

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 76

Chapter Seventy-Six

Adrik

I was lost in my thoughts in the shower, busy beating myself up over what had happened. I looked down, catching her staring up at me. She had a confused look in her eyes but said nothing. I was grateful for any eye contact, so I held it as long as she would let me. Trying to silently let her know I was sorry and that I loved her more than anything. She'd always been able to read my mind just by looking me in the eyes before. I'd hoped she was capable of doing so now. She stared at me for a few minutes, her eyes searching. Constantly searching. I let her read whatever part of my soul she was interested in. It all belongs to her. A tear fell from my eye as I looked into her sad eyes. She reached up and wiped it away with her thumb, leaving her hand on my face for a moment before dropping it along with her gaze. She allowed me to pull her to me and hold her. Her arms stayed limp at her sides, though.

She barely spoke at dinner, but she did eat. She ate a lot, even for her. She'd barely eaten the past three weeks, so it was good to see her appetite come back with a vengeance. The guys were quiet as well, all still feeling horrible about everything that had happened.

Viktor asked me in Russian, "should we change plans for tomorrow? Do we need to arrange for a car instead? Or do you want to wait a day to leave?"

I thought for a few moments. "Let's see how tonight goes and how she is in the morning. The drive to Naples will still be faster if we take the bikes. I don't know which is worse, extending the trip out or making her ride a bike for 7 hours."

"Stop trying to change the plans because of me. I'll be fine," she said as she stood up and walked slowly back to our room for the night, leaving us all stunned.

We cleaned up after dinner and then all retired to our rooms. Sephie was laying on the bed, on top of the covers. She was laying on her good hip, which meant she was facing the door. She had taken her pants off, her road rash on full display. I took my shirt off and slipped out of my jeans, crawling in bed behind her. I was suddenly exhausted and wanted nothing more than to hold her for a few hours.

As carefully as I could, I wrapped my arms around her. I had hoped she would snuggle back into me. She did not. But she made no moves to get out of my grasp, either. This will have to do for now.

Sometime during the night, I woke to her struggling in her sleep. She called my name and then she called for Ivan. She was replaying the scene in the ballroom. She did it over and over on the plane. She would call out my name, then Ivan's name, then she would struggle. That's when I started to talk to her. It seemed like it would help to calm her and it seems like it's what eventually broke the cycle.

I tried it again. "Sephie, I love you, solnishko. Please come back to me. I can't live without you."

She sighed and I felt her push her body back into mine. I held her tighter. She was calm for a few minutes. Just when I thought she had fallen into a peaceful sleep, she called out for me again. Then Ivan. Then she began struggling.

"Sephie, I love you. I'm here. I'm not going anywhere. I don't care how many times I need to tell you for you to believe it again, but you're my everything."

Quiet. Instead of waiting for her to start the cycle again, I kept talking to her. "I've loved you since the first night I saw you, when you were standing at the bar. Your eyes were so wide when you saw Viktor and Andrei walk in. It was adorable. But then you locked eyes with me and I saw the look in your eye immediately change, giving me that spark that only I can see. Your friend Max had to push you to come show us to the meeting room. You almost tripped on your way to us. I was trying desperately to control myself as you walked closer. You were so cute. When you asked what you could get us to drink and Viktor told you waters for all of us, you cocked your head to the side and said "different." Then you immediately got worried you had offended me. It was all I could do not to kiss you right then. I stepped close to you, able to smell the floral scent of your shampoo. It drove me crazy. I sat down at the table and all I could think about was running my hands through your hair and what it would look like not in a braid."

She sighed and made the quiet cooing noise she sometimes made when I would run my hands through her hair while she was sleeping. I reached up and ran my hand lightly through her hair. She started to roll over to face me but cried out when she hit her bad hip. She sat up, cursing, but still asleep. I got up and moved to the other side of her so she could lay across my chest, without having to lay on her bad hip.

She settled onto my chest, my hand still running through her hair. After just a few minutes, her fingers were lightly playing on my chest, and I knew she was having better dreams. I drifted back to sleep, while she played her favorite songs on my heart