

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 326

Chapter Three Hundred Twenty-Six

Sephie

Adrik and the other three guys walked back into the penthouse from their almost nightly visit with Armando. I could see the stress melt off of Adrik as soon as he saw I was still awake and smiling at him.

"And how is dearest Armando tonight?" I asked, standing up almost at a normal pace from the kitchen island. Adrik was by my side immediately, his arms around my waist.

"He might be learning firsthand how painful broken ribs are. I tried to explain it to him, but since I really have no point of reference, I decided to show him," Ivan said. Misha just laughed and gave him a high five.

"Squish. What does it say about me that I adore this side of you?" I said, laughing.

"It says that you're absolutely perfect, solnishko," Adrik said, leaning down to kiss me gently. His s*xxy smirk was evident on his face.

"Meant for this shi t, gazelle," Misha said.

"Did he have any nuggets of information tonight?" Andrei asked.

"He might have, had we given him a chance to speak," Stephen said. "Apparently, Trino's guys not being okay with Sephie made us all slightly

irritable."

I looked at Stephen, surprised. "Should I not have told Trino about Martin?" Adrik pulled me back against him, his arms around my waist. He gently pressed his cheek against my neck.

"No, I think you did the right thing. Seph. We were talking about it on the way up. We were all somewhat surprised by our anger about the situation. It's not just you that they have an issue with. They just don't know about Misha and Andrei's parts in it, but you did what you did when they took you and Ivan and you took all of it so they'd be protected. It's not fair," Stephen said. I could see he was frustrated with the situation.

"I didn't want them to know about Misha and Andrei. That's too much of a risk," I said,

"We know. And we agree. But it still doesn't make the situation any more right," Ivan said.

"The good news is that we don't have to see them very much once they go home," I said. "But I won't deny how adorable I think you all are for being pissed off about this right now."

"We haven't gotten you healed from the last time something happened before another threat showed up. It's enough to make anybody angry," Viktor

said.

I stood, leaning against Adrik, looking at all the guys. Viktor, Ivan, and Stephen were clearly frustrated with Trino's guys. Misha and Andrei were a mix of frustrated with a splash of worry. I could feel Adrik's anger at the thought of Trino's guys even entertaining the thought of harming me. But more than that, more than the feelings of anger I was getting from all of them, I felt their love. They were fully prepared to destroy Trino's entire security team, ally or not, if it came to that. To make sure I was safe.

"Seph, why the tears?" Stephen asked, concerned. I was still smiling at them, but I was overcome with emotion, which usually meant tears would flow freely.

"They're happy tears, I promise. I know I've told you how safe you all make me feel, but I can feel it so clearly right now from every single one of you. You're all ready to annihilate Trino's entire security force if it comes to it. I know a couple of you want to do it just to make a point, even if they don't try anything," I said, laughing. I caught Stephen and Ivan both nodding their heads like they agreed with that line of thinking: "I can feel how angry you all are, but more than that, I can feel how much you love me."

"We can't imagine life without you in it, princess," Ivan said, winking at me.

"My God, it would be so boring," Misha said as dramatically as possible, to help lighten the mood. I couldn't help but laugh as I wiped the tears away.

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Adrik turned me to face him, helping me to dry the tears. He looked at me, very seriously, saying, "you've given us something we never thought possible. You've shown us all how much better we should be. And most importantly, you've brought your own magic into our lives. Our world was very dark before you, solnishko. You've reminded us that the darkest shadows come from the brightest light. And I, for one, will do everything in my power to make sure you're always able to shine as brightly as possible. I feel fairly confident in saying every single one of them will too."

Adrik

Once Sephie and I were alone in the bedroom, she still looked thoughtful as I helped her get out of her clothes and into my thirt for the night. "You still have something on your mind, love." I said, putting my shirt on her. She chewed on her bottom lip. I could feel her nervousness, which was unusual for her. "What is it?" I asked, putting my fingers under her chin gently and lifting her face so she would look at me.

"I know how frustrated and cranky you are because we can't have s*x," she said.

I laughed. "I am, yes, but I can handle it until you're better."

She took as deep a breath as she was able to. "It's not just that. I'm just as frustrated and that's probably why Misha and Andrei keep telling me I'm extra spicy, but..." She paused like she wasn't sure what to say. Her good hand started to fidget with anything within reach.

"But what, love?"

"It...it scared me when I couldn't catch my breath after we kissed," she said. She looked at me like she was unsure if I was going to be upset with her for telling me.

"Sephie..." I said, pulling her to me. I just wrapped my arms around her and held her for a few minutes. I sighed. "You've been acting like you felt better. I can't feel anything from your lung, so I wrongly assumed it was better than it is. I went too fast and I'm sorry," I said.

"I am feeling better. I just can't breathe like I should be able to yet and you're very good at taking my breath away," she said. I could hear her smiling when she said it, even though she had her face buried in my chest.

I put my hand on the back of her neck, pulling her face away from my chest so I could look in her eyes. "I'm happy you told me, solnishko. I don't want to hurt you and I don't want you to end up back in the hospital. I will do a better job of controlling myself until you're ready," I said, leaning down to kiss her gently.

"You're not mad?" she asked. She was almost confused by my reaction, which made her even more adorable than usual.

"How could I be mad that you told me that or that you're still healing?" I asked, trying not to laugh at her doe eyes. She chewed on her bottom lip. not sure how to answer. "I will never be mad that you come to me with something that's bothering you, Sephie. This is how relationships work. We're

a team."

"You're not going to swear off touching me until I'm better?"

"I will if that's what you want, but that's definitely going to make me extremely cranky. I'm going to go through the entire stockpile of punching bags we have here," I said, playing with her curls.

"I don't want that. I definitely don't want that," she said. "I just thought I would have to convince you that those extreme measures weren't needed."

I couldn't help but laugh at her. "We both know how terrible I am at keeping my hands off you. I'd rather not have to try to get better at that. I think you benefit from me touching you more than you realize, too. But I can definitely make sure you don't lose your breath again until your lung is all the way healed." She looked up at me, still unsure. It had been quite a while since she'd needed to search my eyes, but she needed to tonight. I let her. I'd almost missed it. I'd grown to adore the sweet smile of satisfaction that she got when she didn't find what she was always worried she would see. "You're getting much better much faster now that you can eat a little more. And now that you're done with your antibiotics, that process should speed up. We won't have to wait that much longer," I said. I felt the strong pull in my chest as she was satisfied with her search and smiled sweetly at me. I leaned down and kissed her gently once more. "Now get in bed. You need sleep so you get better faster," I said, grinning at her.

The next morning, I woke up to find her facing me again. For the first time in weeks, she was awake before I was. She was quietly watching me sleep, waiting for me to wake up. Her fingers lightly tracing circles over my back. I could feel her warmth before I even opened my eyes.

"You're awake," I said, opening my eyes to see her gorgeous smile. "That's the first time you've been awake before me in weeks. Have you been awake long?"

"No, just a few minutes, but it was a nice few minutes. Although I have grown to love you holding me down when you wake me up though," she said, biting her bottom lip.

"I'll hold you down whenever you like," I said, my mind immediately jumping to all the possibilities of how I could take advantage of that. I leaned over and kissed her gently. She rolled onto her back, stretching her good arm over her head, all her joints popping like normal.

"I want to see how painful it is if I leave the sling off for a bit today. I think my shoulder is more sore from not moving than it is because of being dislocated now," she said.

"That's a good sign. If you feel like you want to start moving it, then it's healing from being torn when it was dislocated, I just don't know about the extra weight from your cast."

"Yeah, remind me to have a conversation with the doctor about rationing his cast materials next time. I don't know much about setting broken bones, but using all the cast supplies seems excessive. This thing weighs as much as I do."

I laughed. "It might weigh more than you do since you haven't been eating much." I poked her hip bone, which was more prominent than it had been since she got hurt before and after the ball. "You're all sharp again. I don't even get to enjoy throwing you around more easily."

"0/10. Do not recommend," she said, trying to be serious, which made me laugh more. I rolled over so I was above her. Before I could say anything, she reached up and pressed her palm against my cheek. "I love you, Adrik. More than I ever thought possible."