The Dark Night of the Soul

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Author Note

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When I look back and think of the life that I have lived, I believe there hasn’t been an instant where I was hopeless enough, in enough pain, angry or even racked with guilt to such an extent that I would contemplate taking my own life. I have also been lucky to never have anyone in my life feel this way, or take their own life. Thus, the only exposure I have to suicide is through books alone.

As someone on the precipice of teenagerhood, in an effort to seem mature beyond my age, I believe, I read *Veronika decides to die* by Paulo Coelho. As the title puts, Veronika does decide to die, but she fails to do so. However, she gets a chance to live anew and whatever reason she had for wanting to die no longer seemed valid by the time the books come to a close.

Then came *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher. By the time this book fell into my hands, I had begun avoiding books associated with the subject of death. I am a hopeless romantic and the idea of a pair of lovers spending the rest of their lives alone, following the death of their soulmate was unbearable to me. However, Hannah was already dead, and I wanted to know why. Its been a good 7 years since I first read the book, and to this day I contemplate what is that one thing that could change the equation, and be the thing that saved Hannah. The four apocalyptic horsemen of self-destruction came for Hannah and drew her under the surface. She couldn’t draw one last breath. She couldn’t rethink the way her life could change. She was going under and only 13 people in the world knew why.

People tell me I have the Hero Complex. I like to save people. I like bringing something meaningful to their lives and change their perspective one tiny bit, just enough that their world seems a little brighter. The fact that I couldn’t save Hannah, a fictional character that was already dead when I got to know her, weighs heavily on my mind.