

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 475

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475

Adrik

Once we finally made it upstairs, I was exhausted. I didn't even need to tell Sephie I was exhausted. She felt it. She didn't waste the opportunity to tease me about it, though.

"You definitely got new level zapped. Fighting it never ends well, either. I know this from experience," she said, her sweet smile across her face. She walked back to me, unbuttoning my shirt for me.

"Is this from being able to feel all of them the same way you do? That doesn't seem like it should've zapped me," I said as I watched her undressing

She chewed on her lip, her mind trying to come up with solutions, "I don't know. Maybe there's more and we just don't know it yet?"

I put my hands on either side of her face, gently pulling her to me. I kissed her softly, wanting so much more, but I had zero energy. She smiled against my lips as she pushed my jeans off my hips. She pulled back, pointing to the bed. "Go to bed," she said sternly.

I gladly climbed into bed, waiting for her to turn off the lights. She climbed in next to me, after stealing my shirt to wear. She laid across my chest in her favorite spot. I might've lasted 30 seconds before I was out completely.

I found myself completely awake in my own darkness. Haven't been here in years. I rarely remembered my dreams, if I even had them. I assumed I had them, but because I never remembered them, I couldn't be totally sure. I looked around, trying to see if I could see anything, other than my own body. I could still feel Sephie, just as strongly as I always did. I knew she was still happily sleeping on my chest.

Gradually, the darkness gave way to a path ahead of me that led to a small house. I'd never seen the house before, but I decided to explore anyway. When I opened the front door, I could hear someone playing the piano. I recognized the song as one of Sephie's songs she regularly played.

I walked further into the house, trying to be quiet so as not to disturb whoever it was playing the piano. After a short hallway, there was a large room where I saw a man playing the piano. I looked around the room, trying to find clues as to who he was or why he'd be in my dreams. I also wanted to know why he'd be playing one of Sephie's songs. I was so busy looking around, I didn't notice when the song ended.

"I can play her song because I'm the one that gave her the melody," he said, as he stood up from the piano. He turned to face me, a pleasant expression on his face. There was something familiar about him, but I didn't feel like I'd ever seen him before. He watched me, watching him for a few moments. Finally, a smile stretched across his face. That's when I knew,

"You're Sephie's father," I said. He nodded. "She has your smile."

"That might be all she has from me, but I find it's one of my favorite things about her," he said.

"Mine too."

He chuckled. "We had extra angels on standby when you two first met because your heart threatened to stop every time you saw her smile. Did she ever tell you?"

I laughed. "No, not about the extra angels. She did tell me she knew my heart threatened to stop each time."

"She found out that little detail early on in your journey. She was still worried you would think she was bonkers if she revealed too much. I don't know why she would think that about you. You've handled everything like a champ. Better than anyone expected. Seriously. You cost quite a few of us a substantial bit of money in the beginning when you didn't freak out about things we were sure you were going to freak out about," he said.

I couldn't help but laugh again. "Clearly her smile is not all she has from you."

He grinned. "I can't really take credit for her love of the wager. She discovered it well after I was gone. But it does seem to run in the family." He paused for a moment, contemplating how to proceed. I knew if he'd brought me here, there was something important he needed to say.

I decided to go first. "I have to thank you for all the times you've helped us. You've proven to be a very valuable resource for us through all of this and

I'm very happy that Sephie has you."

"You're not the only one that's grateful. It's because of you that she has the right people around her now. I owe you thanks for that, too. Between you and Ivan, I really have nothing to worry about. I mean, I still do. Fathers gotta lather, you know. But you two will always make sure she's protected and safe. The others too, but you and Ivan have very special roles in her life," he said.

"Is there something new happening to me? Is that why I'm so tired right now?" I asked.

He inhaled deeply. "You've felt your connection get stronger with everyone lately, but especially with Sephie?" I nodded. "And you've also felt your demon getting restless, so to speak? Especially when Sephie was gone with Viktor earlier?" I nodded again. "Your demon is growing stronger, which means you're growing stronger. You've demonstrated you have complete control of it." He paused again, looking at me like he was somewhat nervous

to tell me the rest.

"Why does that make you nervous?"

"Much like Viktor, I want no part of Hell. My wings are white as snow for a reason. It's an unavoidable side effect of getting news delivered this way. Not to worry, I can manage," he said, giving me a weak smile. "Adrik, when Stephen joked about his gift leveling up, he was really telling you what you'd be able to do."

"Ripping the demon out and crushing it?" I asked, completely surprised.

"Well, not crushing it. But because your particular demon is as powerful as it is and because you are who you are, you now have the ability to condemn souls, both human and demon straight to Hell. You can take both from a body and send them to Hell."

"What happens to the soul then?"

"It spends eternity in Hell. You're the only one that can grant it reprieve once you condemn them."

"That doesn't sound like something I'm going to use very often," I said.

He smiled at me, his shoulders visibly relaxing. "This is exactly why you were granted the power."

"What do you mean?"

"Your new gift is not something to be taken lightly and it's only meant to be used in very extreme cases. Namely, Ricardo and Martin. Those two have made such powerful deals with their demons that Stephen's gift would be completely ineffective on them. He could break them, but the soul is eternally bound to that demon. Even after coming back, it's going to be forced to live out the same life over and over. You're what can break that cycle. Send the demon back to Hell, along with their souls and those souls never get the chance to come back."

"There's no chance at redemption for them?" I asked, suddenly not sure I wanted the responsibility of condemning someone's soul to an eternity of

suffering.

"It's a heavy decision, Adrik. You're right to be wary of it. You have to remember that both souls made their own choices. They knew the consequences. They might not have known the full extent of those consequences, but they knew there would be consequences nonetheless. You are what will keep future generations safe from those two demons. Think of it that way. It's easier to digest."

I was quiet for a few moments, thinking about what he'd just told me. "How will this affect Sephie?"

"Yes!" he said quietly. He quickly looked back at me, trying to look serious once again. "Sorry. I knew you would ask that," he said, grinning at me. "Because you and she are so connected, your strength will also become her strength. However, you're the only one that can condemn souls and deliver them to Hell. But she's going to see an increase in her power just as you will. Her demon will also grow stronger. Ivan will get a boost from her, but not as much as what she'll get from you. The other three will become connected to their demons quickly, once you realize your full power. They've already drawn considerable power from both you and Sephie. You're what unlocked Stephen's extra gifts. That's when it became apparent you could handle this responsibility. Nobody expected you to go full nuclear and then just turn it off like a switch that quickly. Especially not when it came to

Armando."

"I have Sephie to thank for that. She showed me how to control it," I said.

His smile lit up his face, much in the same way that Sephie's would light up a room. It was evident that he was proud of her.

"What about Viktor? How is he going to handle all of us being so connected to our demons?"