

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 423

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Adrik

Ivan and Viktor stayed at the house for the rest of the week and through the weekend. Viktor's youngest brother, Ilya, was supposed to arrive Monday evening, so they came back late Monday morning. Sephie and I had talked to an periodically over the weekend, but it seemed like Viktor still wasn't completely ready to fully accept everything happening.

Sephie was wary about being around Viktor now, too. She was worried she was going to make something worse for him. Ivan had said Viktor had talked some over the weekend, but he was mostly staying quiet. When Ivan told us they were on their way back, Sephie took the Wonder Twins upstairs to the penthouse.

"I have an idea for an experiment anyway," she said, her sweet smile on her. She was using it as an excuse to not be around when Viktor got back. The heavy sadness that was from Viktor was still with her. She'd been quiete han usual most of the weekend. The guys all tried their best to cheer her up, but they could feel her struggling against it as well. None of us knew how to get rid of it.

"What experiment now, love?" I asked her, curious.

"You'll see," she said, grinning at me. For a brief moment, the sadness lifted. Her eyes had stayed amber for almost the entire weekend. They would change briefly now and then, but even her eyes weren't changing like normal, er emotions were constantly changing, which meant her eyes were constantly changing. But right now, it felt like the overwhelming sadness was the dominant emotion and was overriding all other emotions. It was starting to worry me.

I stuck my head out of my office door, motioning for Andrei and Misha to come to the office, instead of her having to go to them. Since I'd learned she was self-conscious about people looking at her, I tried to make sure I was hith her as often as possible or that she didn't have to walk across the floor very often. I'd started paying attention to the people in the office as they watched her, as well. Most were fascinated by her, but she was still dealing with everything from being taken so it still felt negative to her. "Take her upstairs," I said as they walked in. I watched as they looked at each other, seemingly having a silent conversation between the two of them. Misha clearly won whatever contest they were having. He walked to Sephie, schatting down in front of her while Andrei walked behind her and picked her up so she could wrap her arms and legs around Misha.

She giggled as Misha bounced her higher. "I know I can jump again, but not gonna lie, I prefer to be picked up like the princess I am," she said, hugging Misha's neck a little tighter.

"It's easy when you're still too skinny," Andrei said, grinning at her.

She glanced back at me, a devious grin on her face. "Bubba said I can eat more cookies, so I'm going upstairs to eat more cookies."

I just laughed as they walked out of the office as Stephen walked in with my next meeting. While she hadn't been in my life for an entire year yet, I almost couldn't remember my life before her.

I could feel her have moments of happiness, as I'm sure she was laughing and joking with Misha and Andrei during my meeting. Once that meeting left, I had a few minutes before the next meeting arrived that I was planning on using to catch up on some paperwork. As I got started, I figured out her experiment.

She was at her piano, but I could hear her just as well as if I was in the same room as her. "This makes paperwork so much more enjoyable, solnishko,"

"It works?"

"It does. I can hear you just as well as if I were in the same room." I could hear her soft laugh as she continued to play while I continued to look through boring reports.

Ivan walked in my office without Viktor. "He'll be down in a minute. Aleksander called when we got here. I guess he talked to Ilya before he left to come here. It might be worse than we thought from what it sounded like," he said.

"That doesn't sound good. When does he get here?" I asked.

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Ivan looked at his watch. "Not for a few more hours. Viktor still has to leave st upid early to make it to the airport since he's flying commercial. I hate that airport," he said, a clear look of disgust on his face.

"It is very peopley there," I said in agreement..

"Where's the princess?" Ivan asked.

I could still hear her playing in my head. "She's upstairs," I said, as I shared bet impromptu concert with Ivan.

"That's impressive," he said. "Did she just figure out she could do that?"

I glanced toward the open door, expecting Viktor to walk in at any point. "She worried about being around Viktor. She was looking for excuses to go upstairs to try and give him space."

Ivan nodded in understanding. "He's some better. I'm hoping seeing Ilya will help him. She's still sad, isn't she?"

"Yeah, it's starting to worry me. She can't get rid of it. Her eyes have stayed amber the entire time you two have been gone. The Wonder Twins and Stephen have tried their best to keep her distracted and find ways to make her laugh, but it's always short-lived. The sadness is becoming oppressive. I don't know how Viktor has handled it if he's been walking around with that for this long."

Before Ivan could respond, Viktor walked in. He did look better after his short time away, but it was obvious he was still struggling to come to terms with everything.

"Everything okay, man?" Ivan asked.

"Yeah, Sasha is worried about Ilya too. He talked to him before his flight. He said he hasn't ever heard him like that. I guess the girl he thought he was in love with really did a number on his head," Viktor said.

"Hopefully some time away from it all can help him clear his head," I said. "Give him a job, if he wants it. We could use the extra help."

Viktor chuckled. "Ivan said the same thing. I'm waiting to see how bad he is before I offer him a job, to be honest."

"Fair. Totally fair," Ivan said.

"Where's Sephie?" Viktor asked.

"She's upstairs with the Wonder Twins. She wanted playing time while it was quiet," I said.

I almost expected him to want to go upstairs then, but he stayed quiet.

"He's totally still avoiding her," Ivan thought.

"Agreed."