

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 288

Chapter Two Hundred Eighty-Eight

Sephie

I looked at Ivan, noting that he'd been cleaned up and had a fresh set of clothes on. "How?" I asked, pointing at him. I was sure they would know what I was asking, so I didn't feel the need to elaborate or use any more energy than absolutely necessary.

"The recording of you playing worked so the doctor could stitch him up and make sure nothing was broken. We've all been listening to it off and on while Ivan sleeps. So far, he hasn't woken up fighting." Misha said.

I looked at Ivan, remembering him standing over me the last time the doctor checked me. "What made you protect me from the doctor?" I asked, my voice still only barely above a whisper.

He raised his eyebrow. "How do you know that, princess?"

"I can feel you now too. Not as strong though." I stopped to take a breath. "I could hear all your conversations too. I just couldn't move," I said, trying to breathe as deeply as I could.

"Really?" Adrik and Ivan both asked at the same time. I laughed quietly at them, nodding my head.

"Different, though," I said. I looked back at Ivan, still wanting to know what the doctor did. "You were right to do what you did. It felt gross whatever he did."

"He was looking at you the way the doctors at the facility looked at me when they were excited about a new experiment they wanted to try on me," Ivan said.

"It felt the same when Sal was staring at my boobs. And Armando cut my clothes off," I said, taking as deep a breath as I could manage after getting the words out. I coughed once, which made Andrei quickly get more water for me. "You're my favorite, Bubba," I said as he handed me a full cup of water again. I glanced at everyone's tense faces at the mention of Sal and Armando while I drank more water. "Armando?" I asked quietly.

"He's still alive, sestrichka. He's in a room. Chris said he's trying to talk his way out by saying Boss has crazy and put him in there for no reason," Viktor said.

gone

I closed my eyes for a moment, trying not to get angry. I felt Adrik tighten his hold on me. He pressed his cheek against mine, trying to help me stay calm. I took as deep a breath as I could. When I opened my eyes and looked at the guys, they were all surprised.

"Holy shi t, you were not lying, Ivan," Misha said. He looked at Adrik. "Does she feel calm to you, Boss?" I felt Adrik nod his head, his cheek still pressed lightly to mine. I was smiling at them, knowing they were talking about my eyes. I didn't feel out of control angry, but I was certain my eyes told a different story.

"They were like that the whole time they had us," Ivan said. "But she never once lost her cool." He looked at me with a look of pride on his face.

We were interrupted by the doctor coming in to check on me. "Oh, good. You're awake now," he said as he

walked into the room. The guys took a small step back from the bed, but didn't leave. They gave the doctor just enough space to do what was needed, but they were making sure to stay close to me while he was in the room. Adrik pulled me closer to him as the doctor approached the bed. Even though it hurt, I was grateful for him doing so. "How are you feeling?" Dr. Williams asked as he looked over my chart.

"Like shi t," I said quietly. Dr. Williams chuckled.

"How's your breathing? Can you take a deep breath in?" I did as instructed. My ribs were still incredibly painful, so I couldn't breathe as deeply as I wanted to. "Good." He looked at Adrik, asking, "have you heard her wheezing at all?" Adrik shook his head no. "What about coughing?"

"Only when she tries to talk too much," Ivan said.

"That's to be expected," Dr. Williams said. "You're probably going to have a harder time talking and doing normal, everyday things for a few days. Take everything very slowly. It'll make it easier on your lungs to keep up. I'd like to take the chest tube out and see how you do." I nodded my head, eagerly. If me staying in the hospital was dependent on that thing coming out, then I wanted it out as soon as possible.

"Can I get out of bed?" I asked quietly.

"After your chest tube comes out, you can walk for short distances. You'll need to take your IV stand with you, but a little bit of movement will be good for the rest of your body. You're going to be sore, though. How much pain are you in?"

"I'm okay," I said. I was worried about him giving me pain meds that would knock me out for days at a time. I would rather suffer through it. Ivan caught my eye. I looked at him sternly, trying to silently tell him to keep his mouth closed.

"Why do I feel like you're lying?" Dr. Williams asked,

"I've had worse, doc. I'll be fine," I said. My tone was short enough that I was hoping he would let the matter drop. I was trying not to maintain eye contact with him, as I didn't want him to notice if my eyes turned dark. I glanced at the guys, who all had sympathetic looks on their faces. They knew why I was refusing pain meds.

Dr. Williams just sighed. "I'll get a nurse to get your chest tube out shortly. Then you can try going for a short. walk in the hallway. I don't want you to overdo it though. How's your appetite? Are you nauseous?" I shook my head no. "Good. We can give you a few snacks and see how you do with those, then you can have more substantial food." He looked to Viktor. "Or would you rather get food for her too?"

"We'll take care of it," Viktor said. I was curious as to what that conversation had been like, but I would wait to

ask about that later.

Dr. Williams nodded at Viktor, then said, "I'll have a nurse come in shortly. I'll be back in the morning to see how you're doing." He smiled at me before leaving the room.

Once the doctor was out of the room, Ivan looked at me, his broad smile across his face. "Princess, do you know what you're doing with your eyes now?" I looked at him, completely confused. "Your eyes were totally normal when you were talking to the doctor, then you said you were okay and looked at me. Your eyes went

dark as ever when you looked at me, then back to normal the next time you looked at the doctor. If you're doing it on purpose, I'm impressed as hell. If you're not doing it on purpose, then your eyes are telling you that you should be."

"I didn't do it on purpose, I don't think. I didn't want you to tell him I'd told you how much pain I'm in. He's going to give me pain meds that make me sick or knock me out. I don't want that. We can't afford to stay in here for a week just so I can wake up pain free like Sleeping Beauty." I stopped to breathe, but then added, "I also didn't want him to notice my eyes changing. You guys don't need another reason to want to hurt him."