

# Untouchable (The Moonlight Avatar Series Collection)

## Chapter 6 – The Rejection

*“Fear cuts deeper than swords.” — George R.R. Martin*

### *Third Person POV*

The Grand Feast went off without a hitch. The Omegas brought out decadent dishes of all sorts to all the pack members, serving each a hearty amount. After the new crowning of their trio of leaders, everyone was more than ready to celebrate properly. The mingle of conversation echoed in the air as delicious food-filled bellies and the children had time to play with one another. The Omegas took a break from serving and joined their fellow brothers and sisters at their table to dig into the artistry of their cooking. Kwame and his family bonded closer now that their oldest son was officially instated as Gamma. Adama gave his well-wishes and that once he grows up, he would take over as Gamma. The new Gamma couldn't be happier.

Raina congratulated Valerian with peppering kisses on his face and pats on the back from the former Beta. He vowed to serve the Beta title honorably now that Raina was officially the Beta Female. Typically, the Beta title was passed down from parent to the oldest child, but Raina did not want the official title. Since Valerian was her mate, the title went to him. Steven and Ashley could retire easily, knowing the new Beta and Beta Female would fulfill their duties with grace.

Odessa couldn't be more excited when her Alpha returned to her with open arms. It meant she was one step closer to becoming his Luna; mates be damned. Peppered with many kisses from his little lady, Neron felt like a new man. Now officially recognized as Alpha, he knew that turbulence comes

with being an Alpha, and he was more than ready to face those troubles head-on. Everything seemed to fall into place.

The keyword being *seemed*.

Back in the kitchen, dirty dishes flew in from all directions. If Halima finished with two dishes, ten more appeared. Ordered to work fast, Halima scrubbed hard with little enthusiasm. Dessert was to be served and they cannot serve dessert without clean dishes, the Omegas would say. Exhaustion overtook her faster than her mind could process, desperate for sleep. But none would leave her be until the celebration had ceased. Her arms and hands were on autopilot while her body worked against the constant exertion of energy. The delicious scent of the food was killing her as her stomach grumbled with need.

“Hurry Ragoon, we don’t have all night!” One Omega, Samantha, screeched in her ear. Samantha was one of the brattier Omegas, exhibiting her true ugliness to the slave only while everyone else revered her as a walking angel. The Omega ‘accidentally’ bumped Halima’s arm, causing the water to spill on her raggedy dress. Amused, Samantha departed with the dishes in her hands. The kitchen was empty momentarily, serving as Halima’s isolation from the celebration. The slave eyed the running water from the tap, her throat suddenly parched.

In a moment of weakness, her head leaned in and took in several gulps of water. The water soothed her scratchy throat and her small stomach filled with the slightly metallic-tasting water, unable to take much more. She trained her body to run on extremely low food and water and taking in too much would make her vomit everything she risked putting in her stomach. The girl did not want to risk any punishments tonight.

*“How do you feel, Artemis?”*

**“Not great, but the water helped.”** Her wolf responded; her voice gentle.  
**“It’s better than nothing.”**

A small smile graced Halima's lips as she wiped them and continued working. She felt slightly better with the water, but her stomach still demanded food. Food that she would never get. She forced her mind to push out the hunger thoughts so it would no longer bother her. After all the dishes were cleaned and taken back to the assembly hall, Halima sat in her little spot and awaited her next orders.

The humans say that laughter was contagious, but despite hearing so much, she felt nothing. Her heart stilled, rigid and cold. How could a pack that takes their honor and pride seriously turn around and break her down? That was what she never understood. If only there was a way to make the pack, see her truly and listen to what she had to say...

An enormous rubber basket slammed on the ground, startling her out of her thoughts. Fearful brown eyes looked up to see Lead Omega Cassandra leaning over her with her fists on her hips. "Go collect the dishes. The Omegas and I are tired."

"Collect the dishes...in *there*?" Halima's eyes looked at the assembly hall doors. Fear rolled off her flesh faster than she could blink. She couldn't go in there! For once, against all the orders given to her, the girl refused. Shaking her head rapidly, she cowered away from Cassandra.

Groaning in annoyance, Cassandra gripped Halima's bony arm painfully, forcing her up on her bare feet. "I don't have time to repeat myself, but since you're so hard of hearing, I will." She thrust the basket into Halima's chest, nearly pushing the girl over.

"Take your scrawny a\*s inside the hall and collect the f\*\*king dishes! Unless you want the Alpha—excuse me, *former* Alpha, to know of your disobedience?"

Fear could make people do many things. In this case, fear propelled Halima forward to do her job, despite her internal protests. Like her fear, the burns of her anxiety rolled into her stomach. Her heart palpitated, stress gripping her. Nausea plagued her stomach, pushing her to vomit the water she had just

consumed, but she held it in. Her body shook like musical rattles the closer she got to the doors.

*“Artemis...”* Halima called out to her wolf desperately. Tears slid down her cheeks in rapid succession, dripping on her dress. *“I can’t go in there! I can’t do this!”*

**“Then allow me,”** Artemis responded thoughtfully. **“Allow me to take control, and I’ll get us in and out of there as fast as I can. You don’t have to face anyone you don’t want to.”**

*“You’d do that for me? This is the first time you ever offered such a thing.”*

**“Remember what I said yesterday? We’re in this together. If you go into battle, so will I.”** If Artemis was physically next to her, Halima would feel her snout nuzzle into her side. **“Now, give me control.”**

*“O-okay. Thank you, Arty.”*

**“You’re welcome. And don’t call me Arty!”**

### ***Artemis***

I gagged.

The jumble of smells was awful. Werewolves, perfume, food, dessert, and so much more made for an even worse combination than what I sniffed earlier today. How could anyone stand this stench? Their pride must have made these fools nose-blind.

Unlike Halima, I didn’t take kindly to this pack. After our harsh and unwarranted treatment for a crime, we held no responsibility for, my detestation for Zircon Moon grew every day. The daily round of abuse we receive should be punishable by wolf law. I was confident that the former Alpha hid our existence so that he and the pack could continue to hurt us. Corruption was a nasty thing, and it could affect the best of us.

I stuck out like a sore thumb in a room full of prissy elegance. I stood no chance at the expensive clothes and shoes each person was wearing. The combined cost of all these damn clothes must be hundreds of thousands.

Sucking in a deep breath, I worked quickly to gather the plates of the dozens of tables of satisfied wolves. No one made it easy as I expected.

Conversations at the tables died as soon as I arrived. I nearly got stabbed in the hand with many knives and forks from bratty teenagers and angry adults alike. It was as if merely acting as their maid and picking up after themselves was an insult. My very presence was an insult to them.

There were several rude and degrading comments here and there. I've heard them all. *Bitch, worthless slave, murderer, mongrel*, and everything else in between. For a mighty pack, they could benefit from expanding their vocabulary. Tell me something I *hadn't* heard in my five years of existence.

The more plates and utensils I picked up, the heavier the basket became. I had to heave the heavy thing on my non-existent hip as I continued forward to collect more of their filthy plates. I could already feel a bruise coming on, but I couldn't do a thing about it.

But I wished I didn't have to collect the plates from the Gamma, Beta, and Alpha tables. As I draw closer to him, my heart ached deeply. His scent overwhelmed my senses as I grew closer to the last table. His scent of sandalwood, sage, and ginger ignited a fire in my body, mapping out every vein and artery and committing it to memory.

How could I tell Halima about this? How could I live with myself if she knew of this connection? I collected the plates from the Gamma table, ignoring their sympathetic stares at me. Did they feel sorry for us? What a f\*\*king joke.

I reached the Beta table, working as fast as I could. I could feel Halima's pain as she sensed our family. The family that had abandoned us and turned us over to become the slave of the pack. I wanted nothing more but to rip their throats out for forsaking us, but I knew Halima still loved them. Deep down

in her fragile heart. They were still our flesh and blood, even if they were horrible people.

And finally, I reached the Alpha table. The table I feared most of all. The Alpha and that harlot Odessa was exchanging kisses. Kisses that didn't belong to her! It isn't fair! An extremely low, near-silent growl rumbled in my chest as I hesitated. If I was closer, his scent would be my undoing. How could I do this without losing my head?

The weighted basket on my hip pressed firmly against my flesh in protest, forcing me to hurry with my task. I partially dissociated from reality as I got to the table. Faster than ever, I grabbed the utensils and ceramics and piled them up on the mountain I carry on my hip. However, I made a mistake.

One. Huge. Mistake.

As I picked up the dishes, my arm brushed against Neron's. Light as a feather, yet still present. Sparks shot between our connection. For the first time, the touch of gentleness brought forth the truth of the link between us. I couldn't feel it with the violent touches, but now it brought forth a new terror that rocked my body. The distress in the back of mine coiled and tumbled, knowing Halima had felt it too.

**"Mate."** I heard Onyx say in a small whimper.

**"Mate."** I replied the same way.

**"NO!"** In a moment's flash, I was forced out of control of Halima's body. I was once again in the backseat as she assumed full control. I regret this.

Halima... I'm so sorry that I kept this from you.

***Halima***

No! Oh Goddess, no!

This couldn't be happening!

Neron cannot be my mate! He couldn't be!

The gentle touch gave birth to the truth my wolf hid from me. My mate, my soulmate, my other half, was Alpha Neron Prince. The man who hated me with a passion that burned brighter than the sun. This changed everything. I felt the destined sparks, which means he had as well.

I need to get out of here!

In a panic, I heaved the heavy basket on the opposite side of my waist and rushed towards the door, not caring if I had missed a plate or two. It was hard, considering I was carrying over thirty pounds' worth of dishes. I sped walked, but I looked comparable to a penguin trying to run to its mother.

My dream of finding my mate had shattered into a million pieces—because my mate was the very person I want to escape from. The very person I would have never dreamed of being my destined partner. I could have anyone in the world, and yet, I was paired up with him!

*Moon Goddess, this was a sick joke. Are you laughing at me in the heavens? Is this how much you hate me?!*

The double doors were in my grasp. I might make it through the doors unscathed—!

Suddenly, a hard object struck me on the back of the head, knocking me completely off balance. Whatever it was, it exploded on impact. Everything around me slowed, like in those slow-motion movie scenes I saw when I was a kid. Gasps and other sounds echoed around me as I nosedived forward. The basket fell from my hands. Dishes and utensils clattered and shattered against the marble floor. I landed on the broken pieces, hard. Blood oozed from the back of my head, dripping down to my neck and shoulders. Gasping in pain, I brought my shaky hand to the wound, pulling it back to see a furious red staining my skin.

I slowly turned my head to see Neron, standing over me with an unbelievable amount of fury scorching his eyes. No longer blue, now black, signaling the beast had taken over. The ferocity of his anger was astronomical. My soul shook in absolute fear. He didn't just want me punished. No, Neron wanted me **dead**.

"The Moon Goddess must be one sick woman to pair me up with a piece of shit like you!" His Alpha voice boomed across the hall. Whispers and gossip circled amongst the pack in an instant, in disbelief that I was the destined mate of the Alpha. "You stole my mother and sister away from me, and now you wish to steal her title as well?"

"N-no! It's not like that!" I pleaded, with tears streaming down my face. "I don't want this! You have to believe me, please!"

His large hand grabbed my throat with the might of a war god, lifting me off the ground without effort. His fingers trembled with every squeeze, tightening the airways vital for my life. I coughed, wheezing, as his rage burned through my pores and incinerated my soul. The amount of hate Neron held for me was strong, and I knew there was no getting out of this alive.

"As if I'll believe a murderer!" Neron's voice was shrill against my ears. Any louder and my eardrums would burst. My weak, cracking nails clawed at his hand, but he was far too strong. The next words out of Neron's mouth decimated my heart, destroyed my hope, and single-handedly ruined all that I wanted to live for.

"I, Neron Malachi Prince, the Alpha of the Zircon Moon Pack, reject you, Halima Zira Lane, as my mate and Luna." He tossed me onto the ground like a piece of trash, leaving me gasping for air. He then grabbed something off the ground, turned me over, and slashed me. Slashed over my Pack Mark. With a knife.

*"And I, hereby, sentence you to death."*