

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 460

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Sephie

I really had to hand it to the guys. They were so attentive to my needs this time. They were struggling just as much as I was about being here. They were all trying to hide it, but I could tell every single one of them was just as nervous as I was. It seemed to help them deal with that when they could be closer to me, just as it helped me. I wasn't going to complain.

Adrik kept me close. He did have to let go of me a few times when greeting people, but for the most part, he kept one arm around me while he shook hands with literally every person in attendance. It meant I could feel what he felt when he touched people. It was fascinating.

Most people here were overwhelmingly good. When Adrik would shake their hand, it was a momentary feeling of joy. There were a few, however, that had some darkness behind them, but nothing that made any of us worry. Only once did I feel Ivan's bubble go up. Strangely, it was for one of the hospital administrators who had stopped to speak to Adrik. He had very soft hands and an even softer handshake. The kind of handshake that gave you the creeps right away.

I happily stayed blissfully cut off from that conversation while it happened. I took the opportunity to ask Ivan if he could see anything. He showed me what he saw when he looked at the administrator. He wasn't completely consumed by his demon, but it had a very tight hold of the man. The demon itself was clearly defined. The man was older, with a slightly bent over posture, like he'd spent hours pouring over balance sheets. Once I saw what Ivan saw, I wondered if it wasn't the weight of the demon on his back that was causing his poor posture.

I turned my head away from Adrik and the administrator, making eye contact with Stephen as I pretended to cough. I cut my eyes toward the administrator, which meant Stephen was to find the opportunity to speak in front of him to see if we could scare the demon away. He stepped closer to us, to get a sense of the conversation that Adrik was having and interjected a question at the perfect moment.

We all watched as the man suddenly had a coughing attack, almost like he was choking. Ivan still had his bubble up around me, but he was still showing me what he could see. The demon was making a last-ditch effort to get inside, trying to get away from Stephen, which is what was causing the man to cough. His body was trying to reject it.

Stephen was standing just on the other side of Adrik, slightly behind him. I held my hand out to Stephen, who readily took it. He could then see what Ivan was seeing. He spoke a second time and even went to help the man. As soon as Stephen touched the man, Ivan could see the demon just vanish. Stephen's eyes went a little wide, but he kept himself under control. Once the man stopped coughing, Stephen returned to stand just behind Adrik once more.

This time, he grabbed my hand, showing me what had just happened. When he touched the man, he could feel the rage from the demon, who actually spoke to him. I could clearly hear it say, "you'll never get all of us." Then, it laughed as it was vanishing. I got chills as I watched what Stephen had seen. Adrik and Ivan both felt it immediately and I was hit with a wave of fiery anger from both of them. I didn't mean to laugh, but I did. It caused everyone to look at me. It appeared that I was laughing at this man having a coughing attack in front of me.

I cleared my throat, looking at the man. "Sorry. I laugh when I'm nervous," I told him, hoping that was enough of an explanation to grant me some grace and make me not look like a giant asshole.

The administrator surprised me by laughing with me. "It's okay. That came out of nowhere, but I actually feel much better now," he said, excusing himself as he grabbed someone who was walking by.

The guys took the opportunity to close in on me and Adrik, cutting anyone else off for just a moment. I quickly shared what we'd just witnessed with both Andrei and Misha as Ivan shared it with Adrik.

"That was different," Adrik said. "He's the only one so far tonight. Honestly, I was expecting more."

Battista took the opportunity of us being mostly alone to walk to the mayor. He interrupted the conversation the mayor was having and pulled him toward us. It was good to be ridiculously wealthy, apparently.

Before they could make it all the way to us, Adrik made sure I was okay. "You're okay now? I felt you get cold."

"I'm okay. You and Ivan are really quick now. It wasn't like it was with Ilya this time. I just got the chills when I heard it speak to Stephen, but I appreciate the heat boost. I'll never turn that down," I said, smiling up at him.

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He smiled softly at me, pressing his lips to mine once again just before the mayor walked up. The guys stepped back enough that Battista and the mayor could talk to Adrik, but made it so no one else could approach them and interrupt the conversation we'd been trying to make happen for hours now.

Adrik's hand was around my waist as he shook hands with the mayor. I felt a moment of joy when Adrik touched him and nothing else. Ivan shared what he saw. The mayor still had a dark form over him, but it couldn't gain a hold of him. It was still trying. It would move when the mayor moved, but it wasn't completely attached yet. I discreetly offered Stephen my hand so he could see what Ivan was seeing and so he'd know what to do. He once again stepped closer, paying attention to the conversation, waiting for the perfect time to interject.

Adrik and the mayor had spoken before, but they tried to keep their interactions limited. It was obvious that Battista had also spoken to the mayor before, as those two were familiar with each other. There was a level of comfort between them that only happened when you'd had several conversations with a person.

Doug, the mayor, told Adrik quietly, "I've been speaking with my district attorney. We're really working hard to find something definitive on the doctor so we can charge him. Honestly, I don't want you to turn him over to us until I know we have something that will stick. He's wreaked havoc on this city for a very long time. If we can't get the justice system to take care of him, then you need to."

"I might have what you're looking for," Adrik told him. "We've come across some records from the boss that paid him to create brawn in the first place. They're quite detailed. Before I turn them over to your DA, I'd like to meet him, however."

Doug looked momentarily surprised, which made me tense, but he followed it with, "I just assumed you'd met him before." He looked around the room, adding, "he's here somewhere, but if you don't get a chance to meet him tonight, I'll arrange a meeting. Somehow. I'm fairly certain that Henry is having me followed," he said so quietly that we almost missed it.

"What does your DA think about Henry?" Stephen asked. Doug looked surprised that Stephen spoke, but when he saw that Adrik was waiting for an answer, he continued with the conversation. As he did, Ivan shared what he was seeing once again. Just like with the hospital administrator, the demon that looked like a dark cloud just behind the mayor was frantic to get in.

Doug answered, "he's ready to charge him. If you have more information on him, I would love it." He barely got his sentence out and he, too, started coughing uncontrollably. Almost violently. Once again, Stephen reached out and touched the mayor's arm, asking if he was okay or if he needed help. When he did, Ivan could see the dark cloud behind the mayor disappear.

"That's twice now that someone has coughed uncontrollably in front of us. People are going to start wondering what the hell we're doing," I told Ivan.

"Saving lives is sometimes messy business, princess," Ivan said. He glanced at me, giving me a wink

Stephen let go of the mayor, returning to his spot just behind Adrik. He discreetly grabbed my hand, passing on the information he'd gotten when he touched the mayor. Unlike the administrator, who's demon was starting to attach firmly, the mayor's demon was barely hanging on. I wasn't sure if that had something to do with the fact that the first one could speak, but the second one made no sounds when it vanished.

Andrei, who had been quietly watching everything pushed what he could see to me. It was clear that the mayor had holes in his aura. He needed Viktor. The only problem was, we weren't sure how to get him to agree to it and we couldn't do it here, in front of everyone. We weren't sure if Kostya could hide himself and hide the effects of what he was doing when he and Viktor fixed someone. For us, it was visibly obvious. We weren't sure we could do it discreetly yet, so we didn't want to take that chance. Viktor, to his credit, had somewhat come around since Stephen had forcibly helped him. He did, however, seem completely relieved to know that he was mostly off the hook for his special services tonight when we discussed it prior to coming to the hotel. This time, I didn't get the feeling from him that he was avoiding us. It was more that he was overwhelmed with making sure we, mostly me, would be safe while we were at the event. Knowing he would somehow need to also use his gift while we were there was too much for him to handle.

We would figure out a way to help the mayor at a later date. We'd bought him some time tonight, but he was still vulnerable.

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