

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 373

373

Sephie

As soon as we were safely in the penthouse, I stopped Ivan and hugged him again. He was much more relaxed after leaving the hotel, but I knew he was still completely unnerved by what had happened. He wrapped his giant arms around me tightly, picking me up for a few moments. He just stood there, my feet dangling, holding onto me as he slowly calmed himself down.

When he set me down, I said, "I saw what you saw." I quickly looked at Andrei. "Did you see anything when she finally got her ass out of my chair and turned to look at me?"

"I saw her extreme hatred for you, if that's what you mean," Andrei said.

I looked at Ivan's shocked face. "She didn't look human," I said.

Andrei started to put it together. "That's why you panicked when she looked at you."

I nodded my head. Misha, always curious, said, "okay, you guys are going to have to explain what the hell happened. I also want to know what you said to Battista to get that woman out of your chair."

Before I answered him, I asked, "did you get anything from her, Misha?"

He nodded his head, emphatically. "I was insanely nauseous the entire time we were there. But only when looking at her."

Before I could speak, Ivan moved to lean against the counter in the kitchen. He looked at everyone, sighed, then said, "when I was a kid, my mom sent me to a research facility where they did horrible experiments on me because of my inability to feel pain. She didn't know that would happen. They gave her some other story and promised to send my siblings to school. My dad had died shortly after my youngest brother was born, so she was trying to raise four kids on her own and she agreed. She thought I would be taken care of. The reason that hospitals f\*\*k me up is because I'm reliving what they did to me in there every single time. It wasn't just physical torture. They tried to break me. They tried to turn me into a monster and they enjoyed it."

As he was talking, I hopped up on the counter next to him. I hooked my arm through his and rested my head on his shoulder. I felt him squeeze my arm as he continued talking.

"When Sephie told you all that my demons pull other people's demons out so the world can see them as I do, she didn't know how accurate she was. When I was at the facility, I never saw the doctors' real faces. I saw the demons inside them. That's why I'm so haunted by it and why I fight so hard anytime I have to go to the hospital. I'm trying to kill the doctors, but they keep coming back. I can't see whoever is in front of me. I only see the demons' faces from that facility."

I glanced around the room at everyone's shocked faces. Ivan continued, "that woman at the hotel today. I saw the same thing with her that I saw with the doctors. As soon as she walked up to introduce herself to Vitaliy, I saw it."

"Vitaliy saw something, too. I caught his look when he touched her," Adrik said.

"I saw it when she stood up to get the f\*\*k out of my chair," I said. They all laughed at my irritation.

"What did you say to Battista, gazelle?" Misha asked.

I giggled. "I asked him if he always surrounded himself with such ill-mannered women or if he brought her special for us. Then I said if he did, I needed to thank him because it's been a really long time since I made another woman cry."

They all laughed. Ivan slid his arm around my shoulders, hugging me to his side. "What about when she turned to leave? You said something else to her that nobody else caught," Ivan said.

I cut my eyes to him, unable to hide my smile. "I told her if she tries to touch Adrik again that she will no longer have functioning hands."

They all erupted in even louder laughter than the first time.

"What did Battista say to you before we left?" Adrik asked.

"That's where it gets even more interesting. He told me I did him a huge favor and that he's in my debt now," I said.

"His attitude toward that woman changed after you put her in her place," Stephen said. "I don't know what they were saying, but he was very dismissive of her after it happened when he wasn't before."

"I noticed that too," I said.

"She was worse than Giana about staring, though," Misha said.

Andrei snapped his fingers and pointed to Misha. "Same."

Adrik scoffed. "I don't even know how you knew she tried to touch me because it happened while you were gone, but it made me sick."

I hopped off the counter and walked to Adrik, clearly feeling his disgust. I couldn't help but love him a little more for it. I wrapped my arms around his waist. "I f\*\*king love you," I said as I rested my head against his shoulder.

"I think there's more to that woman being there today than we know about, especially considering what Battista said to Sephie before we left," Viktor

said.

"We definitely need to have this conversation with Vitaliy when he gets back. I know he knows something about her that he couldn't say in front of everyone," Adrik said.

"I just want to point out how convenient it is that you're so good at reading my mind now. I didn't have to tell you Ivan was unnerved. I was planning on letting you figure out why he was unnerved when we got back, but that heifer put a hold on those plans."

Adrik pulled me closer. "You're adorable when you get all bitchy," he said, kissing my temple.

The guys took advantage of Adrik's mostly free afternoon while we waited on Vitaliy to make it back to the penthouse. They all took care of little things they'd been putting off because of more important tasks. Adrik had some work in his office to get done, so I went with him so the guys could come and go as needed.

I stretched out on the couch, suddenly exhausted from everything the past few days. I tried to stay awake, but inevitably fell asleep. Since Ivan and I were taken, I hadn't fallen asleep once without someone next to me. I wasn't even sure it was possible anymore.

It was possible. It happened.

I wasn't sure how long I'd been asleep when I felt Adrik's warm hands on me, gently shaking me awake. "Solnishko, you were having a bad dream. I need you to wake up."

I was somewhat startled awake and immediately worried I'd been talking in my sleep. "Shit. Was I talking?"

He smiled sweetly at me, his warm hand resting against my cheek. "You were mumbling, but I could see the shaking from across the office. Andrei is on his way back so you can go back to sleep on him. You are overdue for sleeping in. It took you two seconds to fall asleep when you laid down."

"At least I wasn't yelling this time," I said, sitting up.

Andrei walked in, looking somewhat concerned, but he relaxed when he saw me awake and talking to Adrik. "Spider monkey. I'm surprised you even fell asleep without anyone next to you. I didn't think that was a thing you could do anymore."

"I didn't either, Bubba. You were right, apparently. I am overdue for sleeping in. I'm really tired," I said.

"Being bitchy always makes you tired," Adrik said, grinning at me. He stood up, leaning down to kiss my forehead. "Go back to sleep, love. Andrei can keep you warm. I just have a few more things to finish up and we can go back upstairs."

Andrei sat down at the end of the couch, stretching one leg out along the back of the couch, opening his arms for me. I curled up in his arms, resting my head on his almost warm enough chest and was asleep again in a matter of minutes.

Author's Note: Thank you all for sticking with this story for this long. I love reading all the comments and watching the story unfold through different eyes. I try to respond to all the comments, but please know that I read them all, even if I don't respond. Thank you so much for loving my characters as much as I

do!