

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 153

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Three

Sophie

Once Misha and Andrei came back, I spent a little time playing the piano, so Misha could add to the recordings he already had. I had a new melody in my head for a new song that I thought of while staying awake for Ivan. I started to play with it and a new song started to form. I wasn't sure if I got it from my dad, since he was the one that planted the melody of my song into my head and then let me finish it. That was how I usually wrote songs. I would just think of the melody and the more I played with it, the more the song would form around it. My dad has probably been planting melodies in my head my whole life without me knowing. Once I was done, Misha said, "that's not one you've played before, is it?"

I shook my head no. "I just thought of that one the other night. It'll change a few more times before I figure it out."

"You just made all of that up? Right now?" I nodded, laughing at his expression. "That's amazing. It sounds like a finished song."

"Only because you can't hear it in my head. It's not finished yet."

"I won't tell if you don't tell. No one will ever know."

We walked back through the kitchen to find Ivan passed out on the couch. He finally gave up and fell asleep. I looked quickly to Misha, who ran to his room to get a charger. He rushed back as quietly as he could, plugging the phone in close to Ivan. He turned it on and turned the volume up loud enough that Ivan could hear it.

He pulled me back toward the kitchen, saying quietly. "It's not set up to play on repeat yet. I have to mess with it and the videos I took at the gallery to make one long recording, but if we stay close, I can just start it over when it reaches the end."

I looked at the time. "I think it's perfect. I was going to start on dinner right about now anyway, so it works out. You can help me. Whether you want to or not." I grinned at him.

"Are you kidding? I will gladly help you. My stomach was so fucking happy last night. I'll do whatever you want. What are you going to make this time?"

"I was thinking of making ravioli. It's one of my favorite recipes that Max's grandmother taught me. I haven't made it in a while."

He just stared at me for a long moment. "I love you so much right now," he said as his broad smile stretched across his face.

I couldn't help but smile back at him. "I know," I said as I winked at him.

I was still finishing up dinner with Misha when Adrik, Viktor, and Stephen got home. Misha and I were busy talking and laughing quietly as I ordered him around the kitchen. Ivan was still passed out on the couch. Misha had it timed perfectly. He would run in and restart the recording just as it finished each time.

He had just walked back in the kitchen and I said, "we're going to have to wake him eventually so that you can stop having to restart the recording and make it longer for him. But so far, it's working smashingly well."

Adrik, Viktor, and Stephen walked into the kitchen. I smiled at them, putting my finger up to my lips to make sure they stayed quiet. They walked over to the counter before talking.

"Ivan is finally asleep on the couch. I don't want to wake him up just yet. He needs it," I said.

Adrik walked to my side, his arm sliding around my waist. "So, having you play works just as well as you talking to him?" He pressed his lips to mine when I looked up at him to answer his question. I smiled against his lips as I nodded my head.

"Misha got more recordings today and he's going to put them all together so it will play continuously for him. Then we just have to remember to plug in the phone, so he and Viktor don't need to wake up in a panic again."

Viktor sighed. "I'd prefer to not have to fight him in the middle of the night, but I'll do it if necessary. It usually takes all of us to hold him down. He's a beast on a good day, but when he's like that, he's out for blood. It's hard not to take it personal sometimes."

"He doesn't see you guys when he's like that. It doesn't matter who is in front of him, he can only see his memories. He's not fighting you guys. He's fighting his past," I said, looking at him sympathetically. The fallout of trauma. It affected everyone.

"But he sees you when he's like that," Viktor said, somewhat perplexed.

I thought for a moment. I didn't want to say too much, because I know Ivan didn't want them to know and I didn't have the best track record lately with keeping my mouth shut. Adrik still had his arm around me, I felt him run his hand up my back. He knew I was trying to find the words.

"I think it's because he and I go to the same place. What he described to me today was exactly the same as what I experienced on the plane and when we were at the ranch." I looked at Adrik, suddenly curious as to how he could pull me into the darkness.

"Like I said before, his demons recognize mine." I shrugged my shoulders, not really knowing how else I could explain it.

"Well, whatever it is, I've still never seen anything like it. I've known Ivan for over ten years now and he's never snapped out of it as quickly as he has with you. I'm glad. For him. And maybe a little bit for me, too, because I don't have to fight him," he said as he grinned.

"I wouldn't want to fight him, that's for sure," I said, as I winked at him.

"What's for dinner, sestrichka? It smells amazing," he said, rubbing his stomach.

Misha said, "she made mushroom ravioli. And bread. Bro. She made bread. And she made the ravioli from scratch. Like everything you're about to put in your mouth was made by her."

"To be fair, the chicken was not made by me. I just cooked it. And also, Misha helped with everything. He's quite the sous chef." I said smiling at him.

Ivan walked into the kitchen, looking better than he had earlier. He still looked tired, but nowhere near as tired as he did earlier in the day, "Princess, that smells like it's going to make my stomach happier than it was last night, which is saying a lot."

I couldn't help but smile at him. "Squishy, you look better. You slept okay? It worked?"

He nodded, "Was that one a new one?"

Misha answered for me. "Can you believe she just like sat down and played that for the first time today? She was like I have this melody in my head. Bani. Here's a song. The End."

I laughed. "It's not finished yet. It'll sound better when it's finished."

Ivan said, "I like it. It might be my favorite one so far."

As I stood in the kitchen, looking at Ivan tell me he liked that song, I knew without a doubt that my dad had put that melody in my head specifically for Ivan. I thanked him silently.

"Oh, Boss. I have news," Ivan said as he indicated for Adrik to allow him to the next room. Adrik kissed my temple and whispered, "be right back, love," as he walked into the next room with Ivan.

"Viktor, would you mind seeing if Andrei is awake yet? He told us to make sure and wake him up for dinner."

"If I say no, can I get his portion?" he asked, his eyebrow raised like he was legitimately considering saying no.

"Do you want me to smack you with this wooden spoon? Because I'll do it," I said, pointing at him with the spoon.

He laughed loudly, walking out of the kitchen. Adrik and Ivan walked back into the kitchen, both looking like they were trying to keep it together. That was serious news. Adrik walked back to me, pulling me to him. He wrapped his arms around me tightly, his face in my hair, inhaling deeply. "I missed you, solnishko." I stepped back, looking at him, but saw only happiness in his eyes. I stood on my toes and kissed him gently. "I missed you more," I said smiling against his lips.