

Untouchable (The Moonlight Avatar Series Collection)

Chapter 8 – The Suicide

*"Some people are just not meant to be in this world. It's just too much for them."
- Phoebe Stone*

(Content Warning: This chapter contains the subject of suicide. Reader discretion is heavily advised.)

Halima

There was an unfamiliar world beyond where I was standing. I've never been this far out of the pack house in my years of slavery. Was this what it was like to be free? To feel the gentle breeze on my skin?

To see the bright full moon casting its light down on me? Was the Moon Goddess witnessing it all?

My feet moved on their own accord, walking toward the perilous edge of the cliff.

"Be careful, dear. You might fall."

'Is that a promise?' I thought bitterly to myself, stopping a few yards from the edge. I turned to face Mrs. Dubois, giving me something no one had ever dared to give me in a long time.

A warm smile.

"You don't belong in this pack anymore, sweetheart." I frowned but continued to listen. "What I mean is that this place is no longer safe for you. It used to be your home, but everyone turned their backs on you when they shouldn't. We all have failed you in countless ways. I know I have. I don't believe the Moon Goddess would ever forgive us for willingly harming one of her children. You need to leave and build a life out there, somewhere far away from here."

She scoffed to herself. "We preach honor and pride, yet we turn around and brand one of our own as a traitor. A girl barely in her womanhood."

The betrayer slash stung at the mention of who I was now. The blood finally coagulated and stopped flowing, but it didn't take away the unfairness of it all. I looked at Mrs. Dubois in silence, soaking in all she had said to me.

"I can tell you're special, Halima. Incredibly special."

"No, I'm not," I retorted. "I'm nothing."

"You are something." She corrected. "I don't know what it is, or where it came from, but a special girl like you shouldn't be condemned to this hell."

"But even if I escape, where would I go?" I asked incredulously. "All I've done for eight years is clean. I barely have an elementary school education. No other pack would accept me with this mark on my back. I'm packless and mateless." The last word brought pain, stinging my heart like a pack of angry hornets. Artemis howled in misery at the recent rejection. "I won't last as a rogue. I need to face facts, Mrs. Dubois. My life is over. There's no hope for me. Whatever hope remained; your Alpha took it away."

A violent storm of pity, sadness, frustration, and anger brewed in her mahogany-brown eyes. I forced myself to look away, unable to hold in my sobs. What was the point of being free when death itself was waiting for you at its door? If I remained at Zircon Moon, I die. If I become a rogue, I die. If I somehow survive, it won't be long until death claims me.

The biggest loser of all of this was me. There was nothing I could do to turn this situation around. Life dealt me with a shitty hand, and I was fresh out of moves.

Mrs. Dubois' scream yanked me back to my senses. The guards, border patrols, and other pack members have finally caught up to us. Some as human, others as horse-sized wolves. Mr. Dubois restrained Mrs. Dubois, shouting obscenities at those who come to kill me. Every pathway back into the forest was sealed by a body, cutting any chances of escape through the trees.

But I wasn't scared. Tranquility engulfed me, enveloping me like a warm blanket. It spoke to me, telling me I had another option and that I'd be all right.

Because I knew death would welcome me once I jump off this cliff. We stood high enough that if I were to fall into the river below, it would break my neck. For the first time in my life, I had the power I always craved, the power to decide my fate.

The power to end my life with my own hands.

"Come back to the dungeons and accept your punishment, slave." One guard demanded. My eyes darted to him, every fabric of his being made my skin crawl. He was that one guard who would force me to play his games in the dungeon with my dress up and his pants down. I never knew his name. I still remember his disgusting fingers penetrating me while I cried. I begged, and pleaded for him to stop, but he never did, and now he wanted to command me back to the very hell they put me in?

In defiance, I stepped backward, closer to the deadly ledge. They knew I was serious. Their movements faltered. It replaced the brimming confidence they all had with uncertainty. They now knew if they move, I jump.

I had nothing else to lose.

"Baby girl, don't do what I think you're about to do." Mrs. Dubois begged, tears brimming in her eyes. "You can't go out that way."

"Listen to her, please." Mr. Dubois finally spoke up. "There is a light at the end of the tunnel. It doesn't have to end this way."

"There is no hope for me," I spoke, the coldness of my voice frightening him. "It disappeared the moment your Alpha branded me as a betrayer."

A mate was someone you were to love, cherish, and protect. Mates don't inflict harm on one another. They don't cast you aside like garbage or condemn you to a life of abuse and servitude. Only a monster does that. My mate was a monster. Besides, I was sure Neron would be happy to see me dangling close to my death. One less problem he had to deal with while he fucks Odessa to the end of days.

"Move! Move out of my way!" I looked to

my side and see Raina, standing under the moonlight with all the beauty in the world. Behind her were my parents, stricken with horror. It's the first time I've seen them express something other than disgust to me. It was also the first time I notice Raina's belly poking out slightly from her dress. "Halima, I..."

I took another step back, distancing myself as far as I could from my family- no, they weren't my family anymore. They were strangers to me. Whatever familial connection we had was dead. I could only hope that Raina's baby doesn't grow up to be like her-evil and callous.

"N-no!" Raina raised her hand in a feeble attempt to stop me. "D-Don't do this, baby sis. I...please..."

I wanted to vomit stomach acid all over her fucking dress. Anger boiled in me,

raging like a bonfire. How dare they come here! If my looks could kill, all three of them would be the first ones to die. Artemis growled deeply, in hopes their wolves could hear just how much hate we held for them.

"W-we can fix this..." Raina's mother pleaded, walking towards her daughter. "J- just come back with us and-"

"And what? So, you could hand me over to the fucking Alpha?" I shouted at them, my voice booming louder than what they were used to from a meek slave. Some men bristled at my disrespect, but I didn't care. "So, you could continue to live your lavish lives as I clean up after your filthy selves? Don't you dare act as if you care now! You had your chance when I was nine and you threw it away! Damn all of you to hell!"

That wasn't a quarter of my anger, but I had enough.

I made my decision. Neron would not take my life. There would be no man or wolf to decide my fate. It was my decision to die. My decision to end the pain. My decision to cut my pitiful existence out of this world. With me out of the picture, they all could continue to live their happy lives without a care in the world.

"We're in this together, right, Artemis?" I asked my wolf one last time.

"Always. I love you, Halima. May we meet again in the next life?"

"I love you too, Artemis. And yes, I'm sure we will. I'll see you on the other side."

The Omegas would clean up their messes. Neron would have Odessa as his Luna. Everyone would be happy. May the Moon Goddess grant me access to heaven once I meet her.

"I, Halima Zira Lane, hereby reject Neron Prince as my Alpha, and renounce my affiliation with all having to do with the Zircon Moon Pack, effective immediately."

I felt my bond with the pack snap and fizzle out. It was like a dead tree finally chopped toward the ground. It felt liberating, like the weight of the world was lifted off my shoulders. My right shoulder blade, where the Pack Mark was, burned before fading away. The mark disappeared.

The surrounding atmosphere changed, separating me from the Zircon Pack members. Raina's parents gasped tearfully, and Raina fell to her knees. I looked to see Mr. and Mrs. Dubois in tears, staring at me with finality. I look into their eyes, conveying my final message to them.

Thank you for being one of the very few who were kind to me.

"You all can send this message to the Alpha, courtesy of the slave. I accept his rejection of our mate bond. May you all burn in hell."

I turned on my heels and jumped off the cliff. I fell faster than I could comprehend. A genuine smile appeared on my face for the first time in years. Screams and shouts of Zircon Moon above me grew quieter the further I fell. The tranquility of it all hadn't left me. I felt good. I felt safe. I felt happy.

I was free.

I hit the water with a mighty splash, pain searing through every bone in my body. The dark, bone-chilling water surrounded me in its blackness, pulling me deeper into the bottom of the river. I opened my eyes to see the light of the full moon growing dimmer as I sank.

Death was comforting. Death was peaceful. I closed my eyes and allowed Death to cradle me in its arms. The power in my limbs was fleeting, and the warmth finally left. My lungs filled with water and my heart slowly came to a halt. It released its final beat before silencing forever. I was drowning, yet I'd never been happier.

No one could hurt me ever again.