

King of the Underworld by RJ Kane

Chapter 41

Chapter Forty-One

Sephie

After everyone else had left for the afternoon, Misha turned to me, grinning from ear to ear. Misha was the youngest. He was the little brother of the group, but right now, he looked like he'd won the special prize and he was going to enjoy every moment of it. I couldn't help but smile back at him. "What's on the agenda for the afternoon, boss? You're the babysitter and I can still only barely find my way around the house on my own."

He laughed. "You know it took Andrei two weeks to remember where everything was when we first came here? You're doing better than him."

"He told me! Bless him," I said, clutching my imaginary string of pearls around my neck.

He walked to the windows, looking at the storm clouds rolling in once again. "It looks like it might storm again this afternoon.

What do you say we grab some lunch and spend the afternoon watching movies? I need some recovery time after you tried to kill me this morning anyway."

"That sounds perfect. Want me to make you lunch?" I asked, walking back to the kitchen.

"Net. I have surprise for you. I sent Tori to my favorite deli. She'll be back any minute now with the best sandwich you've ever eaten."

"Oh, I love surprises! Did you know you were staying with me this whole time?"

"I suspected that Boss would take it easy on me after you tried to kill me this morning, but even if I didn't get to stay. I could've had my sandwich later. It's worth the wait."

My stomach growled in anticipation.

Tori arrived soon after. Misha was right. It was the best sandwich of my life. "I'm going to have to run more if I keep eating like this," I told him as I finished the last bite of my sandwich.

He groaned, wiping his mouth. He thought for a moment and then shrugged his shoulders. "At least it will be a delicious death."

I started cleaning up our mess. "I'll clean this up. You go pick the movie. I'm successfully in a food coma and would love to do nothing more than lie around for a while."

His wide smile appeared as he got up from the counter. His boyish good looks becoming even more attractive when he smiled.

Tori reappeared in the kitchen. She went to help me clean everything up. "It's okay, Tori. I can clean this up. I feel bad for you to constantly be cleaning up after me."

She gave me a tight smile. "It's my job, Miss Sephie. Besides, I owe you for last night."

"So, it went well...?" I asked, dying to know how it ended up.

"Very well, Miss Sephie. He was so nervous to start with, but he relaxed after Boss came back. He was almost completely different when we went for a walk after dinner."

"He was so worried he was going to get in trouble. He's adorable. I'm very happy that it went well."

She grabbed my hand, looking at me seriously. "Thank you. You're going to have to give me your secret on how you've changed all of them for the better in such a short time."

I blushed. "No secret. I haven't done anything other than allow them to be who they are."

She gave me the same tight smile but said nothing further. Her reaction gave me pause, but I brushed it off as Misha yelled from the other room, asking me to choose between two movies. "My babysitter beckons!" I said dramatically as I left the kitchen.

We couldn't make the decision between two movies, so we decided to watch them both. Not like we had much else to do that afternoon...

The first movie was about a fictitious war, with all the fighting and gore you would expect. Maybe a little over the top. but a good movie. I enjoyed Misha pointing out mistakes in the fight scenes. He would point at the screen and say, "that's not even humanly possible" or "he would be dead if he tried that in real life." It made me laugh every time.

The second movie was a bit of a supernatural thriller. Ghosts, demons, and the like. The sky had gotten darker outside when we started the second movie, as the storm was now directly above us. The thunder rumbling and flashes of lightning added to the eerie feel of the movie. I didn't usually get scared at these types of movies, but this one was creeping me out. I jumped a few times at what was happening on the screen. Misha laughed at me, but he still got up and moved to the couch I was on. He picked my feet up, placing them in his lap as he sat down.

"Don't worry, gazelle, I'll protect you."

I kicked him in his ribs, gently, "I am not a gazelle!"

"You're a gazelle. Or would you prefer wildebeest? Zebra, maybe?"

I scoffed. "Fine. I'll stick with gazelle."

He laughed and patted my legs. "That's what I thought, gazelle."

I glared at him. "I hate you."

"I know," he said, his wide smile stretching across his face once more.

The movie ended, but the storm was still raging outside. Misha had fallen asleep as the movie was ending. He had stretched out beside me, his legs behind me on the couch. He still had his arm protectively around my legs as he slept. I smiled at how innocent he looked when he slept.

I watched the lightning show through the expansive windows. There was always something about storms that I loved. My mother told me I was born in a thunderstorm. She would say "children born in a storm can walk in the dark without fear, for they know the light is always with them."

When I was young, I never really understood what she meant. After the past few days, I was starting to understand a little more. I should be terrified of all these people. They basically kidnapped me, after one of their associates almost killed me. But I was more than fine with it. In fact, you could say I was happy about it. They weren't terrifying in the slightest. Well, maybe Ivan was a little. But even with him, all I saw was good when I looked at him. When I looked at all of them. Adrik, especially. Life was about balance. We all had good parts and bad parts. Each day was about choosing which parts you paid the most attention to.

I heard Misha snoring softly. I slowly pulled my legs away from him and got up as quietly as I could. I stood and stretched, the soreness still present in my muscles. It felt good, though. I left Misha napping on the couch and wandered around the house. I walked into the room with the piano. No one was around, so I sat down and played a few notes. I was probably going to wake Misha up with this, but I didn't care. It felt good to have a piano to play right now.

My mother always said I had more talent for the piano than she did. She was the classically trained pianist though. I never had as much interest in it as she did. I just enjoyed playing the songs I liked and making up my own songs. I hadn't played much since she died. Every now and then I would visit the Steinway gallery and would play one of their floor models for an hour or so. The salesman had known my mother, so they would let me play as long as I liked. It was a free demo for them, so they loved it when I would come in. They always said they sold more pianos when I was there.

I started to pick at the keys, trying to decide what to play. I played quietly at first, not really wanting to wake Misha up, but as I repeated the melody, I got lost in the music and just started playing, not at all concerned with the volume.

Music was an escape. A way for my emotions to come out. I could play angry, sad, happy, and everything in between. There was never a time that I didn't feel better after playing for a while. Before my mom died, I would play for hours, getting completely lost in the music.

I was so wrapped up in what I was playing that I hadn't noticed Misha come into the room. He didn't say a word, he just sat in one of the chairs on the other side of the room and listened intently while I stayed lost in the melody, completely lost in my own head.