



Awake

Chapter 1 *Transcript*

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2013

Illustrations by Angela Sham

Cast:

Hina: Rielle Braid
Janelle: Jae Jae Lopez
Robbie: Jesse Hodson
Rosa: Annemieke Wade
Travis: Alex O'Shea
Seb: Adam Ford

Special Thanks to Sharif E. and his daughter Aya

Note: Due to last-minute audio changes, transcript may not match final audio script exactly.

[sound of heartbeat monitor]

[Sound of heart beating slowly, about 25 beats per minute. Heart monitor remains quiet underlying sound below scene. All voices and SFX are a little fuzzy.]

ROBBIE: ...Is she alive?

JANELLE: What kind of question is that? God, you're so morbid. She looks good. Heart rate's picking up.

ROSA: Her color's good. How old is she again?

JANELLE: Uh...hang on. [sound of monitor] Twenty-eight when we left earth. She signed up for fifteen years.

ROBBIE: So she'll be forty-one when we get to Tau Ceti Prime.

JANELLE: [sarcastic] Thanks, Robbie. We can all do the math.

[clatters of medical equipment and movement]

ROBBIE: She doesn't...um...have those scars. Like Travis.

JANELLE: No. But I told you--Travis is an outlier. If someone passed the physical back on earth, they should be able to get through the cryogenic thaw.

ROSA: But there's always risk, Robbie. And we all signed up knowing the risk.

JANELLE: Same as you, Robbie.

[pause]

JANELLE: Anyway. She's actually doing really well. Her vitals are better than I expected.

ROSA: When will she be awake?

JANELLE: She might not need the full week. I'll keep you posted.

ROSA: Thanks.

[Sound of door swishing open and closed as Rosa leaves the room.]

ROBBIE: Hina Hwan, twenty-eight years old. Signed up for fifteen years.

JANELLE: [sighs] Don't poke her, Robbie.

[scene fades out]

[Heartbeat fades back in, beating a little faster this time (approx 35 beats per minute) under scene. Sounds are still fuzzy.]

JANELLE: [fades in to her talking] So this guy's AC index is 2.4, which you can really only pull off if you drank a bathtub's worth of hard liquor, so I figure the thumb tester isn't working or the guy would be in a coma. But while I'm scrambling through the ambulance to find a new one, this guy pulls a flask *from his pants* and starts drinking again! Right in front of me!

SEB: [laughing] Damn.

JANELLE: When I try to take the flask, he starts fighting me for it. [laughing] And then he vomits all over me, and oh my God, it's literally just a *flood of vodka*. Clear as crystal, like it was right out of the bottle. I could've started mixing drinks with it right there!

SEB: [laughing] Ew, you're disgusting!

JANELLE: And this guy starts getting upset because, y'know, he just vomited, and he starts to cry a little--and Seb, his tears smelled like vodka. He was crying vodka tears!

SEB: [laughing]

[sound of door opening]

SEB: Hi, Travis.

[sound of limping footsteps]

TRAVIS: She's still asleep.

JANELLE: [a little guarded] Yeah. It's only been a few days.

TRAVIS: I thought she was doing "really well."

JANELLE: She is. [beat] These things take time.

[Travis lets out a breath]

TRAVIS: Are you sure you didn't fuck it up?

SEB: Travis--

JANELLE: She'll get all the tests once she's awake, Travis. Standard protocol.

[pause]

TRAVIS: And then you'll know if she's got brain damage or something?

SEB: C'mon, don't jinx it.

TRAVIS: I can't jinx anything. If she's fucked up, we *know* whose fault it is.

JANELLE: [angry sigh] Travis, I did everything I--

SEB: [raises voice] Janelle, stop it. You said Hina might be able to hear us, right?

[Janelle lets out an angry snort.]

SEB: So don't fight near her. We don't want to stress her out.

[voices pause, sound of limping steps]

TRAVIS: Word of advice. [lets out a breath] Stay the fuck asleep.

[scene fades out]

[Heartbeat fades back in, beating a little faster this time (approx 45 beats per minute) under scene. Fuzzy sounds slowly grow clear.]

ROBBIE: [muttering to himself--monotone] Hi Hina, I'm glad you're awake. Welcome to the Persephone crew. My name is Robbie. The medic had to step away for a few minutes, but she'll be back soon.

ROBBIE: [repeat--sounding a little more natural] Hi Hina, I'm glad you're awake. Welcome to the Persephone crew. My name is Robbie. The medic had to step away for a few minutes, but she'll be back soon.

[Robbie sighs.]

ROBBIE: [repeat--sounding a little more grounded] Hi Hina, I'm glad you're awake. Welcome to the Persephone crew. My name is Robbie. The medic had to step away for a few minutes, but she'll be back soon.

ROBBIE: [repeat--sounding a little more friendly] Hi Hina, I'm glad you're awake. Welcome to the--

[Hina groans.]

ROBBIE: [starts stuttering] Uh, h-hi Hina, I'm glad you're awake. W-welcome to the... [calls out behind him] Janelle! She's awake! [back to Hina, rallying] The medic had to step away for a few minutes, but she'll be back soon.

[pause, Hina groans and breathes heavily]

ROBBIE: Um, do you need anything? I can...uh...

[Hina makes weak breathing sounds. Janelle rushes into the room.]

JANELLE: Whoa, you're up! How're you feeling?

[Hina groans, gasps.]

JANELLE: [sympathetic, but still upbeat] Yeah, that sounds about right. Don't worry, you'll be able to feel your face pretty soon, and you should be talking again in a day or so. Here, can you follow my finger? [pause for test] Yeah...good.

[sounds of medical equipment]

JANELLE: You're tracking sooner than most of the other guys. That's good--you'll be on your feet in no time! [lets out a sigh] Which is a relief, to be honest. Okay, I'm going to poke you now. If it hurts, that's a good sign.

[Hina gasps out a cry; sounds of bustling around, setting up blood pressure cuff]

JANELLE: [while she sets up the equipment] It'll be so nice to have another girl around here. I feel like I've been stuck in a boys' locker room since I woke up--I guess we've got Rosa too, but hanging out with her is kinda like hanging out

with your boss and your mom at the same time. Not exactly relaxing. She's nice, though, and the boys are good guys. [pauses] *Mostly* good guys. I'm sure you'll get along with everybody just--

[Hina starts dry heaving.]

JANELLE: Whoa, there you go! Just be glad you haven't had any solids for, like, six hundred years. C'mere. That's it, just let it happen.

[Robbie shuffles and sounds like he wants to say something, but doesn't put any coherent words together other than "um" and "uh." Sound of door opening as Rosa steps in.]

ROSA: [to Robbie] Thanks for the flag, Robbie. [to Hina and Janelle] How are we doing here?

JANELLE: She's great! Vitals are great.

ROSA: [thoughtful] Four days. That's the shortest thaw I've ever seen. And I've seen my share of thaws.

ROBBIE: Then...then...Travis *was* an outlier.

[Janelle and Rosa go silent. Hina gasps out a few strangled words.]

HINA: Is...is this the...Persephone?

ROSA: I've got this, Janelle. [beat] I'm going to ask you some questions--take all the time you need to answer. Do you understand?

HINA: [labored] Uh...mm.

ROSA: Can you tell me your name?

HINA: Nn...Hina Hwan.

ROSA: What's your birthday? And where were you born?

HINA: Uh...May 9th, 2182...Washington DC.

ROSA: Good. Do you know where you are?

HINA: [labored and halting as she gasps] Space transport...Persephone. We're leaving to...start a colony on the planet Tau Ceti Prime. [pauses] I came here with Bassel and his daughter, Aya.

JANELLE: Yeah, I saw that in your file. Are you two related?

HINA: No. He's...my boyfriend. Wait. [shifts a little, grunts] No, we're engaged now.

JANELLE: You're engaged?

HINA: Nn. Right before the trip.

ROSA: Well...congratulations.

HINA: ...Thank you.

[pause]

ROSA: Do you remember your conditions for transport?

HINA: Y-yeah. We're paying for our tickets in work. Aya's too young to do her ten years, so Bassel and I are splitting hers. Fifteen years each.

ROSA: Very good.

HINA: [suddenly a little more interested] Wait. What year is it? Did he do his time yet?

ROBBIE: I, uh, I can look that up. Do you know his number?

JANELLE: [after a second] I have it. 23879.

ROBBIE: [more comfortable] Persephone, pull the work term access file on Crew Passenger 23879 and cross-reference it with the medical status file, but only report the summary update log. Use a code green if status is 444.

[Quiet robotic voice speaks over the intercom. Voice is feminine.]

PERSEPHONE: Of course, Robbie. Crew work term medical index is 00A.

ROBBIE: He's been in cryogenic sleep since you left. No record of waking him up yet.

[Hina lets out a slightly pained noise.]

JANELLE: Are you okay?

HINA: [a little shaky] I'm fine.

ROSA: It's 2814--We're about six hundred years into the trip. Once you've finished your fifteen years, you'll be put back into cryogenic sleep until the ship arrives at Tau Ceti Prime. [pause] It's pretty unlikely that Bassel will be woken up for his shift while you're working your years...Persephone uses a complex algorithm to determine which people should work together, and it's extremely rare for loved ones to be paired together.

HINA: No, I...know that. They told me that.

JANELLE: If you're both doing fifteen years, at least you'll age proportionately.

HINA: ...Right.

ROSA: Okay. [a little more up-beat] Our crew is six people. I'm your captain, Rosa Medina. If you have any trouble with your job or with anything in general, report to me first.

HINA: O...okay. Thank you.

JANELLE: I'm Janelle Vetrov, Persephone's medic. If you feel sick or something, even if it's just a tiny tickle in your nose, tell me right away. You were wiped of pathogens before you were put in cryo freeze, but sometimes things slip past the sensors, and we obviously have to keep this place sterile. [chuckle] We're basically a hermetically sealed space bubble with forty thousand human popsicles. We need to keep things clean.

HINA: Yeah.

JANELLE: Besides, I'm bored out of my mind. Come to me with period cramps so I'll have something to do, okay?

ROSA: And this is Robbie, our head software technician. Say hello, Robbie.

ROBBIE: I already did.

ROSA: Robbie will initiate your protocol, if Persephone hasn't already. You can talk to the ship directly for a lot of things.

HINA: Okay.

ROSA: You're taking the place of our last engineer. He actually did a lot of maintenance recently, so things should be running smoothly for a while. We might have you help Seb a little, since he's having some trouble with the waste management equipment.

[intercom sound]

PERSEPHONE: Attention, crew. It's time for supper.

[Hina makes a gagging noise.]

JANELLE: [cheerful] Don't worry--you don't have to eat yet. But let's see if we can get you moving a little, huh?

[Janelle helps Hina out of bed.]

JANELLE: There you go. Good!

ROSA: I'm having supper in my room tonight. Janelle, let me know if anything changes.

JANELLE: Got it.

[Door opens and closes as Rosa leaves.]

[Robbie sounds like he wants to say something, but never gets any real words out.]

JANELLE: Robbie, go tell the boys she's coming to supper.

[Robbie leaves. Janelle helps Hina through sliding doors]

PERSEPHONE: Good morning, Hina Hwan.

JANELLE: [slightly overlapping with Persephone] Oh! There it goes.

PERSEPHONE: This is Day 1 of your shift on Persephone. You have 14 years, 364 days remaining. Have a nice day.

[sound of door opening on end of hallway; Seb comes closer]

SEB: Here, let me help. [shifting bodies] Wow, you're really up! I thought Janelle was exaggerating.

JANELLE: [a little bitter] Everybody's different. Some people get through the thaw just fine.

[pause]

SEB: Hina, right? I'm Seb.

HINA: [grunting as she walks, a little tired of this now] Nice to meet you.

[Door opens to kitchen; they help Hina to a chair. Sound of plates being spread on the table, cutlery.]

ROBBIE: Travis brought carrots, potatoes...uh, spinach, kidney beans and peanuts.

SEB: Man, I'm sick of peanuts.

ROBBIE: Then you can have carrots, potatoes, spinach, and kidney beans.

[more kitchen and cutlery sounds]

JANELLE: Where is Travis?

SEB: [hesitant] He's...having a rough day. He sliced his bad arm open in the greenhouse and didn't notice for a while.

JANELLE: He what? Why didn't he come to me?!

SEB: Uh...

JANELLE: I'm so goddamn sick of this! If he seriously hurts himself, Persephone's gonna hold me accountable. And he knows that!

SEB: He patched it. Persephone did a scan.

JANELLE: Those scans don't catch everything! What if he gave himself permanent nerve damage?!

SEB: Janelle--

ROBBIE: [full mouth] It was his bad arm, right? [pauses to swallow] The nerves are already damaged.

JANELLE: [through gritted teeth] Seb, use your secret dumbass-speaking technique to get the giant baby into my clinic. I'm redoing that patch TONIGHT.

SEB: It really looked okay--

JANELLE: Seb, you're not a doctor!

ROBBIE: [through full mouth] Neither are you, technically.

JANELLE: [hits table] NOT NOW, Robbie!

ROBBIE: [freaked out/uncomfortable] Sorry.

[Persephone alert noise over intercom.]

PERSEPHONE: Warning, Janelle Vetrov. Your aggression levels are approaching maximum.

JANELLE: [half to herself] Goddammit.

SEB: Janelle, calm down.

JANELLE: I'm calm. I'm calm. [sound of scraping fork] Look at me, eating Travis's work like I'm supposed to. Hey, spinach! [shoves some into mouth] Mm, tastes a little earthy. Maybe I should throw a three-month fit and never eat his plants again.

SEB: [a little resentful] Come on, that's not fair.

[pause]

HINA: ...Am I missing something?

SEB: [sighs] Travis came out of cryogenic sleep a few months ago. It didn't...go well.

JANELLE: [defensive] No matter what he tells you, there wasn't anything else I could do. It's extremely likely there was a problem when he was first frozen. I don't know why he keeps blaming me.

SEB: The right half of Travis' body was burned pretty badly in storage. It destroyed a lot of the nerve endings on his right arm and leg. You'll...see the scars.

HINA: ...Burned? How does that work?

JANELLE: [lets out a breath] When we're put into cryogenic sleep, we're basically human popsicles. And he got human freezer burn.

SEB: That's the best explanation we could come up with, anyway. Persephone decided that he was still well enough to work.

HINA: Human...freezer burn.

JANELLE: Look, waking up from cryogenic freezing is dangerous. We all signed the waiver when we took this job. But...he probably would've ended up the same when they woke him up on Tau Ceti Prime, anyway! Shit happens! [pause] I was an EMT back on earth--I worked clean-up on some of the New York riots. If he'd seen half the stuff we pulled in off the streets, he'd just be thankful he got off that planet and only had to pay for it with a limp.

HINA: Did...

SEB: What?

HINA: Did he have any...pre-existing conditions?

JANELLE: What do you mean?

HINA: Um...anything that would make waking him up more dangerous.

JANELLE: Uh...he passed the physical to get on Persephone. He had to be in pretty solid health.

HINA: What about his family?

SEB: Why are you asking? That's a pretty...personal question.

JANELLE: And it shouldn't make a difference, if somebody screwed something up when he was frozen.

HINA: Oh. I was just...curious.

SEB: Hina, please don't ask him the details, okay? He'll just get upset.

JANELLE: [dryly] Yeah, like with everything else. That guy is a walking tantrum.

[clattering of plates and silverware; slow scraping of chair]

JANELLE: Where are you going?

HINA: I...need to lie down.

[sound of shaky steps, several chairs getting scraped back]

SEB: Careful--you really shouldn't be walking alone yet. We can help you to your room.

[footsteps]

JANELLE: Are you dizzy? Do you feel weak? [chuckles] I figured you'd be sick of sleeping by now.

HINA: I just...wanna be somewhere quiet for a while.

[scene fades out]

[Next scene, in Hina's room.]

[someone knocks on the door]

HINA: Uh...you can come in.

TRAVIS: [muffled through door] You have to tell Persephone.

HINA: What?

TRAVIS: You have to tell Persephone to let me in!

HINA: Oh. Um...Persephone, open the door.

[sound of door sliding open; Travis's voice is now clear]

TRAVIS: She's not *that* smart an AI. She won't understand a command until you use her name.

HINA: Oh.

[door slides shut; sound of Travis's cane thump as he nears the bed]

TRAVIS: You're Hina.

HINA: You must be...Thomas?

TRAVIS: Travis.

[pause, creak on cane]

TRAVIS: Nice to meet you.

[long pause]

TRAVIS: [irritated] Yeah, I know. I'm an ugly motherfucker.

HINA: The scars aren't that bad.

TRAVIS: Says the girl with no scars.

[long pause]

HINA: You got those while you were under?

TRAVIS: Yeah. Or during the thaw process. Something fucked up.

HINA: Like...an outlier.

TRAVIS: Huh?

HINA: Oh. I just...somebody said something. When I was still waking up. Someone called you an outlier.

TRAVIS: [snorts] That sounds like Janelle. Anything to downplay shit happening to other people. But let me tell you something--I'm not the real outlier here. You are.

HINA: What do you mean?

TRAVIS: It only took you four days to wake up. Your speech isn't slurred, you can obviously see and hear fine...hell, even your skin looks pretty good. [pause] I was...bluish for two weeks. That's what Robbie tells me, anyway.

HINA: Did any of the others have trouble waking up?

TRAVIS: I've only been awake for three months. The rest of these guys have known each other for years...and according to *Janelle*, they had no major problems. But I know Seb was in a wheelchair for three weeks. And I don't know if you noticed, but Rosa's got a little case of the shakes. When I asked her about it, she said the freeze did it to her. [sighs] Shit's dangerous.

HINA: But...we had to take a physical to get on the Persephone.

TRAVIS: That might be why we *live* through the thing. But the thawing process is a lot harsher than they told us when we signed up. If I'd known it was gonna fuck me up like this, I would've stayed on Earth!

[pause]

TRAVIS: [trying to be polite] So, uh...what's your story?

HINA: Huh?

TRAVIS: Why'd you agree to spend fifteen years in a tin can full of assholes?

HINA: Oh. I guess...we kinda ran out of options back home. I was in DC when the bombs hit.

TRAVIS: Shit, seriously?

HINA: Yeah. We were lucky--my family made it out after the first wave. We were in a Red Cross camp for about a year, then we got a pass to move to Baltimore. But it was flooded with refugees and there wasn't any work--at first we could get day labor, but after a while even that dried up. [with wry humor] So...it was either selling a kidney, prostitution, or this.

TRAVIS: [with sympathy] Fuck.

HINA: [knowing] Yeah.

[long pause]

HINA: The scars really aren't that bad.

TRAVIS: [humorless laugh] I'm more pissed that I can barely feel anything on half my body. And that I'll never play ball again. [pause] Anyway. I'm glad you woke up okay. We don't need another cripple around here.

HINA: Um...thanks.

TRAVIS: Oh yeah. When you wanna eat, just contact Robbie. His favorite terminal's near the kitchen and he'll bring you something.

HINA: How do I--

TRAVIS: You can just ask Persephone. The terminals are all connected--she can connect you to whoever you ask for.

HINA: Okay. Thanks.

[Travis creaks out of the room, door closes]

HINA: Persephone.

PERSEPHONE: Yes, Hina Hwan.

HINA: Can you contact Robbie? So I can talk to him?

PERSEPHONE: Of course.

[terminal noise]

ROBBIE: [slightly fuzzy] Hina. You're...up again.

HINA: Yeah. I wanted to ask you something.

ROBBIE: There's, um, a vitamin drink here. Janelle told me you have to drink it soon.

HINA: I'll have it later--I'm still kind of nauseous.

ROBBIE: Oh. Um...

HINA: You're the software tech, right? Do you have access to the health records of other people on the ship?

ROBBIE: I have access to *all* the records. Do you mean pre-existing conditions?

HINA: No, I...I just wanted a run-down on all the other crews that woke up. And if they got sick or injured during the cryogenic freeze. I don't know how many crew members have been woken up since we left earth--

ROBBIE: Three hundred and twenty-seven.

HINA: Okay. Those. Can you see how they handled the thaw?

ROBBIE: Yeah. Is this for Travis?

HINA: Huh? No...

ROBBIE: He asked me to look this up a month ago, but then he changed his mind. He didn't want my report.

HINA: Oh. [pause] I-I want the report. Please.

ROBBIE: Okay. Sending now.

[terminal noise]

[scene fades out]

[scene fades in]

PERSEPHONE: Good morning, Hina Hwan. This is Day 13 of your shift on Persephone. You have 14 years, 352 days remaining. Have a nice day.

[Hina takes a long breath.]

HINA: [sad, but resolute] Okay.

[bedsprings creak as she gets up, scene fades out]

[scene fades back, Hina's footsteps stop in the hallway]

HINA: Persephone, let me into Pod Storage Level 64.

PERSEPHONE: Who are you visiting?

HINA: Bassel Assad, Crew Passenger 23879.

[beep, door slides open]

[Hina steps into room with pulsing pod sounds]

[Hina walks through room, then stops.]

[BGM starts: *Hina*]

HINA: Persephone, I want to do a year transfer.

PERSEPHONE: With which passenger?

HINA: Bassel Assad, Crew Passenger 23879.

PERSEPHONE: This requires authorization from Captain Rosa Medina.

HINA: [tired] Yeah, I know.

PERSEPHONE: What time period would you like absorb?

HINA: A-all of it.

PERSEPHONE: This passenger is slated for fifteen years of labor. Are you sure you want to add that to your time?

HINA: Yes.

PERSEPHONE: Contacting the captain. Please standby.

[Monitor beeps. Rosa's voice comes fuzzy through the intercom.]

ROSA: [urgent] Hina, what are you doing in the pod room? Have you been drinking?!

HINA: No.

ROSA: Do you realize you initiated a year transfer?!

HINA: Yeah. Robbie told me how.

ROSA: There's a lock on transfers--they can't go backwards, or people would force their years on other people. Once you do this, you can't *undo* it.

HINA: [a little upset] I know.

ROSA: This is your fiance, right? Did you discuss this with him?

[pause]

HINA: [quietly] No. [firmly] But from the minute we signed up, I knew I might have to do this. And I woke up first, I did the research...I know what I'm doing.

[pause]

ROSA: [somewhat gentle] Hina, I'm sure you're doing this for personal reasons, but I'm not going to approve this unless you tell me what's going on.

HINA: The thaws on Tau Ceti Prime will have the real teams of doctors on them. I know we can't really bring them out of cryogenic sleep for most emergencies on the ship...no offense to Janelle or the other medics, but if something went really wrong, they probably couldn't handle it.

ROSA: Is this about Travis?

HINA: No. This is about the twelve other crew members who died during thaw on the ship. Or the ones who lost complete use of their limbs, or got brain damage, or went deaf or blind--

ROSA: Hina, the risk is equal for everybody, and you got through fine.

HINA: Bassel...has a pre-existing condition. They warned him about it when he signed up. [pause] He said it was worth the risk.

ROSA: Then that was *his* decision, Hina.

HINA: And this is *my* decision! I'm not gonna take that risk--not when I'm actually here and can do something about it.

[pause]

ROSA: This is a *huge* thing to do for him.

HINA: [awkward, weak non-laugh] I fucking know that.

ROSA: [frustrated] No, you don't! You've been here, what, two weeks? You have no idea what it's like, when you're five or ten years in and not even-- [trails off]

Listen. You have fifteen years to make this decision. Just...think about it a little longer.

[BGM ends]

HINA: Fine. But I'm not gonna change my mind.

[scene fades out]

[scene fades in, clattering of kitchen sounds]

[No one says anything.]

SEB: ...The tomatoes are getting really big. Are you doing something different to them, Travis?

[no answer]

SEB: Well, they're good. It makes me miss pasta, though.

ROBBIE: We have some pasta in the specials container. I can get it for you.

SEB: [awkward] No, that's okay.

ROBBIE: We have the wheel kind. You like the wheel kind.

SEB: Robbie, I really don't need it.

ROBBIE: But I thought we were gonna open the specials container today. Because of the crew meeting.

[pause]

ROBBIE: Everyone said you can have whatever you want, Hina.

[dropped forks, angry sighs]

HINA: [sighs] I'm not trying to hide the transfer.

SEB: I'm sorry. We didn't mean to pry.

HINA: I don't care. I still need Rosa's approval, anyway.

[awkward pause]

JANELLE: Hina...I know this is a health thing--

HINA: It's not just a health thing.

JANELLE: I mean...I know you're worried your fiance won't get through the thaw, and that's fair. It's a rough process. Just...

[long pause]

JANELLE: Did Travis put this in your head?

TRAVIS: [frustrated] Here we go.

JANELLE: Every other word out of your mouth is how you were lied to, how you didn't have the facts before you signed up for this trip! What are we supposed to think?!

TRAVIS: Hey, I didn't tell her to do shit!

JANELLE: You didn't have to! All you had to do was bitch and moan about the thaw from the very second she woke up.

TRAVIS: [furious] I'm sorry if I'm not being nice enough after you destroyed my fucking body!

SEB: Janelle, leave him alone.

JANELLE: No! Shut up, Seb! [voice goes darker] This isn't Earth, Travis. Maybe you were rich and talented enough not to care what other people thought of you, but now you're trapped with us in a tin can hurtling through space and you can't be a self-centered dick anymore.

TRAVIS: You're the one who won't leave me the fuck alone to deal with this by myself! You're *making* it everybody's problem!

PERSEPHONE: [overlapping with Travis dialogue] Warning, Travis Williams. Your aggression levels are approaching maximum.

JANELLE: [overlapping with Persephone warning] I'm trying to keep this team together! Somebody has to--

PERSEPHONE: [shortly after first warning begins, overlapping with other dialogue] Warning, Janelle Vetrov. Your aggression levels are approaching maximum.

ROSA: [loud] That's enough, both of you! Team unity isn't your job, Janelle.

ROSA: [darkly] And Travis, I have been working on this ship for twenty-two years. You've complained more than any of the thirteen crew members I've been in charge of. If you want to reserve your right to suffer in silence, you have to do it in **actual silence**.

[silence]

HINA: No one planted this in my head. I was worried about it back on earth.

[pause]

HINA: I'm not stupid. We're the first human transport to Tau Ceti, so we're gonna have a hell of a lot more problems than they're planning for. Bassel's old medical issues came up a few times. He passed the physical and the genetic scan...but more than one doctor brought up his heart reversion as a possible risk.

JANELLE: Heart reversion? When did he have that?

HINA: When he was a baby.

JANELLE: [a little relieved] Hina, those are really reliable. And if he never had any issues...

HINA: He didn't. But the doctors still brought it up.

JANELLE: Did you talk to him about this?

HINA: [a little annoyed] Of course I did. We argued about it for weeks. But things were getting worse in Baltimore, and the chances of us dying on this trip were still lower than getting shot on our way to the grocery store. [pause] And when I talked to him about taking all thirty years myself...

HINA: [shaky breath] He proposed to me. And swore he would get through this so we could be together in fifteen years. [uneven] Because he's a goddamn romantic.

TRAVIS: Did he...guilt you into this?

JANELLE: [sarcastic] Yeah, Travis. It couldn't have been for love or anything!

TRAVIS: Oh, fuck you.

SEB: [gentle] Well, sometimes love and guilt are kinda connected, y'know?
[quieter] God, that's rough.

HINA: I *did* respect his decision. And I thought that would end it if he woke up first, or if I went through the thaw and it wasn't so bad, or if you had some really great way to deal with medical complications...there were a lot of ways that it could work.

HINA: But...now I have more information. And I've changed my mind.

[long pause]

SEB: [wry chuckle] And you said *he's* the romantic.

JANELLE: Really? You think it's *romantic* to totally ignore what her fiance wants and go behind his back?

ROBBIE: [even] It makes sense.

HINA: Huh?

ROBBIE: You have a list of conditions. You read the report. It's a risk/benefit analysis.

TRAVIS: [terse] Robbie, don't be a fucking robot.

ROBBIE: I'm not a robot. It makes *sense*.

TRAVIS: That's not gonna make her feel better!

ROBBIE: Okay. [pause] Then she can still take something from the specials container.

[long pause]

HINA: [a little more resolute] Okay. Yeah.

ROBBIE: [perks up] You want something?

HINA: I...yeah. Something with sugar in it.

ROBBIE: [scrapes chair, footsteps. rummaging through something] Like, something to eat? Or something to drink?

JANELLE: [conspiratorial] We have *booze*, Hina.

HINA: [halting] Do you...have the stuff to make a strawberry flip-down?

SEB: Ha! I remember those!

[sound of glasses being spread on table, ice]

TRAVIS: [scoffs] The girls at my high school used to make those at *sleepovers*.

SEB: Hey, if it's too floofy for you, I'll have yours--

TRAVIS: Just give me the rum.

ROBBIE: Persephone, bring up a list of ingredients for that.

PERSEPHONE: Of course. [monitor sound] Please see terminal screen for recipe.

JANELLE: Robbie, can you make one for me? I haven't had one of those in six hundred years!

SEB: Yeah, those jokes aren't getting old. Just bring the booze. [more positive] Hina, you have years before you have to make an actual decision. Just unwind and clear your head a little.

JANELLE: Exactly! You were a chunk of ice until two weeks ago.

[sound of movement, bottles on table]

ROSA: [a little more sombre] I admire you, Hina.

HINA: Huh?

ROSA: Whatever you decide.

[no one says anything. more bottle/table/glasses sounds]

TRAVIS: Let's drink to this shit.

[scene fades out]

[next scene fades in, in crew pod room]

HINA: Persephone, can you open my storage box again?

PERSEPHONE: Of course. [monitor sound]

[sound of box opening, Hina rummages through]

HINA: Hang on. I'm missing something...

PERSEPHONE: What are you missing?

HINA: A...ring. I know I put it--wait. Never mind.

PERSEPHONE: What are you missing?

HINA: [tired] Nothing. [pause] I'm taking a ring and a video key. You can lock it again.

PERSEPHONE: Of course.

[Hina leaves room, walks down the hall for a few seconds]

HINA: Persephone, let me into my room.

[door opens, Hina walks inside, door closes]

[Clattering and monitor sounds. Video pops on, sound is slightly fuzzy, ambient noise of schoolhouse outdoors.]

BASSEL: ...I'm recording. Are you ready?

HINA: Yeah.

BASSEL: Great. [brightens] This is January 4th, 2206, and Aya is going to her first day of school.

AYA: I don't wanna go to school, Baba!

BASSEL: *Binti*, you're gonna be great.

HINA: You'll do great, Aya. You already know how to read.

AYA: No! I don't wanna go!

HINA: It's okay, Aya. Gimme a kiss.

AYA: No, Baba! I wanna stay home with you!

BASSEL: Sweetheart, don't...come on, Hina gave you a good luck kiss!

AYA: Baba!

BASSEL: [warning] Aya...

HINA: Here, gimme the recorder. [sound of shifting microphone]

BASSEL: Aya, you're gonna be fine, right? You'll be fine.

AYA: Come with me!

BASSEL: [hesitates] Uh...maybe I'll bring her to the room. Do you think they'll let me?

HINA: I think family's okay.

[pause]

BASSEL: Okay. [weak chuckle] I'll be right back. Sorry, love you.

[Tape ends. Sound of button.]

BASSEL: Okay. [weak chuckle] I'll be right back. Sorry, love you.

[Tape ends. Sound of button.]

BASSEL: Sorry, love you.

[next scene fades in, Hina's bedroom]

[knocking on the door]

JANELLE: [muffled through door] Hina! It's Janelle. Are you up? Haaaaaley.

[bedsprings creak, shuffling of clothes]

HINA: Huh?

PERSEPHONE: Good morning, Hina Hwan. This is Day 26 of your shift on Persephone. You have 14 years, 339 days remaining. Have a nice day.

[Hina grunts, shifts in bed]

HINA: Persephone, let her in.

[Door opens. Janelle's voice is clear as she steps in.]

JANELLE: [teasing] You still haven't gotten used to the schedule? You're slow.

HINA: It's...the lack of sun. I used to jog every morning.

JANELLE: You jogged in *Baltimore*? Damn, were you dodging bullets?!

HINA: I was...pretty fast.

JANELLE: [laughs] All right. Up you go! [creaking bedsprings] You need to do some maintenance down in the passenger pods, and that place is creepy as hell. I'll keep you company.

HINA: [disbelief/desire] Is that...coffee?

JANELLE: Yeah, you want some? Travis just harvested a little crop.

HINA: Fuck me, yes.

JANELLE: Ha ha! Here. Sorry it's black. We tried to use the Synthetics Printer to make some of that fake creamer stuff one time, but it tasted like death and gave half of us food poisoning.

HINA: [voice muffled by cup] Black's fine--that's how I used to drink it. [takes a long sip of coffee, takes a breath] Thanks.

JANELLE: [laughs] Let's go.

[They walk out of the room, down the hall. Conversation takes place through a few halls and doors.]

JANELLE: Have you been off the crew floor yet? You know we're only using, like, the top 5% of the ship.

HINA: I know. Rosa brought me down once.

JANELLE: Oh yeah? Ugh. [sips coffee] I hate the passenger pods. I don't mind the crew pods, but on the lower decks...forty thousand people in those tight little rows. Like ice cube trays.

HINA: Do you know anyone down there?

JANELLE: Oh, sure. My parents and my little brother are down there.

HINA: Really?

JANELLE: Wait, I never told you that? [laughs] They're the reason my sister and I had to split fifty years!

HINA: Oh. Sorry, I...did know that.

JANELLE: If someone's frozen and they're not crew, they're in the lower decks. [pause] Your step-daughter should be down there.

HINA: Yeah. Rosa showed me. [pause] What maintenance do I have to do?

JANELLE: We just got a notice that one of the cooling systems needs a check-up. The old engineer used to do those all the time, so Persephone's got a good protocol.

HINA: Sure.

JANELLE: But to be honest, you're faster with engine stuff than he was. [murmurs into cup] Cuter, too.

HINA: Uh...thanks?

JANELLE: [chuckles] Sorry, I'm not trying to be creepy. But...y'know.

HINA: What?

JANELLE: Gah, this is so awkward. Just...you've been on the ship for a month, and I like you, and I know how lonely it can get around here. So if you're feeling especially lonely, I can help you out.

HINA: ...

JANELLE: In bed. [pause] Sex. Don't make me go into more detail. [pause]
Unless you're into that.

HINA: [realization, a little surprised] Oh...I'm *engaged*.

JANELLE: Well, Rosa's married with kids, and she's religious. But apparently she and her wife agreed that anything that happens on the ship doesn't count.

HINA: That's their business.

JANELLE: [hesitant] Hina...don't take this the wrong way, because it has nothing to do with me hitting on you. But...

HINA: What?

JANELLE: Just...your fiancée. Back on Earth, you guys were planning to get married after you both did fifteen years.

HINA: [a little bitter] And I fucked that up pretty bad.

JANELLE: Well...

[Hina takes a long pause.]

[BGM starts: *Hina*]

HINA: I know...thirty years is a long time. It's longer than I've been alive. And I already miss him.

HINA: I'm gonna be an old woman the next time I see him. He'll be a distant memory of a couple happy years when I was young. But for him, it's gonna be like no time has passed at all...like he went to sleep, and woke up next to a stranger.

JANELLE: [quietly] Damn, Hina.

HINA: He'll stick with me--I know he will. Even if he isn't attracted to me anymore, or feels like he doesn't know me, or doesn't like the person I turned out to be. That's the kind of guy he is. Hell, that's why I fell for him in the first place. [voice starts to sound uneven] He'll tell me he loves me, and he'll even mean it, probably...Shit, it's not worth talking about at this point. It's not helping.

JANELLE: No, you're right. Sorry.

HINA: Even if I change my mind later, I'm just not up for screwing right now.

JANELLE: [nervous laugh] Fair enough.

[long pause]

HINA: Do...a lot of people screw around?

JANELLE: Huh?

HINA: On the ship.

JANELLE: Well, it's not like there's a lot to do around here! So a lot of people do, yeah. [pause] But, you know...even if you're not interested in sex, you should at least think about getting a hobby. Something to work on to keep you busy.

HINA: Do you guys all have hobbies?

JANELLE: Oh yeah. Rosa's, like, a triple doctorate by now, and I'm pretty sure Seb's written about ten screenplays he refuses to show anyone. [sips coffee] I've tried a bunch of stuff. I'm knitting now.

HINA: That sounds okay.

JANELLE: [laughs] It's not. The things I make are *not okay*. But I've got all the time in the world to get better!

HINA: How long have you been awake again?

JANELLE: Six years. But Rosa, Robbie, and Seb were all awake when I got up, so it's not like I've seen a lot of crew turnover. [sips coffee] Just Kyle and Oom, who finished up before you and Travis.

HINA: Robbie's been awake more than six years? [pause] How old is that guy?

JANELLE: Uh...twenty-six or twenty-seven, I think. He was about Travis's age when he woke up.

HINA: I didn't think he could be older than early twenties. Maybe it's just...I dunno.

JANELLE: What?

HINA: He's a little...eccentric.

JANELLE: Ha! Yeah, you get used to that. He just spends too many hours a day staring into a monitor.

[The women stop walking.]

JANELLE: Persephone, let us into dock 57.

PERSEPHONE: Who are you visiting?

JANELLE: The cooler in section G needs a check. Hina's with me.

HINA: Hi.

JANELLE: She knows you're here.

PERSEPHONE: [overlapping with Janelle's line]: I know you're there, Hina Hwan.

[door opens to sound of pulsing passenger pods]

HINA: Have you slept with guys? I was just...wondering if they really sterilized us while we under. That part of the crew form freaked me out.

JANELLE: Definitely. There was a while a few years ago where Seb and I were screwing like rabbits, and I didn't have so much as a pregnancy *scare*. [sips coffee] Did you give them eggs to save?

HINA: [quietly] I couldn't afford it.

JANELLE: Oh. [gently slaps Hina on the back] But you've got your boyfriend's daughter, right? And she's past the eat-shit-cry stage, which is pretty good for you.

HINA: [awkward laugh] She's ten. She passed that stage a long time ago.

JANELLE: Hey, I still have that stage if I've been drinking too much.

[stops near something pulsing]

JANELLE: This is it. Persephone, bring up the cooler vent protocol.

PERSEPHONE: Of course.

HINA: ...Oh yeah, this should be easy. A few settings and some manual vents.

JANELLE: Do you need help?

HINA: Just drink your coffee.

[Sounds of Hina working with tools. Janelle sips coffee and walks around.]

JANELLE: [mostly to herself] Whoa...look at this guy. Nice tattoo. Is that supposed to be a dragon? [sips coffee] I hope he didn't pay money for that.

[A loud hissing sound erupts from Hina's workspace. Janelle cries out and her coffee spills.]

JANELLE: Jesus!

[fizzing sound, alarm goes off.]

JANELLE: Shit! Shit shit shit!

HINA: What happened?!

PERSEPHONE: [repeating over conversation] Warning, please dehydrate the pod panel.

JANELLE: No, he just--the body shifted when you did that and it freaked me out. Shit, I spilled my coffee on the dashboard!

HINA: Wipe it up!

JANELLE: I'm trying! This suit fabric isn't--look in that storage closet for a rag or something!

HINA: Closet? [sounds of Hina's running footsteps] Dammit, it's stuck!

JANELLE: Persephone, disconnect the panel until we fix this! Just keep the guy's sleep static!

[alarm continues]

PERSEPHONE: Panel disconnected. Pod 15437 is in maintenance mode. Please dehydrate the pod panel.

JANELLE: [frustrated] Yeah, I'm working on it! Turn off the alarm!

[alarm continues]

JANELLE: Dammit, Persephone! I disconnected it--turn off the alarm!

[Hina is rattling at door, eventually wrenches it free. There's a thump.]

HINA: What the...? [sounds of shuffling fabric] Fuck. Fucking...fuck.
Janelle...come here.

JANELLE: Hina, the alarm won't go off until we--

HINA: Come here. NOW.

JANELLE: What? [pause] Jesus!

[long pause while alarm blares]

JANELLE: W-was he in the closet?

HINA: Yeah.

JANELLE: Wrapped like that?

HINA: Yeah. Is he dead?

JANELLE: Obviously!

HINA: Who is he?

JANELLE: I've never seen him before. [hesitates] Ugh...he hasn't decomposed much, but the ship is sterile. He could've been here for years.

HINA: How did he...is he in the ship's log?

JANELLE: If he is, he would've been put in the morgue like anyone else who dies on the ship! [pause] Oh my God. Hina...

HINA: ...Where's his ID chip?

JANELLE: Someone cut it out of his head.

[long pause while alarm blares]

HINA: P-Persephone, who is this guy? How did he die?

PERSEPHONE: Error. Error, error, error...

[Blaring alarm and Persephone's error message fade out.]

End of Chapter 1