

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 473

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Adrik

"It feels different," I said, trying to think of how to describe it. "There's always warmth to everything I feel from you, which is why it was so easy to pick up on it when it was Viktor's sadness. It's like the warmth you feel when you think about how much you love me. That warmth comes with everything else. But when it's your demon, it's like a red hot fire feeling to it. It's feisty. It's like a f**k you element to whatever it is you're feeling. It's both intimidating and adorable at the same time," I said, getting lost watching her eyes change from amber to green.

"From now on, whenever they accuse me of being extra spicy, I'm just going to tell them it's my demon and I have no control over it," she said, grinning at me.

God, I love her.

Stephen and Viktor were gone when we came back downstairs, but the Wonder Twins were in the back room with Ivan. They were trying to decide on what movie to watch. Sephie had asked me to make her some coffee before we came downstairs. She was still trying to get warm from being outside in the cold for so long. She ran to Andrei while she waited for me to make the coffee.

"Bubba, I don't understand how you're totally fine in just a t-shirt right now, but please share that with me," she said, curling up next to him on the couch as he threw his massive arm around her to try and help warm her up. He did enjoy having something special with her; his wide smile stretched

across his face as she settled in next to him.

"Wanna experiment?" Ivan asked me.

What did you have in mind?"

"Seeing if we can make her warm again. She did say she'd never turn down a heat boost from us," he said, laughing.

"Deal," I said. I could feel Ivan's anger rising, so I matched his and we both hit her with a wave of anger. I expected her to be surprised by it, but she just giggled. It was Andrei and Misha that were surprised. Andrei, especially. He was immediately worried I was mad she was sitting next to him.

She caught on to what was happening almost instantly, "Don't worry, Bubba. They're trying to experiment to see if they can warm me up again. You're not in trouble," she said, wrapping his arm around her shoulders tighter. He visibly relaxed.

"I love how extreme levels of anger just make you giggle now, gazelle. It's enough to cripple anyone else, but you just think it tickles," Misha said, laughing.

Sephie laughed, her smile brightening the room. "It wasn't even that high. They both held back," she said. She looked at Ivan, then me, saying, "it did work though. I feel much warmer now." She was still smiling, her cheeks now rosy pink.

I made her coffee just the way she liked it and went to sit on one of the couches. Sephie hugged Andrei's arm saying, "I love you, Bubba, but I gotta go now." She hopped up and quickly moved beside me, curling up beside me. I had to admit to feeling incredibly happy that she decided to move.

"How long have Viktor and Stephen been gone?" I asked, leaning over to kiss her temple as I pulled her even closer to me. I still felt like I didn't want to be any farther from her than absolutely necessary. She clearly felt the same as she got up and put herself in my lap, leaning back against me. She wrapped my arms around her, crossing her legs in between mine. I could feel her satisfaction once she'd arranged herself just the way she wanted.

"Only like ten minutes when you guys came back downstairs," Ivan said.

"Did he say anything to you, Squish?" Sephie asked quietly.

"He did. He said the way you explained everything made him finally understand it from our point of view. It's one of your best traits, princess. You always know what to say," Ivan said, winking at Sephie.

I could tell she grinned at him when I saw his face soften. Andrei looked at Sephie, silently asking how she'd explained everything to Viktor. I could see both him and Misha concentrating on what she was telling them, trying to be quiet in case they came back out.

"You're so smart, gazelle. I never would've put that together," Misha said.

"Don't underestimate yourself, my adorable Russian guardian. I only thought of it because of something he said to me first. You're very wise. Don't think I've forgotten that you nailed why our demons were quiet last night," she said. He grinned at her. "Now, enough talking. Somebody decide on a movie already."

I laughed quietly, squeezing her a little tighter. I could feel how much lighter she was since her talk with Viktor. It was infectious. Our talk in the shower helped my demon calm down as well. I was much less irritated about the whole situation, which was a huge relief. I could feel the relief from the three guys as well at knowing that Viktor was finally coming around to feeling comfortable with everyone once again.

The movie had barely started and Stephen and Viktor walked back in. It was obvious how much better Viktor looked this time after Stephen helped him. Not just because he was a willing participant this time, either.

They both found places on the couches and settled in with everyone else to enjoy a few hours of being able to completely relax. Halfway through the movie, Sephie moved to stretch out in between me and Ivan. Her head was in my lap, her feet in his. I knew she wasn't going to stay awake until the end of the movie. It took maybe ten minutes and she was sound asleep in between us.

He glanced at her after she'd fallen asleep, laughing at her. "Guess she's warm enough again," he said silently.

"I think your experiment worked. It's good info to have, given that she gets cold so easily," I responded. He nodded in agreement, focusing on the movie

once more. ~

I tried to focus on the movie, but I found my mind wandering to everything else. I was anxious to talk to Dario again, worried that I'd missed something the first time. I was also starting to get impatient with the situation with the mayor and the police commissioner. It definitely helped to speak

to the mayor, as well as the DA, last night, but I wanted that situation over with. As much for the people of the city as for me. They deserved to have people in office that were working for them, not against them.

It might've been somewhat selfish of me, but I preferred the people of the city to be well taken care of. They left my organization alone that way. When the people were happy, when there was order in the city, everyone thrived. Business owners gave back to the community. People ignored more of the illegal side of things. That side would always be there, whether I was in charge or not. People would always turn to outside means to escape whatever it was they were avoiding facing. I just wanted to make sure it was regulated.

All the dealers in the city had standards, especially those that were working for Trino. His dealers helped bring the standards up for the rest of the city's dealers. It was a business, after all. The longer you kept your customers alive, the more money you could make off of them. The drugs that Trino would send were pure, meaning less side effects. His dealers would only sell in small amounts, to keep overdoses from becoming too common. Other dealers caught on to how much more money his dealers were making and changed their own rules.

Sometimes, the love of money could be used for the benefit of the people. I knew if Sal and Ricardo were to take over, those rules would go out the window. They didn't care about the people. One look at Sal's area of the city would tell you that. His area used to be booming. Now it was all but abandoned. The entire city would turn into that if I didn't stop them.

Sephie stirred slightly, breaking me free from my thoughts. She didn't open her eyes, but I heard her voice in my head. "You're all over the place. What are you thinking about?"

I smiled at her, feeling guilty that I had disturbed her sleep. "Nothing important. You somehow manage to always break me free from my thoughts, even when you're sleeping."

She found my hand, lacing her fingers through mine. She still hadn't opened her eyes. "You have a lot more on your mind than I do at any given point. I don't want you to be stressed."

I picked her hand up, kissing the back of it. "I love you, Sephie. More than I ever thought possible."

She finally opened her eyes, revealing their deepest depth of the ocean blue. She smiled sweetly at me. "I love you, Adrik."