

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 72

Chapter Seventy-Two

Sephie

I was back in the ballroom, watching Adrik go down, over and over. Each time, I was frozen in place, like I couldn't move until I was grabbed from behind. Each time the guy grabbed me, he said something that I couldn't hear or understand.

I heard voices. Familiar voices.

"Princess..."

"Gazelle..."

"Spider monkey....."

"Sestrichka..."

"Solnishko..."

A different voice would pull me briefly out of the ballroom each time, only to return to have to watch the scene again and be frozen in place again. It felt like I was drowning, watching him go down, not being able to do anything about it. I couldn't save him. I couldn't even save myself.

I felt arms around me, shifting me, holding me. Warmth that made my body relax. Fingers in my hair. Back in the ballroom, watching him go down again. This time, I found myself crying. I couldn't watch anymore. I shut my eyes. I can't watch anymore. I can't take it. I would rather have the darkness than be forced to watch this over again.

I hear a voice, calling my name. Everything is darkness. I can only see my body, nothing else. It's like I'm swimming in the nothing. The voice is still there. Calling me. I try to go toward it. It gets louder. I can hear it clearer.

"Sephie, please come back to me. I can't possibly live without you. Please just follow the sound of my voice. Come back to me. I love you."

I know that voice. I want to go to that voice. I try to go toward that voice, only to hear a new voice. "He's lying. He doesn't love you. No one loves you. No one will ever love you." I know this voice too. I know those words. Grant would say those words over and over to me as he was beating me. Like he was beating those words into me.

No, no, no. It can't be him. I got away from him. I locked that voice away tight.

"You didn't lock it up tight enough, stupid girl. I'm still here."

Again, the voice calling me. "Sephie, please come back to me. Follow the sound of my voice. I love you."

The other voice, laughing. "He's so pathetic. Begging you to come back to him, like you're worth a damn. Sickening."

I feel the familiar pull toward the voice calling me. I want to go toward it, but every time I move toward it, the other voice comes out.

"Solnishko, you have to wake up, my love. You have to come back to me, malishka."

I move toward it again. The other voice, yelling now, "YOU THINK HE LOVES YOU? YOU'RE MORE STUPID THAN I THOUGHT. NOBODY WILL EVER LOVE YOU, STUPID GIRL."

No, no, no." It can't be right. He can't be right. It's not right.

I bring my knees to my chest, hugging them tightly.

"YOU THINK THAT'S GOING TO PROTECT YOU?! YOU CAN'T GET AWAY FROM ME, GIRL."

"Solnishko, I love you. I've loved you since the first time I laid eyes on you. You have my heart. You will always have my heart. You're the only woman who knows my name."

Suddenly, I'm in a bathroom, listening to women talk. One of them says, "you know he never even told her his real name? No one knows his real name. It's like he doesn't exist."

"LISTEN TO HER. HE DOESN'T EXIST."

"Sephie, you know my name. I love hearing my name on your tongue. I can't get enough of you saying my name. I never hesitated to tell you my name that night in the parking lot. You're the only woman that knows my name."

Adrik. Adrik is calling me! I have to go to him. Wherever he is, that's where I need to be.

"YOU CAN'T GET AWAY FROM ME AGAIN, STUPID GIRL."

SHUT UP! You're not real!

"OH, I'M VERY REAL. I'M NEVER GOING AWAY AGAIN NOW THAT I'M OUT."

Stop it! You're not real. I got away from you. You can't hurt me anymore.

"Sephie, I love you."

I have to go to him. I need him. I love him.

"YOU AIN'T GOING ANYWHERE."

I'd had enough. Enough of the doubt, enough of his abuse, enough of carrying him around with me for years, enough of his voice in the back of my head anytime I was unsure of myself. Enough!

"YOU CAN'T GET RID OF ME"

I'm not the same Sephie you knew. This Sephie fights back. This is the Sephie that would drive that knife through your heart instead of slicing your Achilles tendon and not shed a tear over it.

I'm suddenly back in the basement. My back is on fire, there's blood everywhere. My blood. Grant is a few steps away from me, catching his breath. This is my chance to get away from him. I try to get up, feeling the familiar object in my pocket. I discreetly pull it out of my pocket, clicking it open as quietly as possible. He must've heard the click, because now he's walked toward me. I grip the handle tightly, waiting for my chance.

He stops beside me, swinging his leg back like he's going to kick me. I grab his foot as he's about to kick me and slice as hard as I can across the back of his ankle. He crashes to the floor, screaming in pain. The knife is still in my hand. I stand up as quickly as I can, looking at him writhing on the floor in pain. He rolls onto his back and all I see is red. Without even thinking, I jumped on him, plunging the knife as deeply into his chest as I can get it to go. He sputters, coughing up blood. I stand up once again, watching him struggle to hold onto life. He reaches for me, trying to grab my leg. I raise my leg out of his grasp, letting my heel land with as much force as I can muster on the knife sticking out of his chest, driving it farther into his chest. I hear him take his last breath as I'm running up the stairs.

I run to my room, grabbing my stuff. I glanced at myself in the mirror, realizing that I'm covered in blood. I look for something to cover my back.

"Sephie, I love you. Please come back to me."

I'm coming. I have to get away. Please wait for me".

I find a jacket and throw it on. When the fabric hits my back, I scream.

I'm no longer in my bedroom. Everything is so bright. I feel arms around me and I flinch, trying to get away.

"Sephie, it's me. You're safe."

say something I blink, trying to get my eyes to focus. Everything is still so bright that I can't see anything. I hear him in Russian and hear movement around me. Sliding. Suddenly it's darker. I open my eyes slowly. They're able to adjust better in lower light. I see a face in front of me and hear that voice. The voice that pulled me out of my nightmare.

"Sephie, it's me. It's Adrik. You're safe now. Look at me."