again? I don’t think you need to go without a bandage and sling like Bubba quite yet.”

He nodded. “Viktor made sure to pick up everything. He knew there was a very slim chance I would go back to see the doctor, like instructed.”

I grinned. Viktor was like the father of the group. He quietly went about making sure everyone had everything they needed. He oversaw all the security, kept Adrik’s schedule, and was even helping Armando create his own security force. Papa Bear.

Ivan’s stitches looked quite good once I got his bandage removed. “Dr. Williams did a much better job on your arm than I did on your back,” I said, laughing as I inspected his arm.

“Your stitches kept me from having to go to the hospital, so I’d say they were infinitely better as far as I’m concerned,” he said, cutting his eyes at me.

“Squishy logic for the win, ladies and gentlemen.” I sighed, “I think you’re going to live, Super Squish. Everything looks good from what I can tell. I would tell you to let me know if anything starts to hurt, but I don’t think that would do any good.”

“I can feel it when it starts to heal. It itches,” he said.

“Really? That’s surprising. So, it’s just the pain that you don’t feel? Like you can feel everything else?” I asked, curious how it worked.

He nodded his head. “Some pain I can feel. Like when you poke me in the ribs. I feel that. Severe pain, I don’t feel. Everything else, I can feel. Pleasure I can feel”

“I was Loday years old when I learned that I was secretly curious about that,” I said, grinning at him. “Now I know,” I said, working on bandaging his arm again.

He looked around, making sure we were alone. “Redheads are similar, you know. You guys have an insanely high pain tolerance compared to other people. The few redheaded boys I knew in the program were put through hell to see how much they could handle. It was almost as much as me. They had weird reactions to drugs too. One boy had it the worst. The pain meds didn’t work on him at all. Like me, but he could feel all the pain. I really felt bad for that kid.”

My heart hurt for that poor child, “I didn’t know redheads were that different. I’ve only had the one surgery and I don’t remember much about it. They said I was out for a long time, but I don’t remember anything else about it. I wasn’t in the best state of mind when I woke up, so I think I blocked it out.”

“Understandable. They probably had to give you more drugs than normal to keep you under. That’s what would happen to the boys in the program. They would take at least double the amount of drugs to knock them out. It would always take them twice as long to wake up too.”

I shook my head. “Those poor kids.” I finished his bandage in silence, thinking about everything he had to endure in his early life, but also how I found myself silently grateful for it, as it led him to this moment. I smiled, remembering Adrik had said basically the same thing to me on the balcony so many months ago, after learning about my scars. “Ivan, I don’t think anything I can say to you about your past will make it any easier to deal with, but I’m grateful that the path you were forced to walk led you here. I can’t imagine my life without you in it.”

He looked stunned. I just smiled at him while I put away the bandage supplies, I went to throw away the old bandage. When I came back, he just pulled me to him, hugging me tightly. I rested my head against his chest, hugging him back just as tightly.

Knowing he would always keep me safe.

We were finishing tip dinner on Sunday night. Adrik looked to Ivan, raising his eyebrow, asking a silent question. Ivan nodded his head, a small smile on his face. I looked to Adrik, who also had a smile on his face. “I think we should go back to the penthouse until we leave to meet Trino,” he said, holding my gaze. There was something in his tone that told me it had already been decided, but there was clearly another reason he wanted to go back to the penthouse before we left. We’d spent almost the entire week at the house, so I was happy to go back to the penthouse, even though I was enjoying the routine we’d all settled into at the house. I was enjoying cooking dinner for everyone each night.

Stephen told me that Viktor hadn’t even put the word out that we needed a chef yet. Clearly, they were also enjoying my cooking. “Why do I feel like the decision has already been made on this?” I asked, smiling at Adrik, He gave me his boyish grin that told me there was definitely more to going back to the penthouse. I couldn’t help but laugh at him.

Viktor asked, “what do we have to do to get you to cook at the penthouse too?” He leaned back in his chair, pulling his shirt up and patting his stomach. He’d pushed it out to make himself look like he had a belly. I laughed at him, knowing he had a six-pack like all of them.

“You don’t have to do anything, Viktor. I like it. Wait until it gets colder and I don’t want to go outside. I’ll start baking. Your stomach might actually look like that come spring.”

“Worth it,” he said, smiling broadly at me