

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 499

499

Sephie

“As long as I can remember. My parents think I’m crazy. My grandmother thought I special and would argue with my parents all the time in my defense, but she died several years ago,” she said, looking down at the floor.

“You still see her though, don’t you?”

Her eyes got wide and her cute little smile stretched across her face. “I do. I see her the time. She follows me around most of the time. That night at the fundraiser was the first time I’d seen other angels in the same place at the same time usually only see one at a time. I was excited about it, but then everyone thought I was crazy.” Her bright face darkened as she thought about that night. “I’m not sure what would’ve happened if Ilya hadn’t heard the commotion from the kitchen.”

I glanced at Ilya, who was watching her. He wrapped his arm around her, pulling her closer to him. “I have a feeling Ilya had been watching you for longer than you realize.” I said, winking at him.

She looked up at me, surprised. She then looked at Ilya, who clearly had a guilty look on his face. “It’s true,” he said. “I had seen you earlier in the evening and kept an eye on you the whole night. When you didn’t come out of the kitchen, I might’ve walked over to find out what was going on. That’s when I saw what was happening and went to get help.”

“You were watching me? Really?” she asked.

“I mean, not in the stalker kinda way. I was trying to see if I could catch your eye, but you kept your head down almost the entire time,” he said, smiling at her.

“I don’t like attention from strangers,” she said quietly, glancing down at the floor.

“I don’t either. It’s why I surround myself with giant men. They keep me hidden.” I said.

She grinned at me, her cute face once again brighter. “That’s one of my favorite thing about Ilya.” His wide smile stretched across his face at her admission. It was official. They were adorable together. It was easy to see they both cared about each other very much, even after only a short time.

I was watching them with each other for a moment when she looked at me very seriously. I chuckled. “You can ask whatever you’d like, Jessica,” I said.

“How did you know I wanted to ask you something?” she asked me,

her eyes

wide.

“It was written all over your face. What would you like to know?”

“You’re...different from the last time I saw you. You look different to me,” she said, shyly.

“You’re right. I am different. Can you tell me how I look different to you?” I asked.

She looked around nervously, then took a step closer to me. “You have...wings,” she said. She was so cute, it was difficult not to laugh at her. I didn’t want to tell her Andrei had already shown us what she could see the last time we saw her. “They’re different colors now.”

“What colors are they now?”

“When I saw you last time, they were only white. Now, they fade to black toward the ends,” she said. She glanced over her shoulder, looking at Adrik. “His are almost all black now.” She looked at Ivan next. “His are like yours, but they have red tips. I don’t know what it means, but every other angel I’ve ever seen has only had white wings. I don’t know why you’re all different.”

“Can you see anything on those three men?” I asked her, pointing to the Wander Twar and Stephen. They were on the other side of the kitchen from Ivan and Adrik, so I don’t think she was paying attention to them before.

Stae studied all three of them for a few moments “They’re like you were last time I say you, but it’s harder to see. It’s not as visible to me. I didn’t see that last time. Are they different too?”

“Yes, they are. We’re all different from the last time you saw us,” I said. I couldn’t help but smile at her. She was trying so hard to be brave, but it was somewhat overwhelming for her. I could feel her calm down every time Ilya touched her. It was very sweet to witness.

“What happened?” Ilya asked.

“That’s a bit of a long story. I’m not sure how much we should share right now, but it’s all necessary for what’s coming,” I said in English. I switched to Russian and added, “everyone but your brother can now make their eyes go black. I have a new col too. I’m not sure how much she can handle right away, so let’s take baby steps for now. She’s a very sweet girl, but she’s clearly overwhelmed.”

Ilya nodded in agreement. He kept the conversation going in Russian as he added, “he is overwhelmed. She’s trying to understand everything. I told her a little bit about what happened to me. She’s fighting against wanting to believe it and believing her parents’ assessment that she’s crazy. She wants to believe everything, but she’s been told she’s crazy for long enough that she won’t let herself believe it.”

My heart hurt hearing that she was struggling that much. I looked at him, his arm still protectively around her. “Ilya, you’re good for her. She’s good for you, too. I can see it clearly. Hell, even Vitaliy can see it. He told me when you guys first got here We can try and help her out as much as we can with accepting that she’s different. She’s even different from all of us. Keep telling her that it’s okay she’s different and that you believe her. It’ll take time, but you can help her turn it around.”

“I tell her often, but I will tell her more,” he said, looking down at her smiling sweetly at her. They were all kinds of adorable. I just wanted to squeeze both of them.

She was somewhat nervous that she couldn’t understand what we were saying. “Don’t worry, Jessica. We were talking about how absolutely adorable you are. I don’t know how you’ve managed to do it, but he’s already wrapped around your finger,” I, smiling at her shock.

Adrik walked over, sliding his arm around my waist. Jessica looked up at Ilya, still shocked at what I’d just told her, but she kept her mouth shut now that Adrik was there. I could feel she was intimidated by him. It was a common reaction to him, even before his latest level-up. Now, it was much more pronounced. He was aware of it, but he rarely tried to make anyone feel more comfortable. With Jessica, however, he did make an attempt.

He smiled at her, saying, “you look much happier than the last time I saw you.”

She smiled nervously, which made Ilya laugh quietly. “She is much happier,” he said fer her.

She inhaled deeply, held her breath for a moment, then said, “I want to thank you again. I didn’t realize how much money you handed me until I got home that night. I’m very grateful.”

Adrik chuckled. “I’m glad it could help you out.”

“She tried to get me to give part of it back to you. I wouldn’t do it,” Ilya said. He looked down at her as her face hardened as she looked up at him. “It was our first fight,” he said, still completely amused by all of it.

I couldn’t help but laugh. I knew Adrik didn’t even know how much money he’d handel her. It didn’t matter.

“I don’t make that much in three months!” she said, still somewhat irritated that ly wouldn’t give part of it back. “I didn’t know it was that much money or I wouldn’t have accepted it!”

“Please, Jessica. Accept it. Keep it. Do not feel guilty for it. You needed to not have to worry about leaving that situation,” Adrik said. Ilya gave her a very clear “I told

you so look.

I laughed quietly. “He looks quite intimidating, but he’s one of the nicest men you’ll ever meet,” I said, leaning my head on Adrik’s shoulder. He pulled me closer to

him

“Just don’t tell anyone. I don’t want that getting out,” he said, kissing my forehead.