

# King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 443

443

Adrik

Vinny looked through the paperwork. Anna leaned over, also glancing at the paperwork in front of them. They talked quietly to each other, discussing options.

“You can take it home and think about it, Vinny. I don’t need an answer today. I said, trying to take some of the perceived pressure off of them. “Everything you need is there. Feel free to call Neal or myself if you have questions.”

Vinny still looked too stunned to speak, but they both stood up. “I would appreciate just a little time to make sure this works for us,” he said. “But you’ll have your answer by Monday, at the latest.”

“That’s fine, Vinny, I know you have a lot going on. Take all the time you need. It’s yours until you decide you don’t want it,” I said, standing with them. Sephie jumped off the cabinet and came to stand next to me.

Vinny looked at her, smiling at her. “Somehow I think you had something to do with this, bella.”

“Nope. This was all him. He might’ve thought about it because my stomach is a long-term relationship with you, but really that’s on you. You did this to yourself, Vinny,” she said. She’d put her contacts in before coming to the meeting, but I knew her eyes were green.

Vinny and Anna both laughed at her statement. They both thanked me and hugged Sephie once again before Stephen escorted them back downstairs. Neal stayed for a few more minutes, catching me up on other business. I noticed Sephie walk to Misha and Andrei, asking them both their thoughts on what Vinny would do. They quietly discussed everything while Neal and I talked about other matters.

I caught myself thinking back to the conversation we’d had that morning, where she was concerned she was keeping them from living their own lives. I watched as they readily discussed things with her that I knew for a fact they wouldn’t be able to discuss with anyone else. She gave them a space to be completely authentic. She just didn’t realize how important that was yet. She didn’t know they’d do whatever it took to keep it.

We got to the house early enough that Sephie wanted to take a walk first thing. She loved being able to go outside without fear of anything. It made me feel somewhat guilty that we hadn’t been to the house in a while..

“Don’t feel guilty,” she said, lacing her fingers through mine as we walked toward the woods. “We’re here now. That’s what matters.”

We walked in silence, enjoying the last bit of daylight. I could feel the stress melting away as we walked. I smiled to myself, thinking about how Sephie really was magic in her own way. She always knew just what I needed.

She felt the pull in my chest and glanced up at me. She smiled her sweet smile that spark in her eyes that was reserved only for me. “I can say the same for you, you know,” she said as we headed back toward the house.

I stopped her before we got all the way out of the woods, pulling her against me. I loved the way the fading daylight made her hair look. There were at least ten different shades of red and orange in the last rays of sunlight. It made her hair look like it really was on fire. Her eyes were normal, which was becoming a rarity, but I found myself loving it just as much as when they changed. Those were the eyes that I fell in love with. Those were the eyes that first looked at my soul and loved every piece of me.

I smiled at her, turning away from her. “Get on. We both know you don’t walk back to the house,” I said. I heard her giggle as she jumped on my back. She wrapped her arms around my neck and shoulders as I bounced her higher and walked us back to the house. I could feel her happiness the entire way.

The guys were all in the back room when we got back. She ditched her coat and went to the kitchen to start dinner. We all happily followed her. Viktor still felt somewhat guilty about taking the weekend off, even though it was my idea, so he made sure there were plenty of gitceries at the house when we arrived.

She started pulling things out of the refrigerator as the guys all moved to the chairs around the kitchen island. I caught her glancing at all of them.

1/2

She had come up with a new signal for Andrei, since I caught their last one. wasn’t going to tell her I’d caught this one as well.

She found the answer to her silent question, a small smile on her face.

She stopped what she was doing, looking at all of them. “You’re all wondering why Viktor irritates you now, aren’t you?”

There was an audible exhale from all of them. “YES,” they all groaned.

“We’ve been trying to figure it out. We also think Ivan knows something he’s not telling us,” Misha said. He was clearly frustrated with not being able to solve the puzzle.

Sephie giggled. “Ivan does know something. He found out last night, but he’s being nice to me and letting me tell you,” she said, winking at Ivan.

“Why didn’t we find out last night?” Misha asked. He was somewhat indignant about the matter, which made it even funnier.

“Because I didn’t want Viktor to be around when I told you. It’s easier to ask one of you to stay behind than it is for me to ask Viktor to go away so we can obviously talk about him,” she said.

“That’s why we’re here, isn’t it?” Stephen asked.

I nodded. “Well, not the only reason. I needed a break. She needed a way to tell you guys what happened without Viktor around. She’s worried about singling him out. She doesn’t want him to feel left out of anything,” I said.

“What happened, spider monkey? What do you know?” Andrei asked..

“Kostya came to me. Same way my dad and his mom come to me. Just slightly creepier because I wasn’t expecting a kid,” she said as they all laughed at her still obvious discomfort. She explained why they all felt different around Viktor now.

“But we don’t control our demons the same way you three do,” Andrei said.

“Not yet, you don’t. But you made the choice to learn how to. By doing so, I think your connection is already stronger. Your connections to me are stronger, as well as Adrik now. If it’s not already, it will be to Ivan soon, too. The connections between the three of us are stronger because of our demons. It should be that way with you three soon. As such, we’ll never have the same kind of connection with Viktor,” she said. “But that’s okay, too. He has good reason to be afraid of our demons. It’s just going to take his soul a little longer to get to the point that we’re at. He’s still very much all in with what’s going on. He’s not going anywhere.” She looked at Stephen, her wide smile stretching across her face, as she added, “and Yoden gets to help him deal with his trauma so that he’s more comfortable around us.”