

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 328

Chapter Three Hundred Twenty-Right

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taber that night, once we were alone again, I asked Sephie about her and Andre's silent exchange that morning. She laughed, telling me she was starting to understand Stephen's aversions to being read. "Bubba picked up on the getting scared by not being able to catch my breath. He and Misha winced me to tell you I didn't want to at first because I the ou'd be worried about touching me at all and I didn't want that. They gave me

the male perspective, which was helpful"

"I'm glad they convinced you to tell me. Although I don't know how I feel about Andre's ability to read you. It seems to be working best on you right now," I said, helping her into bed.

"I don't think it will always be that way. He's getting his confidence from ne right now. Once he's more confident, it'll get better with everyone, but he'll also have to learn how to turn it off. Like with Stephen, I know insanely private, so I tend to turn it off with him. Only little things here and there with him."

I thought for a moment. "He is much more private than even Ivan is now that you say that."

She sighed. "Ivan is private because he just doesn't want to drudge up the past. It's over and done with and he doesn't want to have to relive it by telling someone about it. But he's also handling it. Like, it doesn't bother him day to day. When big stuff happens, it comes back, but he's learning new ways to cope and it's helping him overall." She waited for me to lie down, then she rolled over to face me. "Stephen, though. He has something in his past that's just as dark and traumatic as Ivan, except he's not dealing with it. Something happened to him as a kid and he's kept that part of his life locked up tight. It's partly why he turns so sadistic and violent when he gets pushed past his limit. It's one of the universe's little jokes on us, When you ignore something, instead of it going away, it gets stronger. Hy shutting that part of his life away, he's basically been feeding the monster inside him. It's grown. He's going to have to deal with it at some point or the monster will consume him. For now, he can control it and we only see glimpses of it when he's angry, which rarely happens. But if he doesn't make fjends with his beast, the beast will take over."

I inhaled, thinking back to what the acupuncturist had told me about Ivan, Sephie, and me. "The acupuncturist told me that you, me, and Ivan were older than the rest of them. Misha is in the middle. He's older than the other guys, but not as old as us. Knowing Stephen, he signed up for the hardest lessons first." She giggled, nodding her head in agreement.

"Andre's the youngest," she said. "She told me the same thing. She said nobody expected Andrei to figure out he was like me in this lifetime, but he did. I think that's also partly why he's more attached to me right now. He might've scared himself."

"Did she say anything about Stephen? She told me they all have gifts and we're supposed to help them discover them."

Sephie looked at me, curious. "When did she tell you that?"

"The first time she worked on you after you and Ivan were taken. You were talking with Ivan and she came to me to tell me all this. She told me you and Ivan couldn't hear us. It was like we had left the room, but when she stepped away from me, you saw me again and I could hear you talking to

Ivan."

She smiled. "That's a handy trick," she said, thoughtfully. "What else did she tell you?"

"That you needed the most help with your pain, just as I needed the most help with my anger. She said your soul was showing me where you needed help by allowing me to feel your pain. And that you still don't feel completely safe being totally vulnerable when you're hurt."

She sighed. "I know I'm doing it, but I don't know how to stop trying to hide my pain from you."

"You don't have to now that I can feel it. Although I'm still not sure why I couldn't feel anything from your lung. But I can feel what your shoulder feels like and what your ribs feel like."

"You didn't feel anything from my lung because there's nothing to feel. I only felt pain when I was in the hospital from my lung. You're not missing anything," she said, smiling sweetly at me. She had a quiet way of instilling confidence in every one of us. Even me.

"I did miss that it scared you, though," I said. "You're still able to hide that one from me, but luckily, I have backup now. What you can hide from me, you won't be able to hide from Andrei." She giggled, burying her face in my chest.

"I'm in deep sh it now," she said, still laughing.

It was almost two weeks later and Trino finally sent the video of Massimo's overly dramatic death. He really did light him on fire, but as it turns out, he didn't have to push him off the cliff Massimo pimped on his own, trying to get away from the flames that engulfed him. I shared the video with the guys, but Sephie skipped watching it. She could hear it while everyone else watched and she said that was enough for her Her memory was so good that I understood why she didn't want to have that seared into her fave images

I called Trino later that evening to ask about Martin and to give him an update on tal and Picando We'd had people in Italy watching them for us. Niko and Vito were still with them They were definitely planning, we host weren't entirely sure of their plans.

"How's Martin, Trino" I asked after we had laughed about Massimo.

He sighed heavily. "I thought we were okay when I first got back. He was nervous about almost not making it out of Mexico. I thought it was going to be enough, but he's back to thinking there's another way of dealing with them. He's been questioning my business practices as well."

"Trino. I know you already know this, but he needs to remember his place. He's either going to go back to the Mexicans and get himself killed or he'll try to split from you and run his own business. Both of those options are not going to end well for him. If he tries to split and he comes to me, he'll meet the same fate as Anthony and Lorenzo."

"I know, Jefe. I'm trying to get him to use some common sense, but he's not thinking right now," Trino said. "My guys are oddly sympathetic toward him, as well."

Sephie had walked up beside me, tucking herself into my side while I talked to Trino. The call was on speaker so she could hear as well. "I've put you in a very tough spot right now. Trino, and I apologize for that. You need to be careful how much you say in front of your men. If you tell Martin he's going to die if he chooses to leave you, your men will turn against you once that happens. I did not peg them as being ultra-religious, but they clearly art. They're obviously fine with lighting someone on fire and throwing them off a cliff, but knowing what will happen in the future is a clear line in the sand for them. I don't understand it, but that's where they're at. They'll likely go through extensive me ntal gymnastics to blame it all on me,

but you'll be guilty by association. That's where I see this going," she said.

"I didn't even tell them everything about you saving Martin," Trino said quietly.

"It doesn't matter. They saw enough that they know. Or they think they know. But take it as a blessing. If this was enough to cause their loyalties to waver, they were never loyal to you in the first place, Trino," she said.

We could hear Trino cursing in Spanish on the other end. "You're absolutely right, Miha. It seems I have some housekeeping to do."

After I hung up with Trino, Ivan looked at Sephie, his sly smile across his face. "Princess, you really were made for this shi t."

"Called it," Misha said, pointing at Sephie.

"Stephen was also right. I know how people react to things they don't understand. Even without knowing things I'm not supposed to know, I could've called this one," she said.