

## CHAPTER 127

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127 Lucas: The Dark Side of Alpha LUCAS I'm going to hell. I'm going straight to hell on a VIP plane. Pressing a soft ki\*s against my phone screen after Ava hangs up isn't why. Having a raging boner from the sound of her little laugh? That's not why, either... exactly. But what deranged psychopath gets hard from listening to their mate while slicing body parts off a corpse? Granted, he's still groaning a little, so he isn't a corpse yet. But he's close. "Did you fix the chainsaw?" "Got it working again." Vester holds it up, its teeth gleaming wetly in the dim light. The damn sound of it starting up again had almost ruined my conversation with my mate.. I nod, tearing my gaze away from the screen, Ava's 13:50 1/8 127 Lucas: The Dark Side of Alpha sweet laughter still echoing in my ears. "Let's get this done, then." The knife clatters onto the tray as I set it aside. I barely remember picking it up, so distracted by the sound of my mate's voice. Her presence lingers, a phantom touch against my cheek. But reality crashes back in as I survey the mess on the floor. I kick at his head, to the side in a glistening pool of blood. His eyes stare blankly, mouth slack. He stopped screaming a while ago, his healing abilities no match for Vester's ruthless blade, but even so, the occasional groan comes out. He should have been dead already, but his body hasn't realized it yet, still trying to fight the pain. f@cking Blackwood spy. Thought he could infiltrate my borders, gather intel for that snake Renard. Not on my watch. We aren't usually into dismembering, but it has its place. "What's the plan for all these bits and pieces?" Vester asks, wiping his hands on a rag that's more red than white. 13:50 2/8 127 Lucas: The Dark Side of Alpha A mirthless chuckle rumbles in my chest. "We're going to spread Renard's little spy all around the perimeter of the Unregistered city. Let him catch a whiff of his failure." Vester nods. "Sending a message?" "Loud and f@cking clear. Renard needs to know we're on to him." I roll my shoulders, trying to dispel the tension. It's been a long night. Weeks, really. Ever since Ava escaped her family's clutches, it's been a constant game of cat and mouse, trying to find that little snake of a wolf. And f@ck, I miss her. It eats at me, being away from her. Hearing her voice, that sweet laughter... it's a balm and a curse; soothing my ragged edges while stoking the fire in my veins. I want to be there, watching over her as she heals, holding her close. Not here, elbow-deep in some traitor's guts. But Ava needs her space. And after today, I think I can finally feel the fruits of that sacrifice. She's no longer so distant. If all it takes is letting her go to to the occasional stupid party, it's an acceptable cost. 13:50 3/8 127 Lucas: The Dark Side of Alpha It was worth picking up her call, even during this mess. Vester claps me on the shoulder, startling me out of my brooding thoughts. "I'll get the boys to start on the distribution." Vester's always been there, watching my back, ready to do what needs doing. Even the ugly shit. "Sounds good." Hopefully Ava never hears of these sordid details, the shadowy side of the Alpha title. If it's up to me—and it is—she's going to live in peace. In innocence and a beautiful world. Not in places like this. Vester snorts, a wry smile tugging at his mouth. "You're thinking about her again, aren't you? You should go, before you start writing love poems in entrails or some shit." A surprised bark of laughter escapes me. "f@ck off. You make me sound like a serial killer or something." But there's no heat [www.NoVeLworm.com](http://www.NoVeLworm.com)

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n it. He's not wrong: Ava twists me up inside, makes me want things I've never let myself want before. Makes me want to be a better man. For her. For our future 13:50 4/8 127 Lucas: The Dark Side of Alpha I'd never considered myself lacking before. Now, knowing what pain I've brought into her life? I feel like the lowest scum of this earth. She should have been free of this nightmare a long time ago. Would have been, if I hadn't been such a f@cking judgmental dick. At least we're finally getting to be on the same page. Kicking at a severed foot, I curse the erection that has yet to go down. You'd think the overpowering smell of blood, metallic in the back of my throat, would be enough to keep it down. But all I can smell right now is the smell of Ava's unique scent. All I can see is her gorgeous face and the way she pulls her bottom lip in when she's worried. How her face changes when she smiles. How she moans when I touch her, and... Damn. f@ck. I'm insane. How can I be thinking like this? I've got it bad. All it took was that little laugh of hers, to realize her walls had come down, and my body had surged 13:50 5/8 < 127 Lucas: The Dark Side of Alpha straight toward memories of that hospital room and how sweetly her body had- f@ck. I have a problem. Just go to her, my wolf whines. Aside from bloodthirsty tendencies, he doesn't care about anything except Ava and Selene. He's been somewhat soothed since we'd made love on the hospital bed, her body warm and soft and pliant beneath- Damn it. I have to get out of here. Go to her. Mate her. Mark her. No wonder I can't stop thinking of her body. My own wolf is just a horny litany of words in my head. "You okay, Alpha?" "Fine," I grit out, shoving thoughts of Ava aside with all the discipline I can muster. I take a moment to think of the paperwork that needs to be done. Of the reports I've received this week. Of finances. Finances do it. 13:50 6/8 < 127 Lucas: The Dark Side of Alpha The tension in my body eases and I can breathe deeply, fully immersed once again in this room, filled with blood and death and the ghostly screams of a man tortured for all the information we could pull from him. Unfortunately, it wasn't much. But still. I leave Vester to his grisly task, my mind already drifting to tomorrow's challenges. We've got a lead on some of the wolves who've pretended to accept the changes while trying to drum up support for Renard's return. It's a tightrope walk, trying to integrate the new wolves without sparking more conflict. But it's nothing compared to the real battle ahead. Winning my mate's heart. Earning her trust. Proving to Ava that I can be the partner she deserves, not just some asshole Alpha who's good at spilling blood. I scrub a hand over my face, exhaustion settling deep in my bones. Sleep. I need sleep. And then... Then I'll figure out how to be the man Ava needs. No 13:51 7/8. 127 Lucas: The Dark Side of Alpha matter what it takes. Even if it means learning to write f@cking love poems. Comment R Leave the first comment for this chapter. Vote 14 Fandom Swipe left to continue

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