

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 140

Chapter One Hundred Forty

Sephie

I couldn't help but chuckle. "Don't worry, that one was hard for me to grasp too. I'm still not entirely sure about how it works. We've been tied together since we were born. We were always supposed to meet, and you were always meant to be my protector. You proved that you're ready for the role yesterday when you used your body to shield mine from the impact. At least, that's what my dad told me." He stayed silent, still thoughtful, but he had a tight grip on my hand. I smiled at him. This is a lot. I'm impressed he's not freaking out.

"But they...my...they were black. Does that mean I'm evil?"

"No, Ivan. You're not evil. And they're not entirely black. According to my dad, who is jealous of your wings, for the record, they're white and then they fade to black and because you're extra special, they're crimson on the tips. He called you the big guns." I grabbed his bicep, trying to wrap my hands around it. "I can see where they would get that idea."

He laughed but was still shocked. He was quiet for a moment longer, then looked at me. "Sephie, I still don't understand. How do you know all this? How do you know what I saw?"

"When we first got to Italy, at the ranch house, when I was asleep for like ever. I was still stuck in that same nightmare loop that I was in on the plane." He closed his eyes, flinching at the memory. I hated to bring it up, because I knew it affected him almost as badly as it did Adrik. "Adrik could pull me out of that loop. When he finally pulled me out for the last time, I was able to talk to my dad. He told me he's been watching over me my whole life and that everything that's happened to this point was for a reason. Like the way the kidnap plan at the ball went so horribly wrong? It was meant to happen that way so that you guys would take Misha's gut feelings seriously. He's the only one that was adamant about that being a bad plan, but nobody listened to him. Now, you all listen to him." He stayed quiet, still mulling over everything I was telling him. "Everything that has happened to me, everything that has happened to you, it's all for a larger purpose. I don't know what yet, but my dad told me that you've spent so much time walking among the demons that you can now walk freely between Heaven and Hell." I thought for a moment, remembering the last thing he told me before I woke up. "He also told me I could do the same. I don't know what that means yet. But he said you're my protector and that you've always felt compelled to protect me."

He laughed. "How do you know that..." he said, almost to himself.

"He explained it to me like this: there are different kinds of soulmates. Adrik and I were always meant to meet and fall in love, probably over and over again through lifetimes. You and I have apparently been together in a different capacity over lifetimes too. I don't know if you're always my protector, but it wouldn't surprise me if you were. You're so darn good at it."

He smiled, squeezing my hand. "I have always felt compelled to protect you. Even when I wasn't convinced you were different from the other girls, despite Boss putting us on you to make sure you stayed safe, which he'd never, ever done before. When you stitched me up in your kitchen? I tried to make you angry to see if you would turn into a different person. You just put me in my place in front of everyone and went about helping me, completely unaffected. Anytime I would be grumpy or angry around his other girlfriends, it was almost like it would piss them off and they'd turn into another person. People act differently when they're afraid or angry. Especially those people that are being fake or pretending to be someone they're not. It's like they can't keep the act up when they're angry too, so they show who they really are. But you? You turned into my emotional support sloth," he said laughing at the memory. I couldn't help but laugh, too. That was definitely one of my finer moments. "Even calling you a princess didn't phase you. Hell, you adopted it right then and now you're the goddamn princess."

"Don't you forget it, either," I said, poking him in the arm.

"When you stitched me up, despite me being an asshole to you, I knew you were completely different. I started to see what Adrik saw in you the first time he looked at you. That's when I knew I would always protect you." He inhaled deeply. "When that truck hit us, all I could think about was making sure you were okay, even if it was the last thing I did

I felt the tears burning my eyes, threatening to fall. I sniffed, trying to hold them back. I leaned my head on his shoulder, grabbing his hand again. "Well, if we're connected, you're not allowed to leave me. The princess says so. You have to listen to the princess." He chuckled. "I don't think that's how it's going to play out, anyway. My dad said what is coming is bad. Very bad, even. But there's a grander plan for all of us. No idea what that plan is, but it's grand."

We sat in silence for a minute. "Ivan, I want you to know that I can pull you from your darkness, the same way Adrik pulled me from mine. You don't need to be scared of it ever again."

He didn't say anything, he just put his giant arm around me and pulled me to him. He kissed the top of my head as he held me close. I could feel him trembling as he fought back the tears. He sniffled, then said, "I do a good job of keeping it away, but hospitals..."

"You don't need to explain anything about that to me. I share your hatred of those places." He squeezed my shoulders.

"I remember what you told me before we got to the house, princess. He really will love you no matter what. We all love you no matter what."