

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 441

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Adrik

“You caught your breath right away. That’s definite progress,” I said.

“It’s getting easier each time. I was starting to have issues with catching my breath at the end, but I didn’t panic about it this time.”

I wrapped my arms around her tighter. She held her arms on top of mine, leaning her head against my shoulder. She looked happy. Lighter. Everything that had happened lately seemed to be leaving and her light was brighter again.

I had expected Vitaliy to get tired of watching Misha and Ilya, but he stayed the entire time. They were well-matched. Ilya was fast, like Misha. They were similar in height and build. It made for a good match. As it ended, Vitaly looked at me. “Viktor’s brother. What are his plans? Is he done with his service?”

I understood what Sephie had been planning at that moment. I nodded my head. “Yeah, he’s out. I’m not sure what his plans are though. I don’t think he has any yet. I think he’s trying to figure that out. Viktor was talking about giving him a job.”

“He knows everything about all of you?” he asked.

I nodded. “Most everything, I think.”

“He’s okay with it?”

“Yeah, he even did some research to find out what it was that was hanging on to him when he first got here that jumped to Sephie that first night,” said.

Vitaliy looked impressed. He glanced back across the gym toward Ilya, then to his little flowers. He walked away, calling Aleksei to him. They walked away from everyone, deep in discussion.

I turned Sephie to face me, her wide smile across her face. “You set that up, didn’t you?”

“Ilya wants a job, much like what Viktor has. Vitaliy needs replacements for his little flowers. Ilya could replace both of them for the moment and they’d still be fine. But we both know it’ll go better if it’s Vitaliy’s idea versus Ilya asking him for a job. So I might’ve suggested this happen,” she said, grinning at me. Her eyes were sparkling in the bright lights of the gym.

“Your idea to put him in with Misha too?” I asked. She nodded. “How did you know they’d make a good match?”

“They’re built the same. Misha is the fastest, next to Ivan who shouldn’t count because he’s superhuman.”

I just looked at her in wonderment. “Perfect in every way,” I said quietly, leaning down to kiss her.

That night at dinner, Vitaliy looked at Ilya during a lull in the conversation. a, what are your plans now that you’re done with your service?” he asked.

I looked to Sephie, who was smiling at me.

“I’m looking for a job, sir. Something similar to what Viktor has, if I can find it Ilya said.

Vitaliy said, “I can give you a job. I need another guy who has actual training. You clearly have training.”

“Really?” he said, excited. He quickly cleared his throat, then said, “that would be great, sir.”

“We’ll talk more,” Vitaliy said, waving his hand in front of him. “But you’ll come work for me. You can stay close to Viktor for a while. I’ve decided to

stay for a bit longer now that I have a house here again.”

“Thank you, sir.” Ilya said. He looked to Sephie, smiling widely at her. She winked at him.

“How’s it going furnishing your house, Vitaliy?” she asked.

“I might hate shopping as much as you do, sladkaya. I hired someone to do it for me,” he said, his sly grin evident.

“Smart man,” she said.

While everyone else was talking, I made sure Ivan would stay in the penthouse after everyone else left. “Sephie had a conversation with Kostya last night. She knows why Viktor feels different to all of us now. If you can, stay when everyone else leaves. Or else come back. She wants to tell the other three too, but not when Viktor is around. She’s worried about singling him out.”

“Yeah, I would really like to know why I feel irritated around him now.”

“You’re going to love it,” I said, laughing.

Ivan came up with an excuse to pull me aside while everyone else was leaving to make it look like he’d forgotten to tell me something important. Vitaliy and Aleksei both went to their rooms for the night, so it was just the breeze of us in the penthouse.

Ivan looked at Sephie expectantly. “Kostya came to you?” he asked.

“Yeah. Kind of creepy, not gonna lie. I mean, he’s adorable, but I was not expecting to turn around and have a little boy standing in front of me. Also? Hét like four curse words fly out of my mouth, then promptly felt like a heathen for cursing in front of a child. I apologized to his parents before- figured out who he was,” she said.

Ivan and I both laughed. “That tracks,” we both said.

“What did he tell you about why Viktor is different?” Ivan asked.

“When the Wonder Twins found out that you and Adrik could also control your demons, Misha said you guys just unlocked a new life goal for him. Andrei and Stephen both readily agreed. They essentially strengthened our corection because they made the choice to learn how to do what we do. They’re going to be able to walk between Heaven and Hell eventually.”

Ivan took a deep breath. “Let me guess. Viktor wants no part of that,” he said.

“Exactly. He asked to have his demon removed because he wants no part of Hell. He’s still unnerved by our demons. When he was in that Syrian prison, the guy that would torture him was completely consumed by his demon. Viktor caught glimpses. Now, he’s essentially having PTSD when he sees ours. He wants nothing to do with it,” she said.”

“He never told anyone,” Ivan said.

“Yeah. Are you surprised?” she said. We could both feel her irritation growing. She noticed it too. She grinned at Ivan. “That irritation we all feel? Yeah, that’s not really us. It’s our demons. They all feel like they’re being rejected by Viktor and it makes them itchy.”

“Shut up.”

“No, it’s true. You feel sympathy for yours, too. Don’t even try to lie about it said.

Ivan laughed. “Yeah, 100%. Poor thing. That’s actually kind of sweet.”

“Right? It’s very endearing. They knew what happened before any of us did and they’ve all been restless because of it. He’s over there terrified of them and they’re p issy because he doesn’t want to come over and play,” she said, laughing.

“But it’s this way for the Wonder Twins and Stephen too. How?” he asked.

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“The only thing I can think of is that their connection to their demons is already growing stronger since they made the choice. The connection that the three of us have is made stronger because of our demons. None of us will ever have the same connection with Viktor as a result, but Kostya thinks that Viktor prefers it that way, I have to agree. He said Viktor has so much on his mind on a normal day anyway that the extra baggage from me would be too much. He said the little bit he’s already gotten from me is somewhat overwhelming for him.”

“Can you make it less for him?” Ivan asked.

“Have you met me?” she said.

“Fair, totally fair. How can we help him cope with feeling you then?” he asked.

“That’s going to take time, Kostya said. But,” she said, grinning at him. “Stephen gets to help him get over the time in prison.”

“How? Are we going to get the guy that tortured Viktor?” he asked.

“Nope. No need. Well, maybe there’s a need. Doesn’t sound like he’s a very no man, now that I think about it. Anyway, back to Yoden. He’s leveling up. He’s going to be able to get rid of Misha’s hatred for Giana and Viktor’s time in prison and everything that went with it. If he can feel more comfortable around our demons, I think it will be easier for all of us,” she said

“How is Stephen leveling up? Doesn’t he need to give it back to the person where it originated from?” Ivan asked.

“I asked the same thing. Kostya said that Stephen spent so much time trying to figure out how to transmute his own pain that now he’ll be able to do it for other people. That’s partly why he’s been so freaking happy since he bro Armando. He knows he helped me feel better and it’s made him ecstatic,” she said. I could see the tears welling up in her eyes. “How fucking adorable is that?” she asked, wiping the tears from her eyes. I glanced at Ivan, who actually looked like he was fighting tears back too.

“This whole time, we thought he was a serial killer. Turns out that kid is a fucking saint.” Ivan said.