

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 391

391

Sephie

After finally exhausting ourselves that evening, we fell into a tangled mess together on the bed and fell asleep. I knew he wasn't going anywhere. I knew I wasn't going anywhere. But there was a bigger part of me than I realized that felt so much more secure now that he'd made it official.

And boy did he make it official. This ring had its own zip code. But it was absolutely perfect in every way. He'd remembered my joke about black diamonds, so the main stone was a square black diamond, large enough to be seen from space. Pretty sure, anyway. It was surrounded by five smaller rubies, as well as even smaller white diamonds. It was perfect. It was a constant reminder that he, as well as all five of the guys, would always be with

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Once asleep, I found myself walking down that same familiar path to that same familiar house. As soon as I looked down and noticed the path, I ran the rest of the way inside, knowing what was waiting on me.

"Dad!" I yelled as I ran through the front door. He could barely stand up from the piano before I smacked into him, wrapping my arms around him.

"Hey, peanut!" he said, his wide smile on his face.

"It's been a long time. I've missed you," I said.

"Oh, I've been around. I check in from time to time. You're not the only one with a whiteboard to keep track of outcomes," he said, a sly smile creeping across his face.

I laughed. He really was where I got most of my humor from. "What was the latest one?"

"We're all waiting on Stephen. He's closer than he's ever been to figuring out his gift, but he hasn't made the jump yet. You almost got him to do it the other day, but he's still holding back. I have complete confidence that you'll be able to help him figure it out soon, though. You know, before the end of the month, if you could. Help an old man out and what not..." he said, laughing.

"I'll see what I can do. I didn't know he was that close. I only just got him to open up about his past."

"That's the key, I think. He has to face his past first and then he's ready. Same for Viktor. He has to finally come to terms with his past before he can move forward. They're both closer than they've ever been, though. That's why I'm here, actually."

"To check on your bet pool?"

He laughed. "No. To help you hurry them along. You need them, Sephie. Things are about to get very bad. You're going to need all the help you can get, although you did surprise everyone by bringing Vitaliy along. No one thought you'd be able to do that. Well, I did. Because I know how special you really are. But no one else did. Even Lena was surprised you managed to bring him back from the brink. He's been living in darkness for a very long time, peanut. But he'll prove to be very useful for you in what's coming."

"What's coming? Can you tell me? Is it Sal?"

"I'm technically not supposed to interfere. I can nudge you along, like I've been doing, but the future is dependent on decisions made in the present. I'm not allowed to interfere with those decisions. That's the rules. But what I can tell you is that you will succeed, but you have to stick together and you have to rely on each other. More than you ever have before. You've all done quite a good job at handling what life has thrown at you so far. It's going to get even more weird, but it wouldn't happen if you couldn't handle it."

"What about Viktor though? I'm worried about him. He seems the most unsure out of all of them. I think I scare him now."

"It's not you, peanut. It's his potential. That's what scares him. He sees it in you, but can't see it in himself. It'll come. You'll help him, just as you've helped the others. But you have to start believing in yourself again. You got knocked down; almost farther than I've ever seen you get knocked this time. But you got back up. When you feel your fear and panic threatening to take over, remember that. Not once have

Is just excitement, without the breath. Breathe into your fear, peanut. That's what you're missing. That's what Adrik has been trying to help

con channel your fear, the same way you've learned to channel your anger. You're going to need it. Fear and

to be. Use them to your advantage.?

I was quietly contemplating what he'd just told me. "What about my eyes? Why do they have a mind of their own now?"

He chuckled. "You were right, peanut. They're your warning system. You used them correctly when Sal and Armando took you and Ivan. They're the reason Sal never came back. He ordered Armando to take care of you because he was terrified of you. He still has nightmares where he wakes up in cold sweat after seeing your face and your black eyes in that room. That's also the reason Armando was so savage with you. He was terrified of you and tried to cover it up with his anger. You almost saw through it, but your fear was stronger than you realized when it was happening. Learn to control your fear and you're unstoppable."

"But my lung. I still can't catch my breath and then I panic."

"I know a certain acupuncturist that can help with that. Andrei was right, too. It's more to do with your anxiety about not being able to breathe than it is your lung."

"What about Ivan and Andrei? Was Adrik right? Ivan can see evil and Andrei can see good?"

"He was right. He's becoming quite astute to all of this going on. The four of you complement each other, balance each other. Adrik can feel good and evil, just as you can. You just feel it in different ways. Ivan can see evil, just as Andrei can see good. They just see it in different ways. You can use this. Misha is there to tie it all together. Stephen and Viktor will fit nicely into the puzzle as well once they figure out their gifts. You all have a special role to play in what's coming. The key is Ricardo. Sal is a pawn for Ricardo, peanut. Ricardo is worse than you could imagine and will become more so if you don't stop him. Same for Martin. They've both made deals that have everlasting consequences."

I chewed on my bottom lip as I thought about everything he was telling me. He smiled down at me sweetly. "It's a lot, I know. But I'm always around. Ivan is doing a fantastic job. So are Andrei and Misha. They're all more connected to you than I think you realize yet. Soon Viktor and Stephen will be too. You need each other. But right now, you need to go back. Adrik is awake and can't leave you. I didn't look, but I know you're not exactly decent so he can't take you downstairs with him."

He tried to hide his grin, but he couldn't. "Dad!" I said, completely embarrassed.

"You're an adult, peanut. You do adult things. But that doesn't mean I can't laugh about it," he said, snickering.

I hid my face in my hand. "I can't believe this," I said under my breath, but I couldn't help but laugh at the absurdity of it all.

He leaned down and kissed my forehead. "I love you, peanut. And it's obvious to literally every being in the universe that Adrik loves you now too," he said, pointing to my ring. Huh, it showed up in my dream too. "Of course it did," he said, like he was reading my mind. "It has special meaning to you, as well as them. Think of it like your pinky swears you have with most of them. Funny how you haven't made a pinky swear with Stephen and Viktor yet..."

Just as I was about to say something, he disappeared and everything faded to black in front of me. I was aware of Adrik's hand running lightly over my back. He felt me start to stir. "Good morning, love. Were you having a dream? You were laughing," he said, his wide smile on his face when I picked my head up off his chest to look at him.

"Mmm hmm. I was talking to my dad who informed me that you were trying to wake me up because you couldn't leave me since I was naked. Do normal people get embarrassed by their fathers in their dreams too or is that just me?"