

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 470

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Adrik

That afternoon, once we'd arrived at the house, Viktor surprised the rest of in by asking if he could take Sephie for a walk, just the two of them, while she was upstairs for a minute.

"I still have making up to do with her from everything that's happened," Viktor said.

"You do," Ivan agreed. "But that's the best place to do it. Make sure you tell her everything, though. She already knows anyway, but she needs to hear you say it."

Viktor chuckled. "You're not the only one that's told me that recently," he said. Apparently, he and Kostya spoke quite often. Much more than the rest of us were aware of. If he was getting that kind of advice from him, I wasn't going to be mad about it though.

Sephie walked into the back room, where the rest of us were. Her smile made the room brighter as her eyes landed on me. It didn't seem to matter how long we spent together, she was always happy to see me after even the shortest time away from me. I loved it. I couldn't get enough of it..

"Sestrichka, I was hoping you'd like to take a walk with me?" Viktor asked. I don't think I'd ever seen him so timid. He was nervous, but at least he was finally trying to make things truly right once again.

"I would love to, Papa Bear. But now I have to go get my coat. Shockingly, I'm cold," she said, grinning at all of us before jogging back upstairs.

"Her lung is getting better and better. She's acting more like her old self," Stephen observed.

"Yeah, I was going to try the short distance with her again in the morning if you want to come too," Misha said. "Hopefully this time she'll be able to catch her breath better, but at least I know what to do now if she can't."

"Don't worry, Misha. It's terrifying for all of us when that happens," I said. Watching her struggle to breathe was still one of the most horrifying things I'd ever seen. It's the biggest reason that I was able to turn off my bloodlust so quickly with Armando. I could feel her struggling. Everything else shut off and there was only concern for her.

She walked back in, now with her coat on. She walked to me, leaning down to kiss me before leaving with Viktor. I thought back to how shy she used to be about any sort of affection in front of the guys. It made me smile to see her so comfortable.

"Don't do anything I wouldn't do while we're gone," she said as they walked out the back doors. She slid her arm through Viktor's as they walked around the pool toward the gardens, then stopped to look at a few of the rose bushes, noticing that there were the tiniest little buds starting to appear. I could feel the warmth from her smile as she said something to Viktor, making him laugh, as they continued toward the woods.

"He has no idea how lucky he is that she's so forgiving. I would've made him suffer a lot longer," Ivan said.

I laughed. Mostly because I agreed. "I think we all would have. It's been really hard on her, especially since she's so connected to all of us now. She's not with him and she feels that every time we're all together. She said it's a constant reminder of his rejection. She understands why he chose the decision he did, but she's struggled with how long it's taken him to be okay with the rest of us," I said.

"It's been difficult for all of us, but not to the same level as her. It's obvious to us that his connection is the weakest, too," Andrei said.

"Maybe it will get stronger over time. He's arguably been the slowest out of all of us. Maybe his connection will keep slowly increasing. It seems like he's talking to Kostya very regularly," Stephen said, in his usual reasonable manner.

"For her sake, I hope you're right. As much as she worries that she's holding you all back from living your own lives, she really enjoys the connection she has with all of you," I said.

"She does what now?" Ivan asked, completely surprised.

"She's worried she's holding you back from living your lives. From finding girlfriends. She thinks Stephen will have an easier time, but only just barely. She brought up the conversation we had about it in Italy, when Ivan pointed out how difficult it was going to be to find suitable girlfriends now that

you know her and see what we have. It doesn't seem to matter how much I reassure her, she's still worried she's holding you back," I said.

Ivan looked like he'd made a connection. "That's what she was worried about," he said. We all looked at him, waiting for an explanation. "The last time Viktor had a 'moment,' when she broke down you were downstairs talking to him. I could feel her worry about Viktor, but then something else came up. I asked her about it. She admitted there was something else, but she didn't want to talk about it then so I let it drop. She's been really happy since, so it slipped my mind."

"It's been on her mind for a few weeks now. She feels guilty that you can feel everything she can feel, especially when the falls apart like the did that night. She doesn't know how to turn it off to spare you from having to feel what she feels. She thinks she's condemned all of you to constantly be in turmoil with her," I said.

They were quiet for a few moments, mulling over what I'd just told them. I could actually feel their own inner turmoil, trying to find a way to reassure Sephie that she was wrong.

"I think she's been living with the emotional turmoil for so long that it almost feels like a burden to her sometimes, especially when she can't turn it off or struggles to get her emotions under control. She doesn't realize she's giving us a gift to be able to feel that along with her," Stephen said. "Especially for me. I spent so many years just completely numb to feeling anything, just trying to survive. Being able to feel what she feels reminds me I'm alive and that there's something to live for."

"Same," Ivan said.

"I don't think she realizes that she's also showing us how to get control of our emotions when she shares what she's feeling with us," Andrei said.

"You can feel that too?" I asked.

Andrei nodded his head. Misha agreed with him as well. "It's gotten clearer more recently. It wasn't that way in the beginning, but the more connected we are to her, the more it feels like she's showing us how to control everything. Even when she fell apart that night. It wasn't overwhelming like she thinks it was. At least not for me. Every time, it feels like she's showing me how to handle it when it happens to me," Misha said.

"I've tried to tell her all of this before, but I think she'll believe it if it's coming from all of you, so make sure you tell her. She wants you all to be happy and to have what she and I have," I said.

"She's still showing us how good it can be when it comes to that too. We all see how special your relationship is. It was painfully obvious how different it was, even in the beginning, when I was with Tori. I couldn't help but compare. Maybe that wasn't fair to Tori, but I couldn't help it,"

Andrei said.

"Maybe it wasn't fair, but you were already at a disadvantage with that hot mess," Ivan said, which helped lighten the mood. None of us missed having Tori around, especially not after what she'd done.

"But that's my point though. She's showing us how much better it is to just wait until the right one shows up. Along with how to stay grounded while feeling as intensely as she does. She thinks she's burdening us when in reality, she's making us all better for when the right ones do show up for us," Andrei said.