

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 481

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Adrik

While we ate lunch, the guys took the opportunity to talk to Sephie about her worry that she was condemning them to always feel what she felt.

“So, Boss told us all that you’re worried you’re condemning us to always have to feel what you feel because we’re so connected to you now,” Andrei said, after glancing at Misha and Stephen.

Sephie looked surprised, but she didn’t deny it. “I don’t know how to turn it off without making it worse,” she said.

“Why would you want to turn it off?” Misha asked.

“Because you guys don’t need to be in constant emotional turmoil just because I am,” she said quietly. We could all feel her sadness as she thought about the situation.

Stephen cleared his throat, but paused for a moment before he spoke. He’d been hanging around Ivan a little too much. His flair for the dramatic was growing. “Seph, I’m not sure I could describe the level of Hell that it is to be completely numb to everything and everyone day in and day out. It’s effective for survival, sure. But it’s not living. What you think of as emotional turmoil is really just a kickass reminder from you that it’s better to live than to simply survive. I will take your emotional turmoil over being numb every day of the week and twice on Sundays,” he said, in the serious manner that only he could deliver.

She chewed on her bottom lip, thinking about his words,

“It’s true, spider monkey. I also don’t think you’re taking into account the ridiculous control you have of your emotions. You share that with all of us. To you, it might feel out of control. To us, you’re very much in control. You’re also showing us how to do it each time it happens. That’s not something that most men know how to do. I definitely did not. I just shoved everything down and then eventually blew up when no one was around. I prefer your method, if I’m being honest,” Andrei said.

“Same,” Misha said. “Except for the blowing up part. I chose to make jokes about anything and everything. Mostly inappropriately.”

Sephie giggled. “I mean, it’s effective. I still do the same.”

“The point is, gazelle, that we prefer the connection. You’re not condemning anyone. Given the choice to have the connection or not have the connection, we would all choose the connection every single time,” Misha said. I was honestly surprised he was so sincere. I didn’t know that kid had it in him. “Although, we’re going to have to figure out how to apply this knowledge to future girlfriends or this is just gonna be weird.” Yep, there’s that mostly inappropriate humor we all love.

Sephie laughed again. “I think we can find a way to apply it to normal, boring people. Or else you’re all going to have to find weirdos like me.”

“It would not be the worst thing in the world,” I said, smirking at her.

“I have to agree with them, princess. Much like Stephen, I spent most of the time just being numb or angry before we met you. I prefer feeling everything.” Ivan said. As he said it, even I could feel the love he had for her. It wasn’t just him, either.

“Even your demon agrees with that, Ivan,” I said. “I can feel it.”

“Upon further review, we’re going to need to start looking for weirdos like Sephie. What normal person is going to be okay with a statement like that?” Misha asked, laughing at the absurdity of it all. His laughter was infectious; we all joined in, enjoying a moment of relief.

She had gotten up to clean up from lunch. I stood up with her, pulling her to me. “When I first met you, Ms. Jackson told me that you would show me the best parts of myself if I let you. She was absolutely correct. But what she didn’t know was that you’d make those best parts even better. That’s what the connection is for all of us. You’re doing what you always do and showing us how to be better just by being you,” I said, kissing her temple.

Viktor, who had been quiet up to this point, chimed in. “What’s happening to us isn’t your fault, either, Sephie.” We all turned to look at him, surprised he would say such a thing. He looked slightly offended we would think it came from him. “That’s what she told me yesterday when we were gone. That if I needed someone to hate, it should be her since she’s the reason all of this has happened since we met her. I’m pretty sure she didn’t believe me yesterday, which is why I brought it up again.”

Surprisingly, I could feel everyone’s anger immediately. Sephie did too. Her eyes turned black, causing mine and Ivan’s to also go black. We all sat in stunned silence, brewing in our own anger that she would still be blaming herself for everything that had happened. Misha finally broke the silence. When he did, he was more angry than I’d ever seen that kid.

“Sephie, you’re going to cut that shit out right now,” he said. His face was starting to turn red, even. I expected Sephie to get angry in response to his tone, but I could easily feel her happiness. I looked down at her, noticing her grin starting to curl up one side of her mouth.

“His eyes,” she told me. When I looked at Misha, his eyes were much darker than his usual green.

“Get angrier, my adorable Russian guardian,” Sephie said to him calmly. Her statement caught him by surprise, but Andrei caught on to what was happening.

“Dude, your eyes are changing,” he told Misha.

“You’re going to need to go nuclear for it to happen the first time. We all did. It’ll get easier after that,” she said.

We watched as Misha let go completely and let his anger fully take over. I could feel it clearly. I wasn’t even sure I was feeling it through her this time. It felt as clear as anything I got from her. She was right, too. There was an element of f**kery behind his anger. Like he was already looking for ways to destroy you, but he wanted to make it entertaining while he did. I could even feel the difference now between Misha and his demon. It was like everything I felt from Misha was now as clear as everything I felt from Sephie and Ivan.

“You’re feeling everything just as clearly as I am, aren’t you?” she asked me.

“Yeah. It feels just as clear from him as it does you or Ivan now,” I responded.

“New level indeed,” she said, laughing in her head. She brought Ivan into the conversation, asking him what he felt.

“Misha feels much like you and Boss now. You two are still stronger, but he’s very similar now,” Ivan told us.

Misha’s eyes had turned almost black as he let his anger completely take over. Sephie recognized that he was struggling to contain it, however. We all felt her anger increase to sane levels as she walked to Misha. She just put her hand on his shoulder, showing him how to control his own. His eyes went wide as he figured out how she did it.

“That’s how you control it so easily,” Misha said in a half-whisper, still watching what she was showing him.

She smiled sweetly at him. “Now you try,” she said. We could feel Misha’s anger levels slowly lowering, but then they spiked again. She giggled as she knew he was just playing with us now.

Once Misha was calm once more, I said, “Sephie was right. There is an element of f**kery to your anger that nobody else has.”

“You could feel it too?” Misha asked.

I nodded my head. “You’re just as clear as Sephie and Ivan are for me now.”

“He can even tell the difference between you and your demon already,” she said.

I laughed. I hadn’t even told her that part. “I don’t know why it still surprises me that you read my mind, but it still sometimes does,” I said. She just grinned at me. She hugged Misha’s neck, explaining to him how the rest of us had progressed through this particular development in our lives. To say that Misha was excited for this would be an understatement. He looked like a kid on Christmas morning he was so happy this had happened.

Stephen looked at Viktor. “So, yeah. I think it’s time I helped you one more time. Just to be safe,” he said. Viktor just nodded and stood up to leave the kitchen without a word. I looked to Sephie, wanting to know what he was feeling.

“He’s not as worried as I thought he was going to be. He’s happy. He recognizes that it’s all something we want to happen and he’s happy for us. Stephen really is helping him. I think after this time, he’ll be fine with it and able to laugh about it,” she said.

There was an audible exhale from everyone still in the kitchen.