

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 22

Chapter Twenty-Two

Sephie

I found myself in a familiar old house, dirty from neglect. That smell of sweat that never seemed to go away hit my nostrils, giving me the familiar nausea that was constant the entire time I lived there.

No, no, no, no. I can't be back here. I ran away. He can't touch me. He doesn't know where I went and he's too lazy to look for me.

I hear a familiar voice in my head, screaming my name. "SEPHIE! YOU GET OUT HERE RIGHT NOW!"

I knew the routine. He was going to yell at me for some perceived slight that was, in reality, his fault, but he was too drunk to remember. I sighed, hung my head, and walked to my furious uncle. Only this time, it wasn't my uncle. It was Anthony. I froze in place when I saw it was Anthony instead of my uncle. Terror took hold. I looked around me for something I could use as a weapon, but as I was reaching for a small lamp, the scene changed completely. I was no longer in my uncle's disgusting house. I was in a chair, somewhere I'd never been before. The exposed fluorescent lights flickered above me. There was one door to the room, in front of me. I tried to get up, but realized I was tied to the chair. I started to panic.

The door opened, revealing Anthony, with a sinister look in his eye. This wasn't going to be good. He walked toward me, never taking his eyes off me. He reached out and brushed the side of my face with the back of his hand. I desperately tried to get away, just like I had tried to get away from him at the restaurant.

"Still haven't learned your lesson, I see," he said.

"We've been over this. School was not my thing. So, you tell me, who isn't getting the lesson here – me or you?"

I felt him punch me with such force that it knocked my chair backward. I was now on my back, still tied to the chair, and unable to get free. It didn't stop me from trying to get free, but my attempts were unsuccessful.

Think, Sephie. You've been in this situation before, and you got free. Keep your head in the game.

He pulled my chair upright again, leaning on the arms of the chair, so that he was eye level with me.

"You're so pretty. It's a shame to ruin that pretty face."

"What do you want with me, Anthony? Like seriously. You said it yourself. You can have any girl you want. Why me?"

He laughed. It was not the laugh of someone who was amused, however. This was the laugh of an insane person. His smile didn't reach his cold, dead eyes.

"It isn't just you, carrot top," he said, picking a knife off a table against the wall. "You belong to Ghost now. I saw the anger in his eyes when I smacked your ass in that restaurant. I want to hurt him, but I can't get to him." He was trailing the knife down my neck to my chest. He stopped just above my heart, pressing the knife into my skin in a way that felt oddly familiar to me. "So, I hurt you to get to him. And when he comes for you? I kill him."

I'm not sure what came over me at the thought of Adrik being killed, but I screamed as loud as I possibly could.

I was suddenly not in the chair but lying in bed covered in sweat. Where was Anthony? How did I get away?

My bedroom door swung open, and Adrik rushed to me.

"Sephie! What's wrong? What happened?" He went to grab my shoulders to pull me to him. "Jesus, Sephie, you're soaking wet. What happened? Did you have another nightmare?"

I was still trying to comprehend what had happened and why I wasn't dead. I looked at him and said, "you can't come for me. If Anthony gets to me, he's going to kill you if you come for me." I burst into tears, grabbing onto him.

"Solnishko. Oh, solnishko. He won't get to you. I promise. I will protect you. We will all protect you," he stroked my hair and ran his hands down my back. "You're okay. You're safe with me. I promise."

I sucked in a breath and looked up at him. "He wants to use me to get to you."

His blue eyes looked at me intensely, "tell me what happened. How do you know this? I just found this out a few hours ago."

"He was in my dream. I was in my uncle's house. He was yelling at me again like he did the night... but then I wasn't in my uncle's house and it was Anthony instead." I sucked in a breath, trying to not sob as I relived my nightmare. "I asked him what he wanted with me. He said he noticed how angry you got when he smacked my ass at the restaurant. He said he wants to kill you, but he can't get to you, so he'll use me to hurt you instead."

Adrik swore under his breath, in Russian so that I couldn't understand. "Sephie, did he say anything else? Can you remember anything else about your dream?"

"I was in a room that I've never seen before, tied to a chair. He punched me and then threatened to stab me in the heart. When he said he was going to kill you, that's when I screamed and woke up."