

Chapter 234 Dying Wish

Third person

Nina took the long way, the scenic route, back to the palace from the city.

Her excuse for making the trip had been to check her mail. But in truth, she really just needed a little time to herself. Time for real unwinding without a baby around. And a little self-indulgent self-care.

After visiting her apartment, Nina went to her favorite nail salon and got a mani-pedi. Her nails were now a shade of deep emerald green that matched her current hair color, glossed with a layer of blue-green sparkles. She hit up the dry bar, too, and got her hair washed, deep conditioned, and blown out. It felt so good, so relaxing, she almost fell asleep in the stylist's chair. Lastly, she indulged in a whirlwind tour of her favorite clothing stores for a little retail therapy.

And then she was out of excuses. She headed back to the palace, knowing it was for the best to get back and through security before nightfall. But she did take the scenic route, and didn't regret catching the view of a hot orange sunset over the mountainside as she did.

Staying at the palace with Fi, Alex and Kayden lately was definitely a good thing. Nina had plenty of money saved up, so she didn't need to be working, and she'd been feeling tired of the nightlife lately, too. Plus, it was definitely the safest place to stay, considering the vampire threat. And living in total luxury with unlimited maid service and catering was in no way a bad situation.

Every once in a while, though, the palace did feel a bit like a big, fancy prison.

There just wasn't much to do there. And Nina was used to doing a lot. Excitement and adventure, that was her natural habitat, that was where she lived—or at least it used to be, until recently.

She reached the palace gates and started inching her way through all the familiar security checkpoints. Then finally she arrived at the big, mostly empty parking lot where she'd taken to parking her Benz. She popped the trunk and retrieved her shopping bags, slinging a few of the heavier ones over her shoulder. She closed the trunk, locked the car, and started on her way to her room.

But just as she turned down the final hallway, she paused. The small hairs on the back of her neck stood on edge. She could feel that she was being watched.

For whatever reason, her first thought was: Iris. That bitch that Alex is keeping here for some dumb reason, who's been antagonizing Fiona.

Nina had been wondering when she'd finally run into her. She heard movement and turned toward the sound just as a broad, towering figure stepped out from the shadows.

Nina laughed her sweet, musical laugh as the Gamma warrior moved forward into the light. "You?"

The man, pacing slowly toward her, arched a questioning eyebrow. He had thick, sandy hair and a square jaw, the kind that looked like its sharp edge could cut glass. Broad shoulders, a chiseled body made of hard muscle, and deep, dark eyes.

"What, are you stalking me now?" Nina asked.

"No," the man said, crinkling his brow. Evidently this question caught him off-guard. An awkward, breathy laugh escaped his lips and he paused, stopping just a few feet away from Nina. She could feel the heat of his body from where she stood... and found herself wanting more of it. She wished he hadn't stopped.

"I did come here looking for you," he confessed. "But it's not something I've done before..."

"Sure," Nina said sarcastically, rolling her eyes.

She adjusted her grip on her shopping bags. She was only a little bit afraid as the Gamma warrior, whose name she still could not remember, took another slow step forward. She was more turned on than anything else, but her wolf's instincts still had her glancing to her left and right, checking her surroundings to plan a possible escape, just in case this wasn't about to be as friendly an interaction as she was hoping for.

The man licked his lips. "You didn't seem to mind it the other day when you caught me watching you. You liked it, didn't you? You liked having my eyes on you while you let another man make you come?"

Before Nina could reply – she was too distracted trying to remember how to breathe – he closed the shirt distance between them and pressed Nina up against the wall. Her bags fell to the ground with a clatter.

"I liked it too," he said, looking down at her with a fierce, dark gaze. "That was the hottest thing I've ever seen."

Nina's hands, operating without her mind's permission, caught in a circle around the man's muscular neck. Under her palms, his jugular arteries throbbed faster and faster as he lifted her light, limber body up into the air, pressing her back against the cold marble wall. Nina's traitorous legs wrapped around his trim waist as his hands moved to grope and cradle her ass.

His lips found her ear, grazing it as he spoke. His already deep voice went dark and husky. "I haven't been able to stop thinking about you since the moment I laid eyes on you."

"I don't think this is a good idea," Nina managed to force herself to say, even though her fingertips were already drifting over the ridges of the man's strong, broad shoulders. "I don't want to cause problems in your pack."

"I don't care," he rasped, lips still hovering at her ear. He ran his hands up her sides, slowing to savor the curve of her tiny waist. "I've never wanted anything, anyone as much as I want you..."

Slowly, he started to lap his tongue up the edge of her ear. And then all over her ear. Nina's jaw slackened and her eyes fluttered closed. Her mind was grasping onto a tiny ledge of self-control. She knew her white-knuckle grip could not hold for much longer.

And then he picked up the pace with that frantic, sloppy licking of her ear. He licked underneath it too, and all over her neck, and up the length of her throat. He was practically drooling, and covering her with his saliva. Just lapping that hot wet tongue of his all over her, like the taste of her skin was water and he was dying of thirst.

That animal energy was making her crazy. His throbbing erection was smashed between them, and it thrashed and raged against Nina's body like an animal all its own.

When the soldier's big, calloused hands moved to Nina's chest and started greedily feeling up the shape of her breasts and tugging at the scooped neckline of her top, she didn't stop them.

"I'm going into battle in two days," the man growled, panting into her ear. "And I don't want to die without fucking you first. ...Elektra."

A string of helpless curses tumbled from Nina's lips. Her fingers dug into the hard, muscular flesh of the man's back through the thin fabric of his t-shirt.

His tongue found her neck again as his rough hands started kneading her breasts hungrily. Hot shivers emanated from Nina's chest and zipped out through her whole body. She didn't want to fight this guy. He wanted to give her exactly what she needed – a break from being Nina.

"Yeah, that's my name," the emerald-haired beauty whispered between panting breaths. "Say it some more for practice. You're gonna have to scream it soon."

A growl of excitement ripped from the man's throat. She wouldn't have thought it was possible for him to get any more aroused than he'd already been, but he seemed to grow even harder now that she'd made it known she was down.

She clutched a handful of his soft hair and tugged his head back. "Not here, though."

He laughed under his breath, dark eyes glinting with mischief. "Because you're shy?"

She slapped him the face, just hard enough to sting. Just to see how he'd react.

He let his head fall to the side, absorbing the impact. His lips parted to release a vibrating sound that was half purr, half growl. When his dark eyes slipped back over to hers, they looked drugged and heavy, like she'd just dosed him with something.

"Because I said so," she whispered. A contented smile curled her glossy lips.

Then she shoved him away, freeing herself from his arms and righting onto her feet again.

"Pick these up," she said, glancing at the bags strewn on the floor while straightening out her clothes. "And follow me."