

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 420

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Ivan

Viktor was exhausted last night when he finally went to his room, so it didn't surprise me that he didn't get up at a normal time this morning. It was strange to be at the house without Boss here. It was nice though. The house had become our sanctuary. The place we could go where we didn't need to constantly be on guard. The place where we could just relax for a few days. We were always happy when Sephie wanted to come here. It gave us

more of a break than it did her. I think.

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I think she knew that. I think most of the time when she asked to come here she was asking more for us than she was herself. This situation with Viktor really bothered her. She knew he'd been avoiding her for weeks. It was hard for her to not take that personally. I still wasn't completely convinced that Viktor was as happy about finding out he had a gift everyone else was. Even with the way Stephen's gift happened and the back story that went along with it, he was much happier about it than Viktor. It felt like Viktor was an outlier now. We all had very close connections with Sephie. I had an even closer connection with Boss now, too. I can't be sure, but I think somehow Misha and Andrei are becoming even more connected with each other as things progress. But Viktor. He's wanted no part of it. It has me worried.

He finally woke up after I was done with my workout and on my way back to shower. He looked like he hadn't slept well, even though he was pushing 10 hours by the time he decided to get up. If he drank, I'd say he was hungover.

"You don't look like you slept very well, man," I said when he stopped in the hallway.

"I didn't," he grumbled. He just turned and walked toward the kitchen.

After my shower, I decided to force him to go to the lake, after a short conversation with Sephie.

"I'm not sure what to do with him, princess. He's hella grumpy this morning. He said he didn't sleep last night, even though he didn't wake up until late this morning."

She was silent for a few moments. Almost long enough that I was worried she hadn't heard me. I could feel her emotions all over the place, at least, so I knew she was trying to come up with a solution.

"Take him to the lake. It's not the best time of year for it, but at least it's sunny today. I don't know why he needs to go there, but he needs to go there. That spot is magic."

"No arguments from me there. I'm honestly not sure if he's even been there. Step either."

"I don't think they've been there. They rarely stay at the house with me when we're there. But I feel like it will help. No idea how, so don't ask me details."

I chuckled. "If I haven't learned to trust you yet, then there's something seriously wrong with me, princess." I could hear her laughing, as well as feel her happiness. Since I had paid attention to the connection last night when we were experimenting, it now felt stronger.

Clearly, it was that way for her as well. I was quiet for a moment, still worrying over Viktor, when she said, "there's something else, isn't there? You're worried about him?"

I laughed. "Of course, you'd notice. Side note, the connection feels stronger since our experiment last night."

"It does for me too. We should check Adrik later. I can feel you the same way I do when you're in the room with me this morning."

"Same, princess."

"Now tell me why you're still worried about him. Did something happen? I've never fished in anyone's head from this distance, but I'll give it a try if you make

me."

"No need. Nothing happened. I just caught myself thinking about him this morning when I was working out. He's like the outlier of the group now. It used to

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be Stephen, but he seems like his connection has gotten much stronger with you. I think the Wonder Twins are building their own connection between the two of them, as well as having stronger connections with you. Viktor seems like he hasn't wanted any of that. Like, he almost feels like Stephen, before Stephen told us all he was gay. Like Viktor is hiding something he doesn't want the rest of us to know."

"I think you're right, Squish. He definitely hasn't wanted to be a part of it. I don't know about him hiding something though. He might just be shocked when he learned what Stephen had to go through for his gift. He probably suspected he would have a similar experience and was trying to avoid it. If Misha was right, though, Viktor will at least use it on his little brother, so maybe we have to wait until he comes before Viktor finally wraps his head around everything."

"Great. He said he's not coming for a few weeks. I don't know if I can deal with him Viktor for that long. He's an ass when he's grumpy,"

She laughed, her joy once again coming through the connection strongly. "I might pay to see that. I'm not convinced it's possible."

"Oh, it's possible. You'll be glad he's avoiding you once you see it." I was hit with her sadness once I mentioned him avoiding her, but she tried to quickly hide it with laughter. "Don't be sad about it, princess. He still loves you. What's happening with him is all him. It has nothing to do with you."

She was quiet for a moment, then she sighed. "I know. Thanks for the reminder. You're my favorite."

Viktor protested going to the lake, so I told him I'd kick his ass if he didn't. "You don't have to talk, man. Just trust me. You need to go there. Get your damn coat already."

He grumbled as he walked back to his room to get his coat, but he came out with it a few minutes later.

We walked in silence all the way to the lake. While I didn't mind the silence, I did find myself wishing that Sephie was here. She always knew just what to say. I didn't have the first clue on what to say to Viktor. This was going to be the quietest trip to the lake I'd ever had.

We sat by the lake for longer than I was expecting. Viktor was very much lost in his thoughts. He didn't make a move to go back to the house for almost two hours. It was me that finally broke the silence. "When does your brother come? Which one is it? Aleksander or Ilya?"

Ilya. Sasha is still in Germany. Ilya is done with his service. He wants to come here, at least until he figures out what to do next.

He didn't sound so good when I talked to him last. I'm the one that talked him into coming here. He was going to go back home when he got out, but there's nothing for him there. So I talked him into coming here," he said.

"Give him a job. We could use the extra help," I said.

"That's what I was thinking. I'll see what he's like when he gets here. He's still getting over some girl. I think she did a number on him. Young love, I think," he said, shaking his head.

"When does he get here?"

"Next week. He said he had something to take care of before coming here, but he actually texted last night and said he's coming here earlier. Whatever it was he was taking care of isn't important anymore. I have a feeling he was trying to save whatever was left with the girl, but that must be off the

table now."

"It'll be good to get him to a new place, then. It's been a long time since I saw him. He was just a little shit the last time I saw him."

"He's not anymore. He's as tall as me now. He's still a skinny shit, but he's strong. Like Misha, it gives him a speed advantage. The last time I saw both of them, him and Sasha got into it. Aleksander did not fair well."

I laughed. Viktor's middle brother, Aleksander, was shorter than him but just as wide as he was tall. Nobody ever messed with Aleksander. "Sometimes it's good to be humbled," I said, still laughing at the thought of his brothers fighting.

"He might not agree with you, but Ilya definitely does," he said. He finally laughed. I could see some of the tension he'd been carrying around since yesterday morning melt off him. Sephie was right. This place is magic.