

Chapter 10: Brothers and Sisters, Part 1

(The sound of Nut weeping and crying)

Nut: Oh my god...oh my god...how could I be this stupid. Oh god, how could I be this...this stupid...(footsteps, as Mech returns)

Mech: Nut! What's going on...(enters and sees Jin's broken cage) What...how did you...HOW DID YOU LET THIS HAPPEN? Oh my god...we're gonna get killed. We're gonna be sent down. NUT! WHAT THE HELL DID YOU DO?

Nut: (Sobbing) I'm sorry! I was...I was trying to help. I didn't want him to escape so I...oh God, I'm so stupid. I'm gonna get us killed, aren't I?

Mech: You're damn right you are! Fuck! (Bashes his hands against the metal walls. A pause. Nut sobbing in the background...the coms device flickers on)

Hun: Mech! What in the hell is going on down there? What's with all that racket?

Mech: (Panting, quietly) He...he escaped.

Hun: What??!

Mech: He escaped! Jin escaped. He got out of the cage. He's free.

Hun: I knew....I swear I knew....you two would find a way to fuck this up. The two most incompetent C levels, in human history. Well you better go find him, if you want a chance to be living on this ship longer than a few more weeks. So get moving! I'll be your eyes...tell you if I see anything. No excuses! He gets back in the cage, or else. Hun, over and out. (Coms device powers off)

Nut: Oh god, Mech...this is all my fault...I'm sorry, I didn't mean to, I swear...

Mech: Shut up! Just...shut up. Quiet....quiet. We're gonna get him back, ok? We're gonna get him back. (Takes a deep breath) I need you to take a deep breath. Ok...now, let's think. You're Jin. You just escaped from a cage like this. What do you do? What's your next move?

Nut: I don't know....

Mech: We have to think! We still have time to cut him off and sort this out, but we have to be smart about it. So what do you do now? Think...

Nut: Navi...probably something to do with Navi...

Mech: Yes! Ok, yes. Right. You're Jin, you just got free. The next thing you do is try and get a hold of Navi. So he's going to do the same. So let's get ahold of the others, let them know what happened...and then make our way over to Navi. Got it?

Nut: Yeah...yeah...

Mech: Ok. Let's go. (Firmly) We're not going down, Nut. We're not going down.

Nut: Ok, buddy. I hear ya....

(Low, ominous sound of boilers. Sound of running down metal grates, hurried breathing)

Navi: Quick, Cus! Down here! (Panting) We're almost there.

Cus: I'm sorry, Jannie. I'm going as fast as I can!

Navi: The main communications console is so close...we're just a few more hallways away...(a metal door slams shut. Navi and Cus before yelp in fright)

Bree: (Over intercom) Stop right where you are, Jan. There's nowhere to go. (Another metal door slams down)

Cus: She's sealed off the corridor! We're trapped!

Bree: That's right. Foot thick blast doors. Nowhere to go now. Clever trick you pulled earlier. Now you're both going back into captivity. So sit still. I'll be there momentarily. Don't....and I repeat....DON'T...do anything else to make me angry, Jan. See you soon. (Coms device switches off)

Cus: (Breathing hard) Let me try to cut through them! (The arc welder activates on the door for a few moments) Nothing, barely even a scratch. What are we gonna do? (Grunts, and tugs at the steel) Those doors could survive an antimatter bomb.

Navi: There has to be something, Cus. What's this, down here?

Cus: It's a console screen. (Keyboard clicks and beeps) Nothing useful though. Just hull integrity and temperature. The most basic functions in the whole ship, that's all it has. Just about every hallway in the ship has one of these. (Sighs) There's nothing we can do.

Navi: That, my friend...is where you are wrong. Give me but one basic console and a firm place on which to stand, and I shall move the Earth. (Keyboard clicks)

Cus: What are you doing?

Navi: I'm hacking in.

Cus: How?

Navi: The same way I did all the others. They're all written in the same language.

Computer Voice: Access denied.

Navi: These mostly likely haven't had the passwords changed in a long time. We'll start with the one I always use.

Computer Voice: Access denied.

Navi: But, like all the others...probably a special code for the sector ID. (Flurry of keyboard clicks)

Computer Voice: Access granted. (Cus cheers)

Cus: Ah, Jannie! You're the smartest girl in the whole universe.

Navi: (Flattered, coy) Thank you, Cus cus. (Tone darkens. She takes a deep breath) But we still have some problems. I can see the ship's layout now, the Archives. Not exactly a good time to going browsing through the Archives, though. Security cameras. Here...let me check those. See if I can find Jin. (A few keyboard clicks) What about there? That sector...(Continues to search, and groans) I can't find him. The ship is too big...it would take too much time to check every single camera, every single room and hall. He could be anywhere. (Sighs) All right...what about our sector. (Pauses suddenly. Tense moment)

Cus: What is it, Jannie?

Navi: It's Bree...I see her on the security camera. She's close...coming towards us now.

Cus: Right. She said she was on her way. Who else is with her?

Navi: No one. It's just her. (Dawning horror) And she has a pistol. Derry did this. Bree hates me more than anyone else on the ship. Derry knows that. That's why he sent her alone...and armed. He's trying to get her to kill us. We have to hurry.

Cus: Ok, what do we do? How do we get out of here?

Navi: Let me just...think...I don't know....maybe I can try to override the codes for the security doors. (Keyboard clicks) That's not working! Damn it!

Cus: What if we can crawl out, somehow? There's got to be an opening somewhere. The ventilation shafts are everywhere.

Navi: There aren't any openings though. We can't get to them...

Cus: Can we make an opening?

Navi: No, that's not possible...we'd need to...(pauses) Yes! Yes we can! Cus, you're brilliant! We use the hull integrity readings to find a weak point in these walls and ceilings. Then, we go in through the hole, crawl into the ventilations shafts, and get out of here!

Cus: Yes! All right, let's do it!

Navi: Ok! Ok...pulling up hull integrity now. (Keyboard clicks) Ok...this one, here. This plate. It's thin...weak...has a recommendation for replacement. And there are cooler temperature readings underneath it...which means there's air flowing.

Cus: Which one?

Navi: Halfway point in the corridor. And then three plates to the right. And then up one.

Cus: This one? (Banging metal sound)

Navi: Yeah, that one.

Cus: Ok. Help me lift it...(both grunt and tug at the plate)

Navi: It's sealed too tight. We'd need a tool to get it free.

Cus: Oh no, not these plates. There's a trick. It's pretty painful...you gotta wedge your fingertips in the edges, like this. And then...with a lot of force (Grunts, with great force. A sound of metal slowly coming loose. Cus' grunts turn to cries of pain, as the metal slowly gives)

Navi: There! It's loose! Let me help! (The two grunts, struggle with the metal, and then deposit it to the side with a loud clang) How did you know how to do that, Cus?

Cus: Sometimes my tools broke, but they still made me keep working, to meet quotas. You learn a few things doing that....you get pretty tough skin too.

Navi: Oh Cus! I'm so glad you're with me! (Hugs Cus)

Cus: Ah, Jannie. It's nothing...

Navi: There's a great opening...you feel all that air? We can just drop right into the ventilation shaft. But I need to pull up a map of it. We need to know where we're going. Or else we could crawl right into one of the giant metal fans.

Cus: How will you know?

Navi: Here. I'll pull up a map of the ventilation system on the console real quick. (Keyboards click) All right...I see a path. This will take us...down, underneath the sealed security doors, and then over to the communications console. But we have to turn here...and here...Ok. Ok. I've got it. Cus, help me remember this.

Cus: I'm listening.

Navi: First turn we come to, turn left. Then the next turn we come to right. Then right again. Then left. Then left.

Cus: Ok. Left, right right, left, left.

Navi: Left, right, right, left, left. All right, let's go.

Cus: I'll hop down first. (Struggles) I'm in. Take my hand, Jannie.

Navi: Thank you. (Navi lowers down into the ventilation shaft) It's tight. Really tight. But we can move through it, just barely.

Cus: Should we put the plate back over us?

Navi: No need. Too much time. Plus, she won't know our exact path anyway. Let's go. (The two grunt and strain, crawling through the creaking metal)

(Jin runs through the hall, panting)

Jin: Ok..here it is. The communications console...one of 12 throughout the ship. Full audio and video linkups to any given location. I need to hurry. (Keyboard typing) Good. They haven't changed the password yet. I'm sure they will now, after this.

Computer Voice: Access Granted. Welcome back, sir.

Jin: Thank you...good to be back. Where is she? I don't see her on any of the screens. I'll send an audio message. They probably already know I've escaped. It's better than nothing. "Navi? Can you hear me? Navi?" I need to send her a message of some sort, that she can make sense of, but they can't. I know. "Navi. Listen to me. I'm sending you a message. Listen carefully. Blue is good, purple is bad." She'll understand what that means...(chuckles) "Navi, I'm going to stay here for a few minutes. Let me know if you can get into contact, then we can switch to a direct channel. In the mean time...Blue is good, purple is bad..."

(Jin's voice repeating the message over and over again through the ship's PA system)

Hun: Shut up about the blue and the purple already! Goddamn it!

Mo: What does that even mean? How do you shut it off?

Mana: He's at the 7th Communication Console, near the gravity turbines.

Hun: Why haven't those idiots gotten to him yet? Hurry up! And find a way to turn off that message, it's so goddamn irritating!

Mo: I'm trying!!! (Coms sound) Bree?

Bree: Yeah?

Mo: Have you gotten to them yet?

Bree: Almost...I'm turning now down the corridor where you sealed the doors shut. All right you two, hands up...(pauses) They're not here! Goddamn it, where are they?

Mo: They couldn't have just disappeared! They're hiding somewhere. Find them! Now! (Coms powers down)

Bree: Oh my god....why do they keep getting ahead of me. (Becoming distraught) They keep getting ahead of me...It's because she's smarter than you, Bree. She's a lot smarter. There's nothing you can do about it, you're not going to be able to get her....that's why she's Navi the Navigator, and you're just the lowly Bree the....NO! No...(pulling herself together) I'm gonna find her. This won't be my life forever. This won't...be my life. (Takes a deep breath and collects herself) The plate is loose. Looks like they crawled down into the ventilation shaft. I could follow them but...no, no don't do that. Be like Navi. Be smart. I would probably get lost down there. (Coms device) Mo?

Mo: What? Did you find them?

Bree: They opened the floor and are crawling through the ventilation shafts. Get these security doors open so I can go down the halls, and track the ventilation system. Let me know where they come out.

Mo: Ok. Doors coming open. Don't screw up anymore, Bree. (Coms device powers off. Loud metal grinding and clanking as the security doors come open)

Bree: I won't. (Coms power off)

(Navi and Cus grunt and struggle through the ventilation shaft. Eventually, they come to a halt)

Navi: (Voice muffled in tunnel) All right. This should be it.

Cus: Are you sure? It's pitch black. I can't see my hands in front of me...

Navi: That's the right number of turns...I feel a draft coming from above us. That must mean this is where the ventilation shaft comes out. (Pushes up on metal) This plate above us...we need to lift it off.

Cus: All right. With both us pushing...

Navi: Yes, let's do it...(both grunt and struggle) Almost...off...(A clank of metal) There! Got it! Let's get out of here. (The two struggle to lift themselves out of the tunnel) There! We're out! And on the other side of the security doors. We're free! (Jin's voice is heard repeating his message over the intercom)

Cus: 'Blue is good, green is bad'? What is he talking about...

Navi: (Pauses) It's a coded message. The others can hear it too, but they can't understand what he means by it....Sweet blue! He's telling us to meet him at the protein pools.

Cus: Oh, good. Maybe we can have a treat while we're down there.

Navi: He was able to get free somehow. He's at a communication console. There should be one just down this hall...(footsteps) Cus! I found one...(keyboard clicking) Ok...this terminal has so many screens...video feeds, audio feeds.

Cus: Can you see if anyone's coming?

Navi: Looking at the video feeds...I see Mech and Nut running, but they're in the west end of the ship, by the gravity turbine. They must be after Jin...I don't see Bree anywhere. Jin...I see him! He's at the communications console by the gravity turbine. Let me look at the audio channels...there has to be a one way where we can talk with him directly. There! I think I got it. Hello? Jin? Can you hear me?

Jin: Navi! Thank God, are you all right? Where are you?

Navi: I'm not sure, exactly. This is...the 12th sector communications console. So we're down by the boilers. I got your message. And yes, we'll see you there.

Jin: We?

Navi: Cus is here with me! He was the one who freed me.

Cus: Hi there Jin, nice to hear from ya.

Jin: Nice to hear from you, Cus. I'm glad we have you with us. There's a lot to explain, but I'll make my way there now.

Navi: Ok...(pause) Jin...if we meet up, what do we do then? We're both free now, but we don't exactly have the strongest hand to play.

Jin: I know...

Navi: Maybe try to make contact with Libby?

Jin: She betrayed us...

Navi: It pained her greatly. I think she only did what she thought was right. We can win her over still.

Jin: Yeah...

Navi: It's all we can do...we can't run around the ship for the rest of our lives, being chased around by the C levels.

Jin: (Chuckles) Like a Three Stooges short. (Jin and Navi both laugh. Jin's tone changes) I don't think they really mean us harm though. Like you said with Libby...I think we can win them over too..

Navi: How?

Jin: (Sighs) I don't know. There's a lot I don't know. I'm sorry I put us in this mess, Navi. We weren't ready yet. The ship wasn't ready. And I pushed for it anyway.

Navi: Yes. But we didn't know that. We had to go through with it in order to find out. There'll be another chance. I know there will.

Jin: I was really worried if I'd ever see you again. I feel like I haven't really been alive until these last few weeks. There's so much I want to do now. I thought I'd never get the chance to tell you...

Navi: (Warmly) I felt the same way.

Jin: You did?

Navi: I had a lot of time to think, too. And I also worried...what if I never saw you again? I realized how I really feel.

Jin: I hope I get to know what it really feels like, to be in love...

Navi: (Happily) We'll have so much time together on Empyrean to find out.

Jin: I better get going.

Navi: I'll see you soon, Jin.

Jin: Good-bye, Navi...(Console powers down. Cus chuckles)

Navi: What? Oh god, that was embarrassing, wasn't it?

Cus: I'm happy for you, Jannie. We're gonna get there. Don't doubt it for a second.

Navi: Thank you, Cus. We should get going...Bree could get here any...(pauses abruptly) Oh god...is that...her?

Bree: (Struggling to restrain sobs) Oh no...please don't say that was him saying all that...

Navi: (horrified) Bree...listen. I can explain...just don't do anything...rash, please...

(Bree continues to sob. Then, her sobs gradually turn to growls of anger. Her magnetic pistol powers up)

Cus: Jannie! Get down! (With a loud cry Bree fires the magnetic pistol. Navi and Cus throw themselves to the ground, the communications console is destroyed by the bullet)

Navi: Run! (Cus and Navi take off running, as Bree fires after them)

Jin: Ok. Navi is fine. (Sighs in relief) Thank God, she's all right. But I'm not in the clear just yet. The protein pools are a long way from here. (Footsteps on metal) I was wondering when they would show up. (Takes off running)

Mech: Jin! Get back here!

Nut: Yeah! You're only making this worse by running.

Mech: Mech to Bridge, shut down the security doors in Hall 8 of Sector J-9! (Heavy metal doors slam shut) No need to keep going, Jin. We've got you!

Nut: Yeah, trapped like a rat!

Jin: You haven't trapped me. Obviously you were going to use the security doors to try to hem me in. That's why, I came here...(grunts, and pulls off a metal plate) To the gravity turbine.

Nut: What is he doing?

Mech: Was that plate always loose?

Nut: I could have sworn we had bolted that the other day...

Jin: I know this ship too well for you two to catch me. I'll see you inside the turbine, if you'd like to join. (voice echoes off, a dull roaring becomes a layer of sound underneath the dialogue)

Jin: No use chasing me, you two. This part of this ship is filled with dangerous machinery, and I know it better than anyone. Just say you lost me, and turn back now. Don't get hurt over this.

Mech: What is he talking about? (Cries out and ducks, as mechanical gears whirr overhead)  
Almost took my head off!

Nut: Where are we?

Mech: The gravity turbines. He's inside the turbine itself. Ah, he's clever all right. So many places he could hide in here.

Jin: (From afar) And so many gears that could take your limbs off, if you're not careful!

Nut: How can he hear us? Where are you in there? (His voice echoes off into space)

Jin: (His echoing reply, from a different part of the turbine) I know how to get around pretty easily.

Nut: Mech, what do we do? He's got the run of the place. We'll never find him in there.

Mech: We have to try.

Nut: Can we get the D level to go in there? Like we...usually do.

Mech: Yeah. Let's try. (Activates a coms device) Hun? Can you hear me?

Hun: What? You better have good news for me, Mech.

Nut: Um, well, kinda. I don't think he's gonna get out of this one.

Mech: He's in the gravity turbine.

Hun: Inside? Like, he went into the gravity turbine?

Mech: It's not active right now, but yes. He tore open a siding of the wall, and climbed up into the gears of the turbine. It's...pretty dangerous though. We were wondering if we can get the D level to come in and go after him.

Hun: You idiot! Then it would just be one against one, Jin against the D level. Who do you think would win that fight? It has to be both of you, to take him down. Besides, the D level is on the run. He helped Navi escape.

Mech: What?

Nut: Navi got out too?

Hun: Yes. You C levels are universally stupid and incompetent. That's why I look forward to replacing you soon. No D level is coming to bail you two out. Get in there, and get him back. This is your last chance. Hun out. (Coms device turns off)

Mech: We can't go in there! He's right, Nut. It's a deathtrap in there. The next power cycle will start soon. The whole machine will activate, we'll be ripped to shreds.

Nut: Yeah, but he was able to get through there just fine.

Mech: He knows passages and shortcuts we don't. Admit it, Nut. We can't go in there after him. We're beat.

Nut: (Sighs) I'll go. By myself.

Mech: What?

Nut: I was the idiot who let him escape in the first place. We're both in big trouble cuz of me. I should be the one to go. In order to make things right.

Mech: Nut, there's gotta be another way...

Nut: Thanks pal. But we both know there isn't. I'll go. Here...give me that taser. (Electric crackling) All right, that'll knock him off his feet quick. Wait here at the bottom. Be my eyes and ears from the outside, ok?

Mech: (Sighs) Ok. But be careful. I'll monitor the console from the hallway. It'll tell me when the next power cycle will activate. If I give you the warning, you have to turn around immediately, ok? Don't be a hero about getting Jin. Turn around as soon as you hear me say. Got it?

Nut: I got it. (Grunts, climbs into the opening of the turbine) It's pitch black in here! How does he get around up there?

Mech: He engineered all the renovations and repairs for it. He knows it, down to the smallest cog.

Nut: Here, give me that headlamp, will ya? (Head lamp activates) Ok. I'm going in. Wish me luck, buddy.

Mech: Remember what I said...

Nut: Yeah, yeah. I know. Ok, let's go. (Grunts and struggles, begins to climb up the gravity turbine)

Nut: Ok. These gears are like ledges. I'll just pull myself up...and up...(grunts) and up...Oh! Jeez, that's sharp. Jin! Where are you?

Jin: Who knows, Nut? (A few seconds later. Jin's voice comes from a different location) I could be anywhere.

Nut: Yeah, well, if you would be so kind, please go to that catwalk at the very top of the turbine, please? About...a hundred feet up from here? Then I gotta take you back.

Jin: Why are you doing this? Don't you know there's a power cycle starting soon?

Nut: What? (Groans. Then, angrily) Look, I can't go back empty handed. I have to take you back.

Jin: This isn't worth risking your life.

Nut: (Groans, grunts, bangs against metal) If I don't get you back, I'm done for! Now...go to that ledge...

Mech: Nut! Power cycle in one minute. Do you see him?

Nut: No, not yet.

Mech: Turn around, the turbine is going to activate soon.

Nut: Just let me get to the top of the turbine. I see a safe place to stand.

Jin: You're suicidal.

Nut: No. I'm just...(grunting) determined. (Cries out in pain) What the...(metal banging) Oh god...Oh no...

Mech: What? What's going on?

Nut: I'm stuck....(cries out in pain) My foot's caught. My foot's caught...Oh god please no...

Mech: Nut! Kick the metal, do something! You have to get out!

Computer Voice: Power cycle, in....30 seconds...

Nut: Oh god...I'm gonna die...(sobs) I'm gonna die...I'm gonna die...(Jin hops down. His voice becomes clear and immediate)

Jin: No. You're not going to die.

Nut: Jin!

Jin: Hold still. I need to see your leg.

Nut: (panicking) Jin, please hurry...

Jin: I see the gear you're caught on. Ok...relax...be very still...(Sound of metal being pried, Nut cries out in pain)

Mech: Get out of there, now!

Nut: I'm free! Oh thank God, thank God...

Jin: We have to get to the top. Here, follow me...

Nut: Help me up!

Computer Voice: Power cycle in....10....9...8...(countdown continues)

Jin: Hurry! We're almost at the top!

Nut: I'm trying! I'm going as fast as I can!

Jin: Ok. I'm at the top. It's safe up here. Nut! Take my hand, I'll pull you up!

Nut: Almost, there!

Jin: Now!

Computer Voice: Power cycle, activated. (A gigantic mechanical roar. Electricity crackles. Jin and Nut cry out, their voices gradually drowned out by the energy being released)