

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 389

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Sephie

When he pulled me to him, he turned me to face him. His hands continued to roam slowly over my body, but now I could do the same to his. I could feel his hardness pressed against my stomach. My hands roamed over his chest, his shoulders, down his arms. He grabbed my hands in his, moving my arms behind my back. He held both my arms in one of his hands while the other hand moved to my neck, once again tilting my head to give him full

access.

His grip on my arms was soft, but I didn't like having my arms restricted. I pulled them out of his grip, but he caught them and put them back, holding me a little tighter. His lips went back to my neck. I tried to concentrate on his lips, but all I could think about was having my hands tied behind my back while Armando beat me. I tried to pull my arms free once more, but his grip tightened. I whimpered, my panic fully setting in.

He felt it immediately. "Sephie, what's wrong? Why are you panicking?" he asked. He loosened his grip and I ripped my arms free, hugging my chest. His arms were around me instantly, his voice soft in my ear, telling me that I was safe. I was with him. No one was going to hurt me.

"My arms. I don't like having them behind me. I don't like having them restricted since..." I didn't need to finish. He knew.

"Sephie. Sephie, I'm so sorry, I didn't think..." he said, holding me tightly.

"It's okay. I'm okay. Just not behind me like that."

He put his hand on the back of my neck, pulling me far enough away from him that he could look me in the eyes. The look in his eyes told me my eyes were likely still white. He searched my eyes for a moment, then I saw the look of confusion on his face. "Why are you sad?" he asked as I closed my eyes, trying to get a handle on my emotions.

I stayed quiet for a moment, not sure how to answer his question. I felt so out of control lately. I couldn't get a handle on my fear. Little things would make me panic that never bothered me before. My eyes were doing their own thing. I still worried that the guys were all scared of me because of them. Now I completely killed the mood because of something silly. I knew he wasn't going to hurt me when he was holding my arms. But I couldn't fight off the fear of feeling that vulnerable again.

I felt his fingers under my chin, gently lifting my face. "Sephie, look at me. Please," he said. His voice was soft, but urgent.

I opened my eyes, letting him search. It only took him a moment. He pulled me close again, hugging me tightly. "You've been through so much. I can't believe you're beating yourself up for struggling with processing everything. This was my fault, Sephie. I didn't think about you not wanting to have your arms behind you. You have a very good reason for not wanting that, I should've known."

"It's okay. I'm okay," I said quietly, my face in his chest.

"It's not and you're not, love. Not all the way. You're dealing with so much just on your own. Not even considering how you're helping everyone around you all the time."

"I want to help them. I don't want them to be scared."

Of me, I wanted to add, but didn't.

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He pulled me away from him to look at me again. He searched for a few minutes, but didn't respond right away. He picked up his shirt that he had left out for me, holding it out for me. He quietly buttoned it up after I slid my arms through the sleeves. Then he rolled up the too-long sleeves. He reached down, taking my hand and pulled me toward the bedroom with him. He climbed into bed first, then pulled me into his lap so I was straddling him. He looked at me for a few minutes, his hands in their usual battle with my curls before he finally broke the silence.

"Sephie, I don't know what to say to make you believe that we're not scared of you. The things that are happening are strange. It's a lot to take in. But all of it is made so much easier because we all have you to help us through it. If this were happening without you, we would all be admitted to the psych ward. You're what's kept us sane through all of this." He pulled me down, pressing his lips gently to mine for a moment before he continued. "I'm worried that we're depending on you too much, without giving you what you need in return."

I don't think that's true. You're all becoming experts at feeling my shifts in mood. Even Stephen, who can't feel what I feel can read me now, apparently. I think you're putting too much pressure on yourself and the guys," I said. He raised an eyebrow at me. "I've been through some shit,

Adrik. Even without the past I have, just what has happened since I've met you has been a lot. Most of it I'm dealing with and trying to move past, but there's going to be times when something triggers bad memories and feelings. That's unavoidable. Only this time I have you and I have the guys to help me through it when it happens."

He had a small smile on his face as he looked at me. "You always do that," he said quietly.

"Do what?"

"End up making me feel better when I'm trying to make you feel better."

I ran my fingers lightly over his stubble, loving the feel of it against my fingertips. "You do an excellent job of taking care of me. It's not your fault I'm high maintenance," I said, smirking at him.

He laughed loudly. "You're the most low-maintenance woman I've ever met in my entire life. But it makes me love you even more than I thought possible."

I leaned down, putting my head on his shoulder as he ran his hands over my back. I sighed, loving just being close to him. "I love you, Adrik. Always

and forever."

I woke up at some point in the middle of the night to noises coming from the kitchen. I quietly got out of bed and grabbed a pair of leggings before walking out of the bedroom. Vitaliy was in the kitchen rummaging through the cabinets, clearly looking for something.

"Can't sleep and you're looking for something to help you with that?" I asked. I didn't mean to startle him, but I did.

"Sladkaya, what are you doing up? You should be in bed," he said, almost firmly. Like it was an order.

"I could say the same for you. Don't you need more sleep as you get older?" I asked innocently. He squinted his eyes at me as I walked to the cabinet where we kept the tea. I pulled out my favorite tea that helped me sleep. "Don't be grumpy or you'll get none of this and you'll be awake the rest of the night, having no one to blame but yourself."

He laughed, shaking his head. "I didn't know how much I would miss having someone who was never afraid of me."

"I think you've done an excellent job of showing your warm and fuzzy side just since I've known you. You'll have even more friends soon," I said, filling the electric kettle and turning it on.

He scoffed, but then he smiled at me. He looked at me for a few moments. I couldn't be sure, but it looked like there were tears welling up in his eyes. "You've given me a second chance with my son. I wasn't the best father to him the first time around. Maybe I can make up for that, even if it's just a little bit," he said.

I looked at him as we waited for the water to boil. "I think you're being too hard on yourself again, Vitaliy. You did the best you could with what you had at the time. There's a part of him that understands now where your pain came from and he knows he would've been in the same shape you were if the roles were reversed. I can't imagine how difficult it must've been for you to lose your soulmate but have to be reminded of that loss every single time you looked into your son's eyes."

His eyes got wide. "You've seen a picture of Lena?"

I smiled at him. "I've seen Lena. We had a talk when we were still in Panama. I told you she still watches over you," I said, looking at him sternly as I poured the hot water into two mugs.

"How is this possible?"

the logistics are somewhat complicated. She's the person to ask that question to, but she made it happen. She

always knew I was

was coming for Adrik, but she never realized the role I would play in your life as well." 1

know is th

1. But the important thing for to know is that the is nights when you can't sleep, you should try talking to her. She's y

He sat in silence, mostly stunned at what I'd just told him. I could see his emotions clearly on his face. His cold, tough exterior completely non-existent as he sat in front of me. I suddenly didn't feel like tea anymore. He was still staring at the counter as I walked quietly back to the bedroom.

Halfway down the hallway to the bedroom, I was met by Adrik, leaning against the wall, his arms folded across his chest. He'd been listening to our conversation. He didn't say anything, he just wrapped his arms around me, burying his face in my neck.