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Astro Bandits:

An Audio Drama

By

Ashley M. Jimenez

A capstone project submitted for
Graduation with University Honors

May 31st, 2020

University Honors
University of California, Riverside

APPROVED

_____
Dr. Stuart Krieger
Department of Screenwriting

_____
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Abstract

For many, adults and children alike, animation and cartoons have played a large role in the development of their creativity and imagination. Some have even become inspired to create their own stories with the same tropes and aesthetics of the cartoons and other creative media that has inspired them. With creative technology becoming more accessible, non-professional creators have a chance at bringing their stories to life through a variety of means such as webcomics, short films or web series. Creative media has similarly inspired me to design stories and characters that affect others in the same manner that beloved cartoons and childhood media has affected countless individuals. The goal of this project is to create a series of scripts for the first season of an audio drama. While the scripts for the entire first season will be written, only the first pilot episode will be turned into a fully-voiced audio drama. The series, tilted Astro Bandits, will explore similar themes to the cartoons and media from which it drew inspiration, such as found family, heroism, and love. The aim of this project is to affect audiences in a positive way by providing some inspiration which they can carry with them in different avenues of creative endeavors.

Acknowledgements

I would like to sincerely thank my mentor for this project, Professor Stuart Krieger, for not only agreeing to mentor Astro Bandits on such short notice, but for providing screenwriting knowledge and helping develop my storytelling skills. I would also like to thank the Astro Bandits voice cast for not only being flexible with schedules but for putting hours of hard work into recording for this project. Without their help, Astro Bandits would not be the fully realized project that it is. I would also like to thank the friends and family that proofread and watched early drafts of the scripts and pilot episode. Their feedback was integral to the development process. And lastly, I would like to thank the Honors department for the opportunity to produce this Capstone. It has allowed me to live out part of a dream I never thought possible and has permanently shaped my outlook on career choices. It is an opportunity I will always be grateful for.

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Link to Pilot Episode:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UPegICYgJIs5QVbIxIHrUPT6xvLnOGaA/view?usp=sharing

Astro bandits

"Pilot - The Naviy Escape"

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Ext. Naviy slums market - day.

The sounds of a busy open-air market fill the air. Two brothers, KARON MILEON, 20, and LU DELORA MILEON, 11, push their way through the crowds.

KARON
Hurry up Lu. We're gonna be late.

Lu
I know, I know. I'm right behind you!

Karon
I'm not gonna let anything keep us from getting off this junk planet today. Even if I have to carry you to Q's.

Lu
I'm not a baby you know!

As Karon and Lu argue, the noises of a nearby scuffle intensify drawing Lu's attention.

Lu
Hey Kar check it out! Isn't that Rocker? He's getting in another fight!

Karon
That's none of our business, c'mon.

As Karon attempts to walk away a female voice rises above the crowd. AZA, 18, strikes a fighting pose as she challenges a burly, scar-riddled and middle-aged ruffian, ROCKER, from the inner circle of the crowd.

AZA

C'mon big guy you really think you can take on an Astro Bandit? We never lose a fight ya know? But if you insist, I'll go easy on ya.

Rocker
You? Go easy on me? You must be joking little girl. I've only lost one fight on these streets and I ain't about to lose another to you!

Lu
Uh I don't think that girl knows who she's fighting. Shouldn't we do something?

Karon
No, we've gotta keep moving.

Rocker
Alright you're on pirate girl!

Aza
Bring it on boulder boy!

Lu
Uh...Kar?

Karon
Ugh fine!

Karon begins to move to the center of the circle but before he can get far, Aza begins her fight with Rocker.

Aza
Don't say I didn't warn ya!

Aza swiftly and skillfully gets Rocker on the ground, avoiding his punches along the way. Rocker grunts as he falls to the ground.

Aza
Ha ha!

Rocker
You filthy pirate! You cheated!

Aza
Cheated? Oh c'mon don't be a sore loser Mr. Boulder man! I told you, an Astro Bandit never loses a fight!

Rocker
Nobody cheats the Rocker! You're gonna pay for that little girl! Get her!

The crowd surrounding the fight then begins closing in on Aza, ready to pounce.

Aza
Whoa whoa whoa hold on you guys. He's the one that challenged me ya know.

Lu
Karon! Rocker listens to you! Do something!

Karon enters the inner circle, stepping between Aza and the Rocker.

Karon
Hey back off Rocker. This girl didn't cheat.

Rocker
Karon! There's no way she beat me that fast! Faster than you!

Karon
Just because she knows how to fight doesn't mean she cheated. You got mad at me for beating you too. Just tell everyone to back off and leave her alone.

Rocker
I. . . Fine. Only cause you're the one asking.

Rocker motions for his crew to back off. The inner circle widens as people begin to disperse. Aza eyes Karon as she moves over towards him.

AZA
Hey uh thanks for that-

Karon
No thanks necessary. C'mon Lu.

Lu
Uh, ok.

Karon turns and begins to walk away with Lu reluctantly following. They leave Aza behind.

Int. Q's Pawn shop. Day

Karon and Lu swing aside the sheets marking the entrance to Q's pawn shop. A small bell chimes. An alien girl around Karon's age, Q, looks up as the brothers enter the shop.

Q
If it isn't my two favorite customers. And right on time too.

Lu
Hi Q!

Q
Hey little Mileon.

Karon
The ship's here?

Q
Yup. Source just told me it arrived last night. One bona fide

Unifier cargo ship ready to be loaded up.

Karon
And the disguises?

Q
Got em right here.

Q pulls out three separate Unifier uniforms and lays them out in front of Karon.

Karon
Uh, why are there three?

Q
Ah, well the thing is. Someone offered to pay me twice of what you guys gave to get in on the deal.

Karon
What?

As Q is about to explain, the sheets marking the entrance to the shop swing open. Aza enters.

Aza
Hey there, sorry I'm late.

Q
Oh, speak of the devil.

Karon & Lu
YOU?

Teaser end

Act 1

Int. Q's Pawn shop. Day

The brothers stand aghast as Aza stands before them.

Aza
Oh hey you two! Wow must be fate that we run into each other again! I didn't get a chance to thank you.

Q
Thank?

Aza
Your friend over here stepped in to get me out of a sticky situation but walked away before I could even offer any thanks. By the way, I totally had that fight covered, you didn't need to step in.

Lu
It didn't look like you did.

Karon
Look she can't join us. Lu and I have been waiting far too long to get off this junkyard and I'm not gonna risk our escape on this-this street brawler.

Q
She already paid though.

Aza
Look I didn't start that fight. He challenged me! And you saw me take down that rock guy in two seconds flat, I can fend for myself.

Karon
If you can fend for yourself then wait for another ship to come by.

Aza
Uh no I mean I can help you! And besides I have my reasons for getting on that ship!

Karon
You still can't just-

Lu
C'mon, she can fight pretty well. What if we get in trouble and need help?

Karon
We're not gonna need any help. Besides this is a stealth mission. Or did you not even know that much?

Aza
Of course I did! Q ran through the whole plan with me. It'll be a breeze!

Lu
She seems confidant enough.

Aza
Hey do you recognize my uniform?

Karon
Nope.

Aza
Well your buddy Rocker knew. It's why he wanted to fight me. My name's Aza. I'm a member of the Astro Bandits.

Karon
Never heard of 'em.

Aza

Okay that's...not what I was expecting. But Q here told me you and your brother didn't really save up enough money for supplies. On the last call I made with my transmitter before it ran out of juice, my home ship agreed to meet me outside this planet's atmosphere later today. If we get off this planet and we get to my ship, I can give you guys some more supplies before you head off on whatever little quest you've got planned.

Lu
We do only have a couple week's worth of rations...

Karon looks back and forth between Lu and Aza. He locks eyes with Lu before sighing.

Karon
Okay, okay, fine. Aza was it? You're in. But you follow my lead got it?

Aza
Sure thing boss man. I look forward to working with you uh...

Lu
The name's Lu! The grump is my big brother Karon.

Aza
Alright, Lu, Karon. Let's get this party started!

End of act 1

Act 2

Int. Unifier ship hallway. Day

Aza, Karon, and Lu make their way through the halls of the Unifier ship.

Aza
Looks like the disguises worked. Gotta say pretty bold of you to sneak onto a Galactic Unifier ship like this. It's like you're asking to get arrested.

KARON
Hey how about we don't talk about our plan while walking around the inside of the ship we snuck onto.

Aza
Oops, sorry! Hey, question, are you guys Naviy natives?

Lu
Nope! We've been stuck here for quite a while actually!

Aza
Stuck here?

Karon
Yeah more or less.

Lu
Where are you from Aza? I don't think I've ever seen anybody with face marks like yours.

Aza
That's a good question. I don't actually know myself. I was found by my adoptive father as a baby on some old ruined planet. Nobody knows what happened to it.

Lu
Oh. I'm sorry to hear that.

Aza
It's alright. I've been looking for clues about my species and home planet all across the galaxy. Every planet I can find. That's actually why I came to Naviy but my ship got way too wrecked on the landing.

Lu
Have you found any clues yet?

Aza
Nope! Not a thing...I'm starting to wonder if I ever will.

Karon
Hey I hate to break up this bonding moment but we're here at the security room.

The crew stops in front of a sliding door. Karon pulls out a key card and swipes. The door swings open to reveal a security guard sitting at the main module. He eyes the crew.

Security guard 1
Hey who the heck are you guys?

Karon
We're...maintenance.

Security guard 1
Maintenance? Maintenance wasn't scheduled to pass through this floor. Show me your IDs.

The crew tenses. Karon reaches for his concealed gun.

Lu

(whispered)
Uh...Kar?

Karon
Don't worry I got this.

Karon pulls out his pistol, aiming it at the guard. In retaliation the guard begins to reach for his own pistol. Before Karon can pull the trigger, Aza pushes Karon's arm, letting the shot loose at the ceiling.

Aza
No! Don't shoot him!

Karon
Hey-!

Aza
I got this!

Aza rushes over to the guard, swiftly knocking him out as he tries to fire his pistol. The guard falls to the ground.

Lu
That could've gone worse.

Karon
Lu, get over to console.

Lu runs over to the main console, stepping over the unconscious guard.

Karon
You, why'd you stop me?

Aza
You can't just go around killing random people.

Karon
He was gonna shoot at us.

Aza

Okay but he didn't, I stopped him. Look killing needlessly goes against the Bandit code so as long as I'm here, buddy, you're not getting away with any of that. And anyway wasn't this supposed to be a stealth mission?

Lu
She's got ya there.

Karon
Shut up Lu.

Aza looks over at Lu as he types away at main console.

Aza
What exactly are you doing kiddo?

Lu
Well, the key card we swiped only gave us clearance for certain rooms so I'm hacking their system to grant us permission to launch one of their smaller cargo ships.

Aza
You can hack?

Karon
Lu's always been good at that kind of stuff. No idea where he picked that up.

Aza
You didn't teach him?

Karon
I taught him basics. Growing up in the Naviy slums we had to fend for ourselves so I taught him a little of everything we needed to get by, but I have no idea how he got that good.

Lu
Maybe I was just born to be awesome! And...done!

As Lu speaks his last word, he enthusiastically presses down on one final key.

Lu
Okay we're in the clear!

Karon
Good job Lu. Now let's get out of here before that guard wakes up.

The crew vacates the room and begins running down the hall. As they reach an intersection, Aza takes a step in the opposite direction of the brothers.

Karon
Uh, hey where are you going?

Aza
The cargo bay! Unifier Officers and the Astro Bandits are kinda sworn enemies, we cause the chaos, they keep the peace and all that. They've taken a few things from my fellow bandits in this quadrant so I wanted to see if they have anything that belongs to us. And besides some extra loot can't hurt.

Karon
Uh, no. You're not going to cargo bay. WE are heading to the loading dock and getting out of here now.

Aza
Look they don't even know we're here. What's the harm in looking?

Karon

There's ALL the harm in looking! You're taking a risk we can't afford!

Aza
And why not? So long as we get out of here we're all good right?

Lu
Uh, guys you might wanna keep it down...

Karon
We can't steal things just cause you want to! Ugh I knew bringing you along was a bad idea.

Aza
Hey look, you two can head off to cargo ship and I'll meet you there faster than the speed of light!

Karon
Hey, yeah I have another idea. How about no?

Aza
How about 'yes Aza, splitting up sounds like a great idea! You're so smart!'

Karon
If we split up the chances of guards finding us increases! Especially if you get caught stealing!

As Aza and Karon argue, footsteps can be heard rounding the corner. Two Unifier Security Guards appear before the trio.

Security guarD 1
There! Those are the three that knocked me out!

Aza
Oh no.

Security guard 2
Stowaways! Get them!

The guards pull pistols on the trio. Aza and Karon take a step forward to fight the two guards but before they can, more reinforcements arrive pistols drawn. The guards knock the trio to their knees. They are arrested.

End of act 2

Act 3

Int. Unifier ship brig. Day.

The security guards drag the crew over to the brig. The three are tied up individually, hanging with their hands above them.

Aza
So uh...who woulda thought that guard that I knocked out would wake up that fast?

Karon
Yeah...who'da thunk?

Aza
I uh...I'm sorry guys.

Lu
It's okay Aza. It's not all on you.

Aza
Can I ask something? Why do you guys wanna get off this planet so badly anyway?

Lu
We...we're trying to find our mom.

Aza
Your mother?

Karon
Lu and I got separated from her when we were kids. I got us out of a pretty bad trafficking system but that just left us fending for ourselves on the Naviy streets. I made two promises to our mom before they took her from us. The first was to take care of Lu and the second was that we'd eventually go find her and be a family again. But we hardly had enough money to fend for ourselves, much less buy a ship to get off this junkyard. This was the first Unifier ship to come by with means of getting out of here. This was our one shot.

Lu
And it took us awhile to save up for those disguises and all our rations but I'm pretty sure the guards took our bags when they left just now...

Karon
I knew I shouldn't have let you stop me from getting rid of that guard. You got us into this mess Aza...now what?

Karon pauses to let Aza respond but she doesn't answer.

Karon
Uh...Aza? What are you doing?

Aza

Shh hold on. I'm gonna try to get us out of here but I need to concentrate.

Karon
What?

Lu
Whoa Aza the marks on your face are glowing!

As Lu speaks, the two gold marks on Aza's face begin to glow. A quiet hum fills the room as the restraints holding Aza's hands shatter. Aza falls to the ground, landing on her feet as her hands glow with a bright light.

Karon
Did...did you just break the restraints?

Lu
Cool! What was that?

Aza stands up, rubbing her wrists and examining her hands.

Aza
I don't actually know. I've been able to do that since I was a kid. Create this energy from my hands. I think it might have something to do with where I'm from. Who...well what I am ya know? The people from my home planet might have the same powers I do...

Karon
Uh huh...

Lu
Hey...Aza? Would you uh, mind getting us down too?

Aza
Oh! Right!

Aza heads over to a console off to the side, releasing the restraints on the brothers as they fall to their feet.

Karon
Alright change of plans. We've gotta recover the stuff they swiped off us otherwise Lu and I have nothing to live on.

Lu
I overheard the guard mention the cargo hold.

Aza
Looks like we're looting after all!

Karon
Good for you I guess. Well, Cargo hold it is then. But we better make it quick.

The crew quietly make their way out of the brig, heading to the cargo hold. Lu hacks the door open and Aza rushes inside. She looks around.

Aza
Whoa look at all this stuff! I'm one happy pirate!

Karon
Hey maybe show a little restraint?...Ugh whatever, Lu do you see our stuff?

Lu
Uh...ah! Over there!

The brothers walk over to where they spotted their bags as Aza looks around.

Aza

Oh man a lot of this looks pricey!
The black market on Naviy must be
crazy!

Suddenly Aza stops as she hears a sound resembling small jingling bells. A hum fills the room.

Aza
Huh...what is... Do you guys hear
that?

Karon
Hear what?

Aza
A...noise...

Aza looks around the hold for the source of the sound. Her eyes land on a triangular shaped piece of rock several feet in front of her. Almost hypnotized, she begins to walk over.

Aza
It's...coming from that thing.

Lu
That rock?

As Aza walks closer to the rock, the hum becomes louder. She reaches out to it.

Lu
Hey uh Aza, what are you doing?

Karon
How about we don't go around
touching random things-

Before Karon can finish his sentence, a bright flash of light fills the room as the rock reacts to Aza's touch. The hum becomes louder as the three avert their eyes from the glow. As quickly as it began, the light and hum die down.

Lu

What...what was that?

Aza
I...I don't know. But I think this thing was reacting to me. It was calling out to me. Maybe...maybe this thing has something to do with where I'm from!

Karon
That's...nice but we should probably get going.

Aza
I'm taking this.

Aza picks up the rock, placing it in her pocket.

Lu
That doesn't look like it'll fit in your pocket-

Aza
Taking it!

Karon
Aza-

Aza
Took it! Alright let's get out of here!

The trio steps through the cargo bay doors and begins to sneak their way down the hall.

Karon
Based on that map we got, the loading bay should be on the other side of this lower deck. We better book it.

Lu
Is running a good idea though? Seems like they haven't caught on

that we escaped yet so it might be better if we were sneaky about it...

As Lu finishes his sentence, an alarm blares throughout the ship. After a few seconds a voice comes through the speakers.

Unifier Officer (V.O.)
Attention all personnel: Three young stowaways have escaped from the brig. They've been spotted by the cargo bay. All lower level personnel: mobilize to capture. I repeat mobilize to capture.

Lu
Okay I take back what I just said. RUN!

End of act 3

Act 4

The crew begin running through the lower level as alarms blare. Soon more footsteps can be heard as security guards begin to catch up to them.

Security guard 3
There they are! Get them!

Aza
Run faster, run faster, run faster!

Lu
I'm trying but I have small legs!

Karon
The loading dock's up ahead! Go start the ship! I'll hold em off!

Aza

Don't kill anyone!

Karon
Alright alright jeez just go!

Aza and Lu run through the doors of the loading dock as shots of blasters can be heard behind them. Before they reach the ship another security guard spots them.

Security guard 4
Hey you two! Surrender or I'll shoot!

Aza
Oh man I'm sorry but you're not gonna get the chance! Hiyah!

Aza dashes over to the security guard, knocking him unconscious.

Aza
Get in the ship Lu!

Lu
Right!

Lu and Aza board a small cargo ship. As Lu presses a few buttons, the ship powers on.

Lu
I got it on! Where's Karon?

Karon
I'm here! Hurry close the loading doors!

The doors shut with a loud mechanical bang as shots fire continuously from the guards surrounding the ship.

Aza
Uh now might be the wrong time to ask but do either of you know how to fly this kind of ship cause I sure don't.

Karon
I've only flown speeders before.

Aza
Speeders? Speeders? You built a whole escape plan around flying a ship and you didn't think about learning to fly one?

Karon
I thought I could handle learning on the job! And I didn't think we'd be running from the law!

Aza
Oh stars, we really didn't think this through!

As Aza screams, the ships bounces into the air, lurching forward.

Karon
Everybody hang on!

Aza/Lu
Whoa!

Karon propels the ship forward, out of the dock and into the atmosphere. They begin flying away from the Unifier ship at full speed.

AZA
Huh you're better at flying this than I thought you'd be. We're not dead.

A blast hits the side of the ship, rocking the group.

Lu
Yet! They sent fighters after us!

Aza

Fighters? They had fighters on that ship! Why didn't we take one of those?

Lu
Does this thing have any firepower?

Karon
Nope! We're just gonna have to gun it! Aza, do you see your home ship anywhere?

Aza
Uh...There! Off to the right! That bright grey ship with red insignia!

Karon
Alright! Hang on!

Karon pushes the ship forward as fast as it can go. More shots are fired until finally, an alarm begins sounding inside their cargo ship.

Lu
Uh oh that can't be good.

Karon
Hey uh, your ship's dock isn't open Aza.

Aza
What do you mean it isn't open?

Karon
It isn't open!

Aza
Hold on! I'll send a distress signal from this ship!

Aza presses a button on the ship's console.

Aza
Astro Bandits this is Aza! On board this uh on-fire ship! Let us in! Please!

Lu
Uh...we're getting pretty close.

Aza
I repeat: This is Aza! Open the gate! Now!

Lu
It's opening!

Karon
Everybody hold on, we're coming in hard!

The crew braces for impact as the ships crashes into main ship's loading bay. Eventually the cargo ship screeches to a halt.

KaroN
Everyone okay?

Lu
I...I don't know. I think I'm dead. Am I dead?

Aza
I'm fine...I'm...I'm finally home.

Aza jumps up and immediately heads for the door.

Karon
Hey...hey slow down!

Aza runs out the door. The brothers get up and follow. They walk out to a group of pirates, dressed in the same outfit as Aza, surrounding them.

Aza

Karon, Lu, Welcome to the Astro Bandits!

End

Astro Bandits 102 - The Appraiser

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. Astro bandits ship. Day.

KARON and LU stand before a crowd of ASTRO BANDITS, with AZA at the center, arms outstretched and a huge smile on her face.

Aza
Welcome to the Astro Bandits!

Lu
Um, hi.

Karon
Hey.

A 25 year old blue-skinned MAN (LEZ) wearing a black Astro Bandits uniform steps forward to Aza's side.

Man
Aza!

Aza
Oh hey Lez!

Lez
So let me get this straight, Aza. You disappear for a week, then come home in a burning Unifier ship, destroy our landing bay yet again, AND you bring home two new friends?

Aza
Yeah that sounds about right! Guys meet Karon and Lu! It's because of them I was able to get back home!

Lu
Hi everyone!

Aza
Karon, Lu, these are the Astro Bandits. The best space pirates in

the entire galaxy! This stuck-up here is Lez, the first mate.

Lez
Pleasure to meet you both and thank you for helping Aza get home safe. But Aza, look at the mess you made of the landing bay. How am I gonna explain this to Cap'n...

Voice (O.S.)
Explain what exactly?

Lez
Cap'n!

The CAPTAIN of the Astro Bandits, a burly middle-aged alien, begins to walk towards Lez and Aza from the back of the crowd. The Bandits clear the way to let their Captain pass through. He walks towards Karon and Lu, stopping in front of them as he continues to stare them down. Karon stares back. Lu fidgets.

Cap'n
Hello there. Seems we have two new faces. Now what are you two doing setting fire to my dear ship?

Teaser end

Act 1

Int. Astro bandtis ship. Day.

Cap'n stares down the brothers as the Astro Bandits watch, anxious and tense.

Cap'N
Karon and Lu was it?

Karon
Yes sir.

Cap'n

And you two are partly responsible for this mess in my landing bay?

Karon
Y-yes sir...

Cap'n
Welcome! Thank you for bringing our girl home to us! Aza, come give this old man a hug!

Aza
I'm home Cap'n!

Lu
Well he's not that scary...

Cap'n
Scary? Me? How dare you! I'm as cuddly as Garian Bear! Right Aza?

Aza
Yup!

Lez
Cap'n? What should we do about the landing bay?

Cap'n
Get a few men together and put out the fires. We can worry about repairs later! Your sister's home safe and sound. It's time to celebrate! Everyone! It's high time we have a banquet!

All the Astro Bandits roar in excitement. A group sets off to put out the fire in the landing bay while the rest begin to vacate to prep for the party. Aza follows her fellow Bandits while Cap'n turns around to look at the brothers. He walks over to them clasping both by their shoulders.

Cap'n
You two! You must join us! As a thank you for bringing Aza!

Karon

I don't think we should impose-

Cap'n
Nonsense! Come along!

Cap'n drags the two brothers out of the landing bay.

Int. astro bandits ship. Night.

The Astro Bandits are all gathered in a large hall, a party in full swing. Drinks and food are passed all around as laughter and loud discussions fill the room. The Brothers sit next to each other on the outskirts of the party, people-watching and enjoying food.

Lu
Well these seem like nice people!
Like a really big family!

Karon
They're kinda loud.

Lu
Like Aza!

Karon looks over at Lu. Lu has a huge smile on his face.

Karon
I haven't seen you smile like that
in a while.

Lu
Well...I think I like it here!

Karon
Like it huh?

As Karon and Lu finish their discussion, Aza and Lez walk over to them. They sit down, joining the brothers.

Aza
Hey you two! Enjoying the party?

Lu
Yeah! I don't think I've ever had
food this good before!

Aza
I'm glad you like it! Our cooking team is one of the best in the galaxy! Right Lez?

Lez
Yeah they're really wonderful. Listen, I wanted to thank the two of you again for getting Aza home safely. We were pretty worried when she dropped off the face of the universe for several days. It took us a while to get our ship over here and we were still plenty far out when we got a call that she was planning an escape with a couple others. I worried about whether or not you two were good people but it seems like my fears were ill-founded.

Aza
Awwww you worry too much!

Lez
I'd worry less if you weren't the only Bandit with a penchant for causing explosions wherever you go!

Karon
Speaking of the Bandits, what are you guys exactly?

Aza
We're a group of the best misfits in the galaxy!

Lez
Well there's more to it then that. The Astro Bandits are made up of individuals that come from all walks of life. Mercenaries, petty thieves, gamblers, you name it. All wishing for a chance to change

the path they'd chosen. Cap'n found them all and offered them a second chance at their lives by joining the Astro Bandits. That's why we all wear these uniforms. Once you put this uniform on, you're an Astro Bandit. Who you used to be doesn't matter anymore. You belong to a new family.

Karon
Isn't that a little dangerous? Letting ex-criminals join your group?

Lez
Well we've had our fair share of traitors, sure, but Cap'n believes that everyone deserves the benefit of a doubt. A chance to change themselves.

Aza
We owe a lot to Cap'n's way of thinking. Lez and I wouldn't be here without it!

Lu
You said you were found as a baby right?

Aza
Yup! As an infant in a stasis life pod on my old planet! Nobody knows how long I was there for. Lez was rescued a few years before. He's basically my brother!

Lez
Yeah and what a handful of a little sister you turned out to be.

Aza
Don't be mean; you know you love me!

Lez
I'd love you more if you stopped setting our ship on fire!

Aza smiles at Lez before turning back to the brothers.

Aza
So, what are you two gonna do now? You mentioned you wanna look for your mother but do you have any leads?

LU
We've got one!

Karon
Yeah.

Karon tugs the collar of his jacket aside, showing off the tattoo on the side of his neck.

Karon
See this tattoo on my neck?

Aza
Yeah I noticed it before. Didn't think it was right to say anything about it.

Karon
Well this tattoo is a marker. Given to me by the people that took us from our mother. Everyone in the barracks we were taken to had these on their necks.

Aza
How come Lu doesn't have one?

Karon
Lu was only a year old at the time. Giving a baby one of these...That probably would've done more damage then they could afford. Still this is basically a brand.

Lu
We think that if we find out who this brand is associated with, we can track them down and find out where they sent our mother. But we don't really know who to ask.

Aza
Oh! I do! I'm going to visit a friend of mine tomorrow who might know something about that piece of rock I picked up on the Unifier ship. They're pretty knowledgeable about all sorts of things. Maybe you can come along with me and ask them!

Lu
That doesn't sound like a bad idea! Killing two birds with one stone!

Karon
It's all we've got I guess. Sure.

Aza
Alright then! Tomorrow, first thing in the morning, we're off!

The party continues late through the night. Aza and Cap'n eventually offer the brother's a room to sleep in once the party is over. The crew then turns in for the night.

Int. AstrO BANDITS SHIP. DAY.

Once morning breaks, Aza jumps out of bed and wakes up the brothers. They gather in landing bay, hopping inside one of the smaller fighter ships the Bandits have.

Aza
Okay boys! Who's ready for an adventure?

Lu
Yeah!

Karon
Hey, do you actually know how to fly this ship?

Aza
Yup! This is the same model fighter I took to Naviy!

Lu
Didn't you say you crashed that ship?

Aza
Yup!

Lu
Okay suddenly I'm not that excited anymore.

Aza
Hold on to your seats boys cause here we go!

With a jolt Aza propels the ship forward. The brothers scream as they fly off into the atmosphere surrounding the ship.

Ext. Outer Aelsi atmosphere. Day.

The trio reaches the outer atmosphere of their destination, the planet Aelsi. They begin descending, viewing a planet rife with large jagged rock formations.

Aza
Alright here it is! Aelsi: the rock planet! Buckle down boys. Landing's never really been my forte.

Karon
Ya don't say.

Aza

Don't worry I won't crash! This time!

The ship jerks and rocks as Aza haphazardly attempts to land.

Lu
Ugh, I think I'm starting to understand what feeling space sick is like.

Karon
Aza, in front of you! That cliff!

Aza
Uh oh.

Aza swerves the ship to the side to avoid the cliff. The ship scrapes the edge of the rock and begins to spin out of control.

Lu
We're gonna crash!

Karon
No we're not! Aza give me the controls!

Aza
No I can do this!

Karon
Aza!

The ship bumps into another rock. The alarms start to blare.

Aza
Okay on second thought, here you go!

Karon leans over Aza, taking his place at the controls. He brings the ship out of its spin and starts flying towards the ground.

Karon
Everybody hold on!

Karon carries out a bumpy but safe landing.

Aza
Okay I admit. You're better at flying than I am.

Karon
New rule: anybody but Aza flies.

Lu
Hear hear.

Aza
You know what? That's fair.

The trio hops off their ship and begins following Aza towards their destination.

End of act 1

Act 2

Ext. Aelsi . Day.

The trio walks towards the Aelsi plains, a vast rock riddled dust bowl. They walk towards the outskirts of a large town, where a diner sits.

Karon
Hey are we there yet?

Aza
Yup! My friend's right inside this diner!

Karon
We came all this way for a diner?

Aza
It's the owner of the diner that we're here for!

Int. Diner - continuOUS

Aza throws open the door of the diner.

Aza
Ar-Lei! You here?

An alien girl, AR-LEI, 19, walks towards the diner entrance.

Ar-lei
Aza? Is that you? It's been quite a while!

Aza
It has hasn't it! How ya been Ar? Is Ku around?

Ar-Lei
He's helping out in the kitchen. So who are your friends?

Aza
Ar-Lei, this is Karon and Lu Mileon. Karon and Lu, this is Ar-Lei, the owner of this diner and a galaxy renowned Appraiser. She helps put a price on a lot of the prizes the Astro Bandits find.

Karon
An Appraiser? No offence, but you look pretty young for a job like this.

Aza
You should never judge anyone by their age alone! Ar's the most knowledgeable person I know!

Ar-lei
So Aza, what brings you here?

Aza
Ah right! Well I've got a couple inquiries.

Aza reaches into her pocket, pulling out the triangular rock she stole from the Unifier ship and presenting it to Ar-lei.

Aza
Do you happen to know anything about this rock I picked up from a Unifier ship? It started glowing when I touched it.

Ar-LEI
Glowing? Hmmm let me see.

Ar-lei takes the rock from Aza's hands. She inspects it for a while.

Ar-lei
It has a lot of interesting inscriptions but I can't figure much just from looking at it. I might need some time to do some research.

Aza
Ok that's fine. We have one more question too. Kar?

Karon walks closer towards Ar-Lei and shows her his tattoo.

Karon
Do you recognize this tattoo? We're looking for the trafficker who gave me this brand.

Ar-lei
I...can't say that I do. But I can look for any information I may have on it while I research Aza's um, weird rock.

Karon
Oh, alright. Thank you.

As Ar-Lei and Karon are finishing their conversation, Ar-Lei's younger brother, KU-LEI, 12, enters the room.

Ku-lei
Hey Ar, I finished writing up a list of all the ingredients we need. Oh, Aza? Is that you?

Aza
Ku! Wow you've gotten so big since I last saw you! Karon, Lu, this is Ku-Lei, Ar's little brother.

Ar-lei
Perfect timing Ku! Aza stopped by with some friends for some information but it may take me a while to examine this. Aza, would you mind helping Ku with his market run? There's been a lot of pickpockets and robberies in the market lately so I would worry sending him on his own.

Aza
Sure why not! We've got time to kill, right guys?

Lu
Yeah, why not!

KU-LEI
Oh uh, well thank you!

Aza
Alright Aelsi Market here we come!

Lu
Woo-hoo! Market Adventure!

Ext. Aelsi Market. Day.

Aza and the brothers, along with Ku-Lei are walking along the inner path of an outdoor market. Various stalls and tents are set up along the crowded walkway.

Lu
Wow there's so many people here!

Karon
Don't wander too far!

Aza
Oh wow Lu, look at that!

Aza and Lu begin running towards a stall.

Karon
Something tells me I have to worry about Aza more than my brother.

Ku-LEI
Yeah, Aza's a handful. She's driven my sister crazy plenty of times back when we used to adventure together.
(shouting at Aza)
Aza! Be careful! My sister trusted you with our shopping money!

Aza
Yeah don't worry, I'll protect it with my life!

Aza turns back to the stall she ran to with Lu. Various clothing garments line the tables. Aza picks up a small newsie hat from the table and holds it out to Lu.

Aza
Hey Lu, this hat would look great on you!

Lu
Awww ya think?

Aza
Yeah! I think so!

Aza looks over to the SHOP OWNER.

Aza
Excuse me shopkeeper, how much for this hat?

The owner turns towards Aza.

Shop owner
600 units.

Aza
600? That's a lot for just a hat.

Shop owner
I'm sorry but we've had to raise prices. There's been so many robberies here lately that if we sell for any less I might not be able to keep my store...

Aza
Robberies huh? What happened to Aelsi since the last time I was here-?

Aza stops mid sentence as she bumps into a FIGURE behind her. The figure says nothing.

Aza
Oh I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to bump into you!

Figure
It's alright.

The figure hurries away.

Lu
What was with that outfit that guy was wearing?

Ku-LEI
That's a casino uniform. There's a huge casino that set up here a couple years ago. They make a lot of money and bring in tons of shady-looking customers from all over the galaxy. But ever since they moved in local shop owners here in the market have been reporting lots of robberies. A lot of stores even closed. But the

casino still manages to keep its customers.

Karon
Hey Aza. Check your pockets for our money.

Aza
What? Why?

Karon
Just do it.

Aza
Okay...

Aza reaches into her pocket checking for their grocery money. Her eyes widen as her hands come out empty.

Aza
Uh oh.

Ku-LEI
Uh oh?

Aza
The money's not there.

Lu
Did you drop it anywhere?

Karon
I knew it. That casino worker must've pickpocketed her. I used to "bump into" people all the time back in Naviy if Lu and I were struggling for food.

Aza
That...that shazlarp!

Ku-LEI
(gasp)
Aza! Language! What would Ar say if she heard that?

Aza

We're getting our money back!
C'mon guys!

Karon
Uh where are we going?

Aza
To the casino!

End of act 2

Act 3

Ext. Aelsi casino. Day.

The crew is crouching behind some rocks outside the perimeter of the Aelsi Casino. Bright gaudy lights shine in all directions as muffled music can be heard from inside.

Karon
Remind me, why are we here again?

Aza
I told you, we're getting our money back.

Lu
Ooh! A heist!

Aza
That's right! Wow look at how fast your brother is on the uptake, Karon. You could learn a thing or two from him!

KARON
So what we're just gonna break into a casino and steal money?

Aza
Yeah that's the plan!

Ku-LEI

No no no no no! We can't do that! What if we get into trouble! I'm not a fighter!

Aza

We'll be fine! Besides we're going in through back entrance. We broke out of a whole planet yesterday, breaking into a casino'll be a cinch!

Karon

Pirates really will steal from anyone huh?

Aza

No not anyone! Never anyone in need! But based on what that shopkeeper said, something tells me this isn't the first time this casino has stolen money from people here! We're only repaying the favor. Maybe we can bust them too!

Ku-LEI

I don't know about this...They always have a lot guards wandering around.

Aza

Ok if anyone gets too close you can...hit them with this rock!

Aza picks up a small rock from the ground and hands it Ku-Lei.

Ku-LEI

Aza this is a pebble.

Aza

Come on guys we're wasting time! I'll break the door lock with my powers and then we need to find the vault where they keep all their cash!

The crew quietly shuffles over to the casino's back entrance. Aza holds the door lock and closes her eyes. Her face marks glow and the lock cracks, falling to the floor.

Aza
Alright we're in! Now to find our cash! Where do you think they keep it? A vault?

Karon
We should really come up with plans before we jump into things...

Aza
C'mon guys this way!

The crew starts walking down the hallways of the casino.

Ku-LEI
Ohhh man I don't like this at ALL.

Aza
Shhhh not so loud Ku. Someone might hear us!

Casino guard 1(O.S.)
Hey, who's there?!

Aza
See?

A CASINO GUARD comes rushing over.

Casino guard 1
What are kids doing in here? You're coming with me!

The guard reaches out and grabs the kid closest to him: Lu.

Lu
Hey let me go!

Karon
Don't touch him!

Casino guard 1
Don't resist or I'll call backup.

Ku-LEI
Hey! Uh-sir! Let him go!

Ku reaches into his pocket and grabs the pebble Aza handed him earlier. He chucks it at the guard. It bounces right off and falls to the floor as they all stare in silence.

Casino guard
Did you just throw a pebble at me?

Ku-LEI
See Aza I told you it wasn't gonna work!

Aza
Don't worry you bought me all the time I need!

Aza, taking advantage of the distraction, comes up from behind the guard, punching him in the face. He falls back unconscious, releasing Lu.

AzA
There. He won't be getting up for a while.

Lu
Hey check it out! He has a communicator on his wrist! Maybe there's some floor plans on it!

Lu grabs the communicator and examines it.

Lu
Hmmm it's locked with a password.

Lu stares at the communicator a second more then begins to manically press buttons on the screen, almost as if possessed.

Ku-LEI

Okay. Well that's that. He can't tell us the password now so maybe we should-

Lu presses one final button and the communicator beeps.

Lu

Okay unlocked! And it says the vault's straight down the hall from here!

Aza

Nice going Lu! Let's go!

The crew begins running towards the vault.

Ku-LEI

How...how did you do that?

Lu

I'm an expert hacker! Or at least I think I am.

Ku-LEI

That's...that's really cool.

Lu

I thought you throwing that rock was cool too! Thanks for saving me!

Ku-LEI

Oh! Uh, you're welcome.

Aza

Alright this is it!

They stop in front of a large door with a key pad to the side.

Aza

Lu do you think you can get this door open?

Lu

Hmmm, It's locked with just a keypad and no screen. I'm not sure...

Aza
Okay then I'll just break it! Everybody stand back.

There's a silence as Aza places her hands on the door. A couple moments pass.

Karon
Uh...nothing's happening.

Lu
Yup. Nothing.

Aza
Ugh it's not working! This door's too big!

Karon
Now what?

Aza
Now...we kick it down!

Aza grunts as she kicks the door.

Karon
No we don't!

Karon reaches to pull Aza back, her foot still in the air.

Aza
Well if the door won't open, then we're taking this to the boss himself!

Aza begins walking down the hall, the crew hastily following behind her.

Karon
What are you crazy?

Aza

This is the fastest way to get back our money and bust this casino: a head-on approach! And besides, I can't just let them get away with this! If we don't stop them, who will?

Karon
Did you forget this place is filled with security?

Aza
I bet we can handle anything they throw at us! C'mon!

Lu
Wait Aza don't open that door. That's-

Aza throws the door in front of her open to reveal a lounge filled with casino security guards. One guard stands up.

Casino guard 2
Who the heck are you guys?

Lu
...The employee lounge.

End of act 3

Act 4

Int. Casino employee lounge. Day.

The crew is standing in the doorway of a crowded employee lounge. Casino guards all stop what they are doing to stare at them.

CASINO GUARD 2
What's a group of kids doing in here?

Aza
We're here to speak to your boss!

Casino guard 2
Boss? Why should we let you?

Karon
Lu, get behind me.

Aza
We've got some business with him and believe me, it'd be better for the both of us if you didn't get too involved.

Casino guard 2
And I'm asking you, why should we let you? What business do you have with him?

Aza
We've just got some...sensitive topics to discuss about your casino here that you're probably not gonna like. But we'd rather not deal with all of you.

Casino guard 3
Hey that kid has a blaster! They're armed!

The guard points at Karon, his hands on his blaster. The guards all pull out their pistols. Karon does the same.

Lu
Well that escalated quickly.

Ku-LEI
That's a lot of pistols!

Aza
Okay then if it's a party you all want then it's a party you'll get! Bring it on!

Male voice (O.S.)
Whoa whoa whoa a party starting without me? Sorry but I'm gonna

have to kindly ask you all to stop
before things get too wild.

Aza and the crew turn around. A tall LONG-HAIRED HUMAN MAN with black hair, 23, stands behind them with a smile on his face. He locks eyes with Aza.

Karon
Who are-

Aza
Orion?

Long-HAIRED MAN
Nice to see you too Aza.

The end

Astro bandits 103 - The casino

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. Aelsi casino employee lounge. Day.

The crew stands, weapons drawn, before a group of casino security guards. A tall man with long black hair, Orion, 23, is standing behind them, smiling.

Orion
Whoa whoa whoa a party starting without me? Sorry but I'm gonna have to kindly ask you all to stop before things get too wild.

The crew turns around.

Karon
Who are-

Aza
Orion?

Orion
Nice to see you too Aza.

The guards who were previously holding the crew at gunpoint, lower their blasters.

Casino guard 2
Orion? You know these guys?

ORION
I do indeed. These kids just happen to be part of my team. All these jobs the boss has been giving me are starting to drive me up the wall and are taking major time away from my beauty sleep so, I called them in for some extra hands. Oh and don't worry, they're much more capable than they look. Right team?

Aza
Uh, right!

Karon
What?

Aza
(whisper to Karon)
Shhh! Just play along.

Casino guard 2
What business did they have with the boss then?

Orion
Ah, see here's the thing. I kinda told them to just ask for the boss when they showed up here. Figured I'd be glued to his side, more often than not, you know? Rather than have them run around the casino looking for me. Can't have a bunch of young ones running rampant, specially when Miss Face Stripes over here is always looking for a fight and can throw a punch so hard she can knock your teeth out. Trust me, you don't wanna tango with that one. Anyway, sorry to disturb you all, why don't you go about enjoying your drinks and fancy food and I'll go ahead and take these rascals with me. Come along team.

Aza
Yessir!

Orion begins walking away from the lounge. Aza begins following, motioning for the others to follow suit. They leave the lounge together. After walking down the hall Orion turns around to look Aza in the eye.

Orion
Now, Aza and friends, what am I to do with you?

End of Teaser

Act 1

Int. Casino hallways. Evening.

Orion stares at the crew.

Aza
Wait Orion! Hold on! What are you doing here?

Orion
I should be asking you the same thing! What's a pirate princess like yourself doing in a place like this?

Karon
Wait! What's going on? How do you two know each other?

Aza
Orion's an old...acquaintance.

Orion
Acquaintance? After all the adventures we've been on? Oh, Aza you're breaking this poor man's heart.

Aza
Guys, this is Orion, galaxy-renowned Captain of the 33rd Special Ops Division of the Galactic Unifiers.

Orion
A pleasure to meet you all.

Karon
A Unifier Captain?

Orion

Now now Trigger-happy, I won't bite so you can put the blaster away. I know not a lot of people think kindly of us but not all Unifier officers are evil you know. Besides, I'm here for other official business, so I don't really have time to arrest anyone. And I'd say I'm on good terms with Aza and her pirates. Speaking of, how's your brother Aza?

Aza

Oh no don't you dare bring up Lez again. Watch out, you guys, this one flirts with anything with a pulse.

Orion

Hey now, you make it sound like that's a bad thing. I'm only trying to enjoy this wonderful life I've been given to the fullest.

Aza

I think you enjoy your life a little too much.

Karon

What business does a Unifier officer have in a place like this?

Orion

Well actually, since you're all here, I could use your help with this. See I'm here on an undercover mission. Apparently this planet's been a magnet for theft and illegal gambling lately. Local merchants have been reporting that large sums, if not all, of their revenue is frequently disappearing from right under there noses.

Aza

And this has been happening ever since this casino set up shop here right? We heard from a merchant.

Orion

Yes, that's right. Already well informed huh? That's just like you Aza. Anyway, the Unifiers believe this casino is stealing from local merchants to fund their prizes and drive out the local population, possibly to make room for an expansion of their territory. I've been investigating undercover here the past few weeks, and I've got a good amount of evidence but I need just a smidge more. And there's only so much of me to go around.

Aza

So what do you need us to do?

Orion

Well you see, the biggest prize offered at this casino is from winning first place in their speeder races. Now I need to be by this casino boss's side during that race since I've technically been hired as a bodyguard but apparently many of the racers that enter, know about the boss's black market ties and could also have valuable information.

Aza

So?

Orion

So I need you all to be my team of racers.

Lu

You want us to enter a speeder race? Don't speeder racers need a whole crew? Like a pilot, gunner, and mechanics?

Orion
Well there's certainly enough of you.

Aza
We'll do it.

Lu
Yeah!

Karon
Are you kidding me? No. No way. Look I didn't come here to get involved in something like this. My brother and I just want information and we're not gonna find it here. C'mon Lu, let's just go back to the diner and wait for The Appraiser to get us what we need.

Ku-Lei
Yeah I dunno how I feel about getting mixed up in all this...

Aza
What? There's people that need our help out there and you just want to turn a blind eye? And Ku-Lei, where's your sense of adventure? You lived on Aelsi your whole life, you know this land better than any of us. We need you!

Ku-LEI
I...

Karon
Lu and I have a mission to carry out. We're not shifting our focus.

Lu
But Ar-Lei said she needed time to research so it's not like she'll have anything even if we do go back. We have time to kill! Besides, you're great with a speeder!

Orion
Great with a speeder you say?

Lu
He's amazing! We used to hijack speeders all the time on Naviy for fun! We would modify them to make them super fast! C'mon Kar! You too, Ku-Lei!

Ku-LEI
I...okay. I'm in.

Lu
Kar you always tell that the best course of action is to take your gut feeling, think it through and then-

Karon
Take action. Yeah I know. So what?

Lu
Well my gut instinct is to help these people, and Orion already thought of a plan to make that happen so all that's left is...

Karon
To take action.

Lu
Exactly! What kind of older brother would you be if you didn't follow your own advice?

Orion
Hm. I like this kid.

Karon
Ugh alright. Fine! You win!

Lu smiles at his brother.

Orion
Perfect! Welcome aboard team!

End of act 1

Act 2

Int. Casino racing arena. evening.

Orion escorts his new team to the racing arena attached to the casino. He brings them into a hangar, where a large speeder sits.

Orion
Alright team! That there, is the speeder you'll be driving.

Lu
That junky old thing?

Karon
You've gotta be kidding me.

Orion
What? Is it bad? I've gotta admit as much as I know about everything, I don't know much about transport vehicles.

Lu
Yeah it's terrible! Where'd you find it? The garbage?

Orion
Hey kid, it was a last minute purchase.

Karon
Well we've made worse buckets run before haven't we?

Lu
Yeah! Me and you'll make this the fastest ship out there!

Orion
Now now, the goal isn't to win as much as it is to gather any information you can from the racers. We're not in this for the money after all. But hey if you wanna go full throttle I'm not gonna stop you. Have as much fun as you want. I'll give you the night to tinker as much as you like. The races are tomorrow morning.

Lu runs up to the ship and begins examining it.

Lu
Hey Kar look at this engine. What kinda fuel do you think it uses?

Orion
Well since it seems like you eager beavers have this all under control, I'll take this as my chance to leave. Good luck team.

Orion waves goodbye as he exists the hangar.

Lu
Hmm think we can sub whatever fuel this is for something that works better? It'd probably run a lot better that way. Oh! And look at these suspension engines! I bet I can fix em!

Karon
Yeah, you're probably right. Hold on I'll go get the parts we need. Aza, I might need extra hands.

Aza

Sure no problem!

Karon and Aza walk off to search the hangar. As Lu begins messing around with the interior of the speeder.

Ku-LEI
Wow you seem excited about all this. Why?

Lu
I love engineering! Mechanical and electrical! Mechanical is more my brother's thing but I'm really at good at electrical engineering. I guess that's why I like hacking too! See, when I was little Kar used to go out a lot to get us food and other things. I wasn't allowed to go with him. He always said it was too dangerous. So I passed time by messing around with all the junk we had in our place. I made a lot of cool toys! Oh! I made a mini speeder once! It floated and everything!

Ku-LEI
What? Really?

Lu
Yeah! As much as I wanna be cool like my brother, I'm still much smaller than he is! He's the muscle so I've gotta be the brains!

Ku-LEI
Well I...I think you're plenty cool already.

Lu looks up from speeder and lets out a small laugh. He's visibly slightly embarrassed.

Lu
Thanks!

Int. Casino racing arena hangar. Night.

Karon and Aza and are rummaging through the hangar for parts they can use on the speeder.

Karon
Aza, can I ask something?

Aza
Yeah, shoot.

Karon
Why are we here? Why did you jump right into helping these people? We came here for information.

Aza
So just because we came here for one thing means we can't help people in need when they need it? We're in a position to be of help to everyone here. Who would we be if we didn't offer a helping hand?

Karon
You're putting us in danger.

Aza
But we can handle it! We're tough! We escaped off a heavily guarded Unifier ship! Oh, don't tell Orion about that by the way.

Karon
Aza-

Aza
Don't worry Karon! We'll be fine! And besides, you never know. You might come to like helping people too.

Aza pulls an unidentifiable metal part from a loose pile.

Aza

Hey, think we can use this?

Karon
That's...that's just a screwdriver.

Aza
So...yeah?

End act 2

Act 3

Ext. Casino racetrack. Day.

The crew, along with Orion, are standing next to the speeder on a crowded race track. Racers of various species are all standing around working maintenance on their machines. Orion is examining the work the crew has done on the speeder he bought.

Orion
Wow would you look at that. The speeder...looks exactly the way I left it.

Lu
Don't let the appearance fool you! It's the inside that counts! Karon and I changed a whole bunch of things. This baby's gonna run faster than all the other speeders out there, I guarantee it!

Orion
Well if that's true little man then I'll head off to my post. Go and mingle amongst the racers and see what you can find out about where this prize money came from. I'll be up there overlooking the races with the boss. Oh and just a warning, these races only really have one rule: cross the finish line and you win. Everything,

including damaging other speeders mid-race, is fair game. And it's just a hunch but I bet everyone here doesn't mind playing dirty.

Karon
You couldn't have told us all this yesterday?

Orion
Look, I'm sure you're all be fine. Just do your best, have fun, and don't do anything I wouldn't do. Oh, and don't die okay?

Orion walks off, heading towards the racetrack building. The rest of the crew stands awkwardly around their speeder.

Karon
Mingle huh? How are we supposed to do that with this crowd?

Ku-LEI
Yeah they all look way too scary.

Aza
Hey maybe, we don't have to. Look. There's someone coming this way.

Aza gestures in the direction of a rough-looking RACER walking towards them. The racer stops in front of Karon, making eye contact with him.

Racer
Hey you, with the neck tattoo. What are you doing here?

Karon
What?

Racer
That tattoo, you're one of Jagar's servants right? If he thinks he can send one of his errand boys to steal my prize money he's dumber than I thought.

Karon
Jagar?

Aza
It's not your prize money. You haven't won the race yet. It belongs to the casino.

Racer
Oh, come on you all know that money's stolen goods anyway.

Aza
So it is stolen...

Karon
Hey, who's Jagar?

Racer
Wait your owner didn't even care about you enough to tell you his name? Well then, he probably won't care if I get rid of you out there in the field. Stay out of my way. Or else I'm not holding back.

The racer marches away from the crew. Aza hops into the gunner's seat.

Aza
So the casino did steal the prize money. Alright that's it! I know we're not really here to win the race and I could care less about winning their dirty prize but I'm itching to put some of these thugs in their place. Let's win this thing!

Lu & Ku-lei
Yeah!

Lu and Ku scramble to jump into the backseat of the speeder as a short alarm rings throughout the racetrack.

Announcer (V.O.)

Attention racers. Bring your speeders to the starting lines. Races will begin in 10 minutes.

Aza
Karon! C'mon!

Karon
Uh...yeah. I'm comin.

Int. Racetrack building. Day.

Orion opens the door to the room overlooking the racetrack. The BOSS of the casino is standing near the glass, overlooking the racers. He turns around as Orion enters.

Boss
Where have you been?

Orion
Just patrolling the racetrack. You sure know a lot of people if you were able to gather all these racers. I can see why you needed me here.

Boss
They come for their shot at the prize. The more that come, the more business we get. And the more business we get-

Orion
The more you can expand and solidify your base here right?

Boss
Yes. You're very perceptive for a man-for-hire.

Orion
I've been told I'm as smart as I am handsome. So if I may ask, what are you gonna do about all the locals and their businesses if you

plan to expand? I doubt they'd leave if you just ask.

Boss
Of course they wouldn't. But that's why we break their backs quietly.

Orion
So the prize money? It's from the locals then?

Boss
Like I said, perceptive. You know, your talents would be greatly appreciated here full-time.

Orion
A tempting offer good sir. I'll hold off on my answer until after the races though. Seems like they're about to start.

Orion points out to the racetrack as the racers are in their speeders. Karon is in the pilot seat, with Aza as the gunner. Lu and Ku-Lei are sat in back, bracing for the launch.

Aza
Alright guys! We got this!

The countdown beeps three times, then the race begins. Karon speeds ahead of all the other racers early on.

AZA
Wow you guys were right! This speeder is FAST!

Lu
Told ya! Nothing beats the Mileon brothers!

The crew's speeder quickly passes up all the other racers. The other competitors look on in confusion as the young crew makes their way to first place.

Aza

Wow we're passing everyone up!

Lu
If we keep this up we'll definitely win first place!

Ku-LEI
Uh guys? I hate to disrupt the party but isn't that the racer from earlier.

Ku-lei points to the speeder quickly gaining on them. The racer from earlier shakes his fist at Karon.

Racer
Hey kid! You modified your speeder! There's no way anything that old runs that fast! You're cheating this race!

Aza
Oh please, I'm sure you all made illegal modifications to your speeders too!

Lu
You're just jealous you don't have better mechanics!

Racer
I warned you all! You're not getting out of this race alive!

The racer swerves his speeder to the side, bumping it into the crew's. Their speeder jolts.

Lu
Karon go faster!

Karon
Aza! Shoot him!

Aza
You got it!

Aza begins firing shots at the racer while his own GUNNER begins firing back.

Karon
Lu! Ku-lei! Duck! I'm gunning it till we get to the finish line!

Karon pulls the speeder ahead, as fast as it can go but the racer still sticks close by.

Racer
You're not getting away kid! Don't forget, we play dirty here.

The racer's gunner shoots at one of the suspension engines on the crew's speeder. It bucks to the side, almost knocking off the back.

Karon
What did he hit?

LU
The suspension engine! I worked hard on that last night! Argh, two can play dirty ya know! Take this!

Lu picks up a screwdriver from the back of the speeder and chucks it at the opposing gunner. The screwdriver hits the gunner square in the face causing him to lean back from his blaster.

Gunner
Ow!

Ku-lei
What did you just throw at him?

Lu
A screwdriver!

Aza
Hah! The screwdriver DID come in handy!

Lu
Aza, shoot the speeder! Aim for their engines in the back!

Aza

You got it!

Aza aims towards the back of the opposing speeder. Their engines explode as the speeder comes to a harsh stop. Karon continues forward, leaving the racer in the dust.

Ku-LEI
We got him!

Lu
And we're still in the lead!

Aza
Now all that's left is to finish this race! Gun it Karon!

Karon
Right!

Int. RacetRACK BUILDING. DAY.

Orion and the boss are watching over the races from the window of the building.

Orion
Oof, did you see that boss-man? Those racers in first place are brutal. They shot second-place's engines clean off. Would hate to be in the middle of that.

Boss
Who's that kid piloting first? I don't remember inviting them.

Orion
Maybe just a local interested in a little of the action? Hey, if we're gonna be future business partners, can I ask a question?

Boss
What?

Orion

What do you plan to do once all this territory is yours?

Boss

Well, those Unis got us kicked off of the previous planet we took. But those officers tend to leave this planet alone, or so I've been told. The perfect location for our business to be located wouldn't you say? We can create a safe place for all our business partners to thrive. No officers to stop our lucrative expeditions.

Orion

No officers huh? Well I wouldn't quite say that.

Boss

What?

Orion

You know I really have to thank you, I don't get job offers all that often, people say I talk WAY too much. But you sir may have just proven that there really are people out there more loose-lipped than I am. My boss is really gonna appreciate all this great information.

Boss

You-you're a traitor!

Orion

Well you say traitor, I say I'm just good at my job, tomatoes, tamahtoes, y'know.

Boss

Orion!

Orion

Now I'd love to stay and chat but it looks like my ride's here. Oh, and don't worry, you won't be lonely for long. I'll make sure my boss sends some friends to come keep you company and take you to some a nice cell in a prison ship soon. Nice working with you!

Orion takes his blaster and shoots at the glass overlooking the racetrack as Karon and crew come close to the building where the finish line is located. Orion begins waving at the crew from up above.

Lu
Is that...Orion waving at us?

Aza
Karon! Get close to that building!

Karon
Alright!

Karon pilots the speeder over to the side of the building. Orion jumps down, landing in the backseat with Lu and Ku-Lei.

Orion
Congratulations crew, you just passed the finish line! Looks like you just won the race! I would give you all a prize but it doesn't look like I can anymore.

Aza
Orion what are you doing? What happened to getting information from the boss?

Orion
Got all I needed. A nice confession wrapped in a bow. Felt like the right time to do a nice dramatic reveal. And now that this ruse is over and I'm a wanted man I say we get out of here. Aza, I'm

gonna need you to blow a hole in the racetrack wall and Karon you've gotta drive through it and get us out of here.

Karon
Why are all your plans literally insane?

Ku-LEI
I can see why you and Aza are friends.

Aza
Ready when you are Karon!

Karon
I'm as ready as I'll ever be. Everyone hold on!

Karon propels the speeder forward. Aza blasts the wall of the racetrack repeatedly, creating a whole large enough for the speeder to fit through. The crew escapes.

End of act 3

Act 4

Ext. Aelsi market. Day.

The speeder crew is hastily making their way as far from the casino as possible. They make it to the outskirts of the Aelsi market, near Ar-lei's diner, before slowing down and coming to a stop.

Orion
Alright, I don't think they'd dare chase us out this far. You've all done an excellent job, team! I couldn't be more proud!

Lu
That was AWESOME!

Aza

Yeah!

Ku-LEI
I. NEVER. Wanna do anything like this again.

Ar-lei, hearing the commotion comes running out of the diner.

Ar-Lei
Ku! Aza! You're back! Where have you all been? I've been so worried!

Aza
Oh uh, Ar, about the groceries, we kinda got our money stolen and then that kinda led to us getting involved in an undercover mission at the casino and uh...

Ar-LEI
Why does every small thing turn into some big adventure with you. Are you okay Ku?

Ku-LEI
Yeah, I'm fine.

Ar-LEI
Aza, since you bought me arguably more than enough time. I was able track down where your mystery ruin possibly came from.

Aza
Really?

AR-LEI
The ruin's a communication device of some kind. I was unable to open it despite my best efforts. And I wasn't able to translate any of the inscriptions either but I did discover that they match reports of inscriptions on the ruins of an

uninhabited planet not too far from here. I can give you coordinates. Oh, and Karon? I'm sorry but I couldn't find much about your tattoo.

Karon
No worries. I think I got the information I need. Hey Orion?

Orion
Yeah kid?

Karon
Are familiar with the name "Jagar?"

Orion
Yes, as a matter of fact, I am. He's a dangerous man. Infamous among us Unifiers. I would ask how you know him but I think that brand on your neck there answers my question.

Karon
Yeah. I think he's the one responsible for taking our mother away from us. Do you know where we can find him?

Orion
Hmmm. Well, that's usually classified "Unifier officer only" type information. I can't just spew out secrets for free. But I suppose since you so kindly helped me out, I can bend the rules a little. Just don't tell my boss alright?

Karon nods.

Orion
Jagar's a wanted slave owner and trafficker throughout the galaxy.

He usually hangs around Rehall, but the Unifiers have yet to apprehend him because of Rehall's...unique population makeup. And really that's all I can tell you.

Karon
That's enough. Thanks.

Orion
No problem. Have Aza send me a message regarding any information you have on your mother. I'll keep an eye out for her.

Karon
I will. You hear all that Lu?

Lu
Yeah. So we're going to Rehall? Where is that?

Ar-LEI
It's not too far off from coordinates I'm giving Aza.

Aza
So in other words we can all go together! With Karon piloting!

Lu
Yeah!

Aza
I think the three of us make a really great team! Whaddya say Karon?

Karon
Well...you're not gonna let me say no are you?

Aza
Nope!

Karon

Alright then. Let's go.

Lu
Yes!

Aza
Yeah! C'mon Lu! Bet I can beat you to the ship!

Lu
You're on!

The two begin racing towards their ship, Karon turns to follow.

Ar-LEI
Hey Karon, can I speak to you for a bit.

Karon
Uh, sure.

Ar-LEI
Listen, I...I wanna ask that you keep an eye on Aza. She's been after the truth about her past for so long and now that she has something...well you see what kind of messes she gets into all the time. I'm just afraid she'll go overboard. Promise me you'll look after her?

Karon
You care about her a lot don't you?

Ar-LEI
Yes. I do.

Karon
Ok. I'll try my best.

Ar-Lei
Thank you.

Karon turns around and begins walking to the ship.

Ar-LEI
Oh and Karon?

Karon looks back.

Karon
Yeah?

Ar-Lei
Good luck finding your mother.

Karon
Thanks.

Karon turns away and walks off.

End of act 4

Atro Bandits 104 - The HOlogram

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. Aza's Ship. Day.

Aza, Karon and Lu are all together in the cockpit of Aza's ship, on their journey to the coordinates Ar-Lei had given them. As Karon pilots, Aza and Lu are passing the time by exchanging stories.

Aza
So lemme get this straight. You're telling me, YOU, sweet little Lu Mileon, were raised all this time, by THAT grumpy gunslinger of a brother?

Karon
I can hear you, you know.

Lu
Kar got some help from Q and other people every now and then I think. But he wasn't this grumpy all the time, especially when I was little! Sometimes I couldn't sleep so Karon would tell me all sorts of bedtime stories!

Aza
Ooooh stories? About what?

Lu
Mostly about bounty hunters and space swindlers. Cool action stories! Oh but my favorite is the one about the Ghost of the Naviy Ship Graveyard.

Aza
G-ghost?

Lu
Yeah! Back on the Naviy, not too far from where Q's place is, there's this huge empty crater

full of old battle ships, all in pieces. It's said that all those ships belonged to an old band of pirates that made enemies with the wrong group. That group destroyed all those ships and their crew with a powerful laser blast, creating that huge crater. There's a rumor that one of the captains still wanders around that area as a ghost but anybody who wanders in hasn't come back to tell the tale...except for one bounty hunter. He said when he walked in he saw-

Aza
Wow! Hey! Look at the time! Don't you think we should be reaching those coordinates soon?

Lu
Huh? Why'd you stop the story at the best part!

Aza
That...that wasn't really my intention.

Karon
Don't tell me, the almighty Aza, the pirate princess who's seemingly afraid of nothing, is afraid of ghost stories?

Aza
No, no not ghost stories-

Lu
Ghosts??

Aza
Hey look what's that over there! Isn't that the planet straight ahead!

Aza points out the front of the cockpit at the planet up ahead.

Karon
Looks like it is. Guess we'll table this conversation for later. Everybody take your seats. Get ready to land.

Aza and Lu do as their told, as Karon brings the ship closer to the planet's atmosphere.

End of teaser

Act 1

Ext. Unknown planet ruins. Day.

Aza and the brothers exit their ship as they begin examining their surroundings. The ruins of an old society surround them. Broken pillars and seemingly caved in buildings extend as far as they can see. Ahead lies a large building, more in-tact than the others.

Karon
This place sure is quiet.

Aza
A little too quiet. Looks like no one's lived here in a few centuries.

Lu
Yeah this place is like a ghost town.

Aza
Oh why'd you have to say that...

Karon
These are the right coordinates. Aza, check on that rock of yours. It glowed last time, maybe it'll react to something here.

Aza
Yeah, you're right.

Aza pulls out the triangle ruin from her pocket. It begins to glow faintly.

Aza
Yeah it is glowing. I think...I think it wants us to go into that building.

Aza points the ruin at the only standing building ahead. It glows brighter.

Karon
Alright then, onward. Lu, behind me.

Lu
Right.

The three enter the building.

Int. Old building. Day.

The three walk through the halls of the abandoned building, Aza leading the way.

Karon
Where is that thing taking us?

Aza
Straight ahead it looks like.

Lu
What's...that?

Lu points ahead to the end of the hall. In a circular room lies a small pillar. Aza approaches first.

Aza
It looks like...a console? Maybe...I need to put this rock on top of it.

Aza places the ruin on top of the pillar. It glows brighter as the sides begin to open. As the triangular ruin unfolds, a HOLOGRAM is projected from the middle. A female face, with similar face marks to Aza appears.

Hologram
To you who activated this memory Hologram, What is your name?

Aza
Uh, Aza.

Hologram
Hello, Aza. My name is Maerell of the Architects, a race devoted to scientific development. If you were able to activate this memory Hologram, then you must also be of Architect blood. I congratulate you on finding this Hologram.

Aza
Wait wait. A hologram? Maerell, are you alive? Are there more of my species out there?

Maerell
Unfortunately, no I am not alive. This memory Hologram, is what its title states: a memory. Our race, known colloquially amongst the universe as the Architects, are an ancient species driven by scientific thought and responsible for many innovations throughout the galaxy. Two hundred years ago, a war was launched upon our people, causing an eradication of our species. This memory Hologram was created in the small chance that any Architects survived.

Aza
Eradicated? You mean...they were all killed?

Maerell
Yes. However, you have seemed to survive.

Lu
Wait, if that all happened two hundred years ago...Aza, are you two hundred years old??

Aza
No! I'm 19! Cap'n found me as a baby 19 years ago in...a stasis life pod.

Karon
And stasis life pods preserve life through time. Meaning you were in that pod for-

Aza
Two hundred and eighty one years.

Lu
Wow. You ARE old.

Aza
I...I have so many questions.

Maerell
I will attempt to answer them all. But before I can, I need you to undertake a trial, to prove you are a surviving Architect worthy of carrying on our legacy.

Aza
A trial huh? What is it?

Maerell
The planet you are on is an old outpost for our kind. Beneath this building is a tunnel which will lead you to a large device known as a Mass Converter which you will then need to use your Architect abilities to activate, just as you

activated this hologram. That is your trial.

Aza
Alright, seems easy enough. I'll do it.

Maerell
Be warned young Aza: I call this a trial because it will be a test of sorts. There are dangers waiting ahead. However if you are an Architect who has awakened to your abilities, you stand a chance at completion. Do you still accept?

Aza
A little danger's never been enough to scare me away! I accept!

Maerell
Very well. Proceed.

As Maerell gives her blessing, the wall ahead Aza and the brothers begins to open revealing a staircase to tunnels below.

Aza
Well boys, you ready?

Lu
I am!

Karon
As ready as I'll ever be.

Aza
Then let's go.

End of act 1

Act 2

Int. Ruin tunnels. Day.

Aza and the brothers are walking through the tunnels. Aza walks ahead of the others, holding out the open Hologram in front of her.

Lu
You know this tunnel looks really old...and really creepy. For someone who's afraid of ghosts, I'm surprised Aza's okay down here.

Karon
I think she's a little too preoccupied with that Hologram to even care.

Karon looks ahead to where Aza is discussing with the Maerell.

Aza
So Maerell- actually, can I call you Mae? That's much cuter.

Maerell
I will respond to whatever you wish to call me.

Aza
Mae it is then! So Mae, I really can't ask you any questions yet?

Maerell
I suppose basic questions about the Architect race are permitted.

Aza
Okay good! Well first question then: what exactly are the Architects? And why am I able to destroy things with these weird powers I have?

Maerell
Those weird powers you speak of, are the abilities I previously mentioned. We Architects are a

species devoted to technological and scientific advancement. We are responsible for the creation of devices such as this memory Hologram and life pods. At the time of this Hologram's creation, stasis life pods were only in their trial stage, however it seems a functioning one was used to house you.

Aza
Why just me?

Maerell
I could not say. It is possible your birth parents were scientists with access to such confidential test pods and decided to take a gamble with you.

Aza
My parents huh?

Maerell
Us Architects, in addition to possessing a vast intellect, also possess the ability to manipulate energy at a molecular level with the touch of our hands. We can destroy bonds and also create new ones. These two tools have been the primary factors in our race's innovational success.

Aza
Wait create? I've never been able to do that. Just destroy.

Maerell
The ability to destroy comes far easier to underdeveloped young ones such as yourself. To destroy is a primal instinct and thus easily understood. Young Architects tend to grasp this

concept first. The ability to create however comes with a deeper understanding of your abilities and the good you are capable of making. Many Architects are born unable to grasp this concept fully and some struggle until the day they perish.

Aza
Huh. I wonder if I have it.

Maerell
We shall see by the end of this trial.

Karon
My turn to ask a question: We've been walking down this tunnel for a while now. I thought this Hologram said there would be danger.

Maerell
Yes, there will be.

Karon
Okay, well when?

Maerell
I cannot say.

Karon
Well that's comforting.

Aza
Relax, Karon! I'm sure the danger can't be that bad! Mae said I could pass this trial if I have Architect abilities, which I obviously do, SO we'll be fine. And besides not only am I experienced with living a dangerous life, Mae ALSO said our species shares a vast intellect-

Karon
You? A vast intellect? I don't know about that.

Aza
-which means if any danger shows up, I'm bound to notice it!

As Aza says her final words, her foot steps down on a panel on the floor. The tunnel begins to shake.

Aza
Oh. Was that me?

Lu
Aza you stepped on a booby traaaaaaap!

Aza and Karon join Lu in his screaming as the floor beneath them falls open, dropping the three into the pit below. They land hard and begin writhing in pain.

Karon
Lu...Lu you ok?

Lu
Yeah. It's dark in here, I can't see anything but I think something broke my fall.

Aza
That thing would be me. Ow.

Karon
And now we're stuck in this hole. You know we could've avoided this if you were actually paying attention instead of being so engrossed with that Hologram AFTER it warned you about danger. This is the last time I'm letting you drag me into one of your adventures!

Aza
Oh so everything's my fault now?

Karon
Yeah. It is! If it wasn't for you Lu and I probably would've gotten off Naviy a lot smoother, we wouldn't have almost been shot by a bunch of money hungry casino guards, we wouldn't have almost gotten killed in a speeder race AND we wouldn't be HERE stuck in this hole!

Aza
Yeah well if it wasn't for me you guys would probably be somewhere in space with no lead to follow!

Lu
GUYS! As much as I love spooky, dark places, this hole is TOO dark and strangely damp and cold and I would like to get out of here!

Aza
You're right...this place is dark and spooky. And we are in the ruins of my ancestors...which means there's probably ghosts here! I dropped the hologram. Where is it? Where is it? Maerell!

Lu
So she is afraid of ghosts.

Karon
Of course she is.

Aza searches around the dark pit for the hologram. She finds it, opening it up and summoning Maerell.

Aza
There she is! Mae! How do we get out of here!

Maerell

This is the first of two trials. I cannot tell you how to escape.

Karon
Wow. So helpful.

Lu
Hmm. These walls feel really smooth.

Karon
Yeah. So climbing our way out doesn't seem like an option. And it's a long way up to the light from where we fell.

Lu
I can't make out any switches or anything on the ground either. We really are stuck here.

Karon
Well Aza, you haven't said anything yet. This is your trial.

Aza
Yeah. Yeah it is. I...wait. Mae said with my abilities I should be able to pass this test. So that means I have to use my abilities to get out of here! But the question is how...

KARON
Well the only ability you know right now is to-

Aza
Destroy! I've got it!

Aza places her hand on the sleek wall on front of her. She closes her eyes and concentrates. Her face marks glow and soon the wall begins to melt. She curls her fingers inward, creating a grip in the wall.

Aza
I got it! Look at that!

Lu
Whoa! You made a hole in the metal wall!

Aza
Alright! I'm gonna climb up first and create a bunch of these holes with my hands! You guys climb up after me using these holes to grab onto!

Karon & Lu
Right!

Aza places the hologram in her pocket and beings to climb. The brothers follow in her path. Soon they reach the top of the hole.

Aza
Ha! I did it!

Karon
You did. I'm surprised. Thought we'd be stuck there forever.

Aza
Hey!

Lu
(out of breath)
That...That was...a lot of climbing. My arms...feel like noodles.

Aza removes the hologram from her pocket.

Aza
Well? Whaddya think Mae?

Maerell
You did well. You may proceed.

Aza
You heard her! Let's go boys!

Lu

Wait! Already? Can't we just like...take five?

Aza stands up and begins down the hall. Karon pulls Lu to his feet, and they follow.

Int. Ruin mass converter room. Day.

Aza and the brothers reach the end of the tunnels and walk into a expansive room. Ahead of them lies a large fixture. The fixture, half machine and half rock is lined with markings, just as the hologram is. Aza stops several feet away.

Aza
Looks like we've reached the end of the tunnel. Is that...?

Maerell
The Mass Converter.

Aza
And all I have to do is activate that? Ok. Easy Peazy.

Aza begins to steps forward but Karon places a hand in front of her. She stops.

Karon
Wait. The hologram mentioned back there that the pit was the first of TWO trials. Where's the other?

Lu
Maybe it's somewhere in this room?

Aza
Or it could be me just turning on the converter? I don't see anything else in this room...

As the trio looks around a large FIGURE drops from the ceiling to the ground. It lands directly in front of them, jostling their stances as it hits the ground. The large figure, humanoid in appearance and made both of rock and

metal, rises. It lifts two blades, full of energy from its hands and readies itself in a battle stance.

Aza
Guys. I think I found the last trial.

Lu
What is that thing? Did it fall from the ceiling??

Maerell
That is the guardian of this Matter Converter. Aza, as your final trial you must destroy this guardian.

Aza
Oh boy.

End of act 2

Act 3

Int. Ruin MASS CONVERTER ROOM. DAY.

Aza and the brothers stand side by side, a large armed GUARDIAN before them. Karon pulls out his blaster. Aza puts down the hologram.

Aza
Alright all we have to do is take down this big guy? No problem! Maerell, you just sit there and watch!

Karon points his blaster at the guardian and shoots. It causes no visible damage.

Karon
Tch! Doesn't looks like my blaster works against this thing.

Aza

Well if a blaster doesn't work
then how about this?

Aza runs toward the guardian, dodging as it swings with its blades.

Aza
Haah!

She reaches the guardian and launches a punch directly at its leg. The guardian doesn't budge.

Aza
What? Punching it didn't work?
Usually my punches do some damage-

Before Aza can finish, the guardian reaches a hand down and knocks Aza off to the side. She crashes into the wall.

Aza
Ugh!

Lu
Aza! Alright you big monster!
Nobody hurts my friend and gets
away with it. I've got just the
thing for you!

Lu reaches into his pocket and pulls out two small circular devices.

Karon
Lu what are those?

Lu
Remote bombs. I made them with
some scrap parts back on Aelsi. In
case we needed them for the race.

Karon
Where did you learn how to make
those?

Lu
Ummmm don't worry about that!

Karon

Lu-

Lu
Alright big guy! Take this! Hyup!

Lu presses a button on the bombs, activating them with a beep. He throws them in the direction of the guardian's feet. They make contact and explode creating a cloud of smoke.

Lu
Alright I got him! There's no way
he can get up from that!

The smoke begins to clear and reveals that guardian, which had been knocked down, is slowly rising yet again. Still with no visible damage.

Karon
I wouldn't be so sure about that.

Lu
What? Even my bombs didn't work?
What's this thing made of?

The guardian fully stands and begins swinging one of his swords as Lu.

Lu
Uh oh. Wait Mr. Guardian don't
come any closer!

Karon
Lu!

Aza
Lu look out! Duck!

Karon tackles Lu to the ground and out of the guardians swing as the sword flies above their heads.

Aza
Are you guys okay?!

Karon
We're fine!

Aza
Ugh! If I don't do something they'll seriously get hurt.

Maerell
Remember Aza. These trials contain solutions that require the usage of your abilities.

Aza
Yeah well I doubt that thing will stay still long enough to let me just place a hand on him till I break the bonds in his legs.

Maerell
Yes but there are other solutions. Your power comes from energy. Energy that surrounds every part of you. You can manipulate it.

Aza
Energy that surrounds me huh? Maybe...

Aza brings herself up from the ground and closes her eyes. She balls her fists and her face marks glow. Slowly her fists begin to glow as well. She opens her eyes and looks down at her glowing hands. She smiles.

Aza
Alright. Now we're talking.

Aza begins running towards the guardian.

Aza
Boys! Take cover! This guy's going down!

Aza punches the guardian again. This time, the punch destroys the area of impact.

Aza
Hrah!

Lu

She's doing it! The punch is destroying it!

Aza punches again. And again. Each strike crumbling the guardian more. It drops its weapons.

Aza

Haaahhh!

Aza strikes one last time as the guardians crumbles to pieces in front of her.

Lu

You did it! Aza! And your hands are glowing...

Karon

How did you...

Aza

Mae said I have the ability to manipulate the energy of anything I can touch. So that means that the air surrounding my hands is fair game. Right?

Maerell

Precisely. Congratulations Aza, you have passed our two trials. Now you may turn on the Matter Convertor.

Aza

And how do I do that?

Maerell

With the power of creation.

Aza

But...I don't even know if I have that power.

Maerell

Then we shall see if you do. Go. Place your hands on the console of the Converter.

Aza walks over to the converter, placing her hands on the console.

Maerell
Now close your eyes and imagine: something good. Something bright. Warmth. Comfort. Happiness. Imagine Life. Imagine something broken lies before you. Pour all those good feelings into it. Show it kindness. Bring Life. Create Life. With your own two hands.

Aza's face marks begin to glow, a different color than they usually do. The Convertor also begins to glow and the ground below the trio trembles. Aza opens her eyes and looks up at the converter.

Aza
I...I did it. I activated it.

Maerell
Congratulations Aza. You have activated the Matter Converter, as well as the power of creation within you. You have passed all trials and have proven yourself a worthy Architect.

Aza
(laughing)
Ha ha! I did! Now can I ask all my questions?

Maerell
Yes you may. But before you do-

Karon
Oh great, there's more? Was the giant rock monster not enough?

Maerell
I must inform you that there is a way to bring back our society, the Architects.

Aza
What? Wait really? You mean I can bring back our planet? Our people? That's possible?

Maerell
Yes. There is a way to do so.

Aza
I...I can bring back my birth family? My parents?

Maerell
Possibly, yes. However my programming prevents me from speaking further of the plan until the 3 other converters located on planets throughout the galaxy are activated.

Aza
Three other converters? Ok. Are they all guarded like this one?

Maerell
No they are not.

Aza
Then this'll be easy! Where's the next one at?

Maerell
The closest convertor from here resides in the Qualien Region on the planet Altura.

Aza
The Qualien region? That's pretty far.

Karon
And nowhere near Rehall.

Aza
Well! I can't just up and leave you two now! Not after all we've

been through! So we'll all go to Rehall together and then Altura next! And that gives me plenty of time to ask as many questions as I want! What do you think Mae?

MaeRELL
I am not programmed to give such opinions.

Karon
The third non-helpful answer she's given. Something tells me this hologram's gonna be the death of me.

Aza
Alright team! Let's head out! Off to Rehall!

End of act 3

Atro bandtis 105 - rehall

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. Aza's ship. evening.

The crew have arrived at Rehall and are suspended in its outer atmosphere. Aza is playing 20 questions with Maerell in the passenger's seat.

Aza
So, Mae, are you a hundred percent sure there aren't any other powers I should worry about developing? Like shooting energy blasts from my hands? Or like flying? Flying would be cool.

Maerell
Unfortunately no, an Architect's only abilities are creation and destruction. Of course there are creative ways to utilize those abilities as you demonstrated during the trial.

Aza
Oh! I've always been really strong! Like abnormally strong! Does that have anything to do with my powers?

Maerell
Yes, quite possibly. In addition to superior intellect, some Architects also posses superior athletic and physical abilities.

AZA
So I can manipulate energy AND I have super strength and a superior intellect? Oh man, I can't wait to tell Cap'n!

Maerell

Not all Architects can acquire all the characteristics I listed. While I have seen evidence of your super strength as well as your ability to manipulate energy, I have yet to see evidence of a superior intellect based on your actions.

Karon
Pfft. She just offhandedly called you stupid. I take back anything mean I said about this Hologram before, I like her.

Aza
Hey!

Aza slaps Karon on the shoulder.

Karon
Ow!

Lu
Don't be mean Karon! Aza can't help not being super smart! She was just born this way!

Aza
Thank you Lu-wait that's not really a compliment is it?

Before Lu can answer, the communicator built into Aza's ship beeps.

Karon
Just the call I've been waiting for.

Aza
(to Maerell)
I'll talk to you later Mae, looks like we're getting a call.

Aza turns off the hologram as Karon presses a button on the board in front of him, answering the call. Q's face is projected across the windshield in front of the crew.

Q
Hello there my little escapees. Glad to see you all well.

Lu
Hi Q!

Aza
Wait, Q? From Naviy? Why are you calling?

Karon
I asked if she could dig up any information on Jagar and Rehall.

Q
I used to help bounty hunters and smugglers set up all sorts of convoys back in the day. Ran into a lot of different people. Unfortunately, even with a name, I don't know anything personal about this Jagar individual. We've never crossed paths before it seems. However, I did find a Unifer-issued warrant for a certain Jagar's arrest.

The screen beeps as a wanted poster with Jagar's name and photo appears on the screen. Karon shows visible disgust on his face as he examines the photo of a seemingly charismatic man listed as "Jagar."

Karon
So that's what he looks like huh?

Aza
He gives me the creeps.

Q
That's all I have on Jagar. It's not much, but I think you'll be more interested on what I know about Rehall.

Karon

What about Rehall?

Q
It's a bounty hunter central hub. One of the biggest on that side of the side of the galaxy.

Aza
Bounty hunters??

Q
Yup. A dangerous place that Rehall. But something tells me you're all going no matter what I say.

Karon
Of course we are.

Q
How did I know? Just be careful. All of you.

Aza
We will!

Q
Oh, and Karon? Don't push you luck.

Karon
I won't.

Q face disappears from the windshield.

Karon
Alright, Rehall. Here we come.

Aza and Lu settle in their seats as Karon begins piloting the ship down to Rehall's surface.

End of teaser

Act 1

Ext. Rehall city. Evening.

Aza and the crew land their ship on the outskirts of a city, full of tall skyscrapers. They leave the ship behind as they walk further in and begin wandering around.

Aza
So this is Rehall huh? Looks like any other big city to me. All these tall buildings look fancy.

Karon
Don't let your guard down. If this place is hub for hunters there's bound to be some danger around.

Aza
Eh, we have several ex hunters in the Bandits. They're not all that bad trust me! Uh, hey what are you doing?

Karon reaches into his pocket and pulls out a black handkerchief. He begins tying it around his neck.

Karon
Covering up so we're low profile. If anybody here recognized my tattoo like back on Aelsi then we're in for some serious trouble.

Aza
Yeah. Yeah that would be bad.

Lu
So do we actually have a way to find Jagar? Is there someone we can ask?

Karon
I have a hard time believing anyone'll just give us information.

Aza
If it's information we need then there's only one place to go on planets like these.

Karon
Which is?

Aza
Hmm. Just follow my lead.

Aza motions for the boys to follow her. She examines the buildings ahead and heads straight to one with a neon glowing sign overhead. She slams the front doors open with a bang.

Int. Pub - contiNUOUS

The door to the pub slams open. Aza and the brothers overlook a sea of bounty hunters in a dimly lit pub. Groups of hunters crowd at tables and around a large bar in the center of the room.

Aza
A pub!

Karon
So much for the low profile.

Lu
Oh no...

Aza
Hey everyone! I got a question for you all!

All the heads of the angry and ragged bounty hunters turn to look at Aza at the entrance of the bar. One BOUNTY HUNTER raises his glass to point in Aza's direction.

Bounty Hunter 1
Who the heck are you guys?

Aza
Not important. Do you any of you guys know a man named Jagar?

Another BOUNTY HUNTER turns his head at the mention of Jagar. He looks Aza over.

Bounty hunter 2
Yeah. I do.

Aza
You do? Perfect! We have some questions for him! Do you mind telling me where he is?

Bounty hunter 2
Why should I tell you anything?

Aza
Hmmm. Fair. Alright, I get it. How about this. I challenge you to an arm wrestle! If I win, you tell me where he is.

Bounty hunter 2
And if I win?

Aza
You get the ship we have parked on the outskirts of the city.

Karon
Aza!

Aza
(whisper to Karon)
Don't worry I got this.

Aza winks. The bounty hunter thinks it over and takes a swish of his drink before placing it back on the table. He looks back to Aza.

Bounty HUNTER 2
Ok, you're on.

Aza
Perfect!

Aza goes to join the bounty hunter at his table. She takes a seat across from him.

Aza

Now, Mr. Bounty Hunter. What's your name?

BountY HUNTER 2
None of your business.

Aza
Ok, Mr. none of your business, I hope you're prepared. I'm not going easy on ya!

Bounty HUNTER 2
Hope you and your friends don't mind losing a ship. Needed a new one.

Aza
Hmmm we'll see about that. I'm really strong ya know?

Lu
I hope this works...

Aza places her elbow on the table. The bounty hunter follows suit. They claps their hands together and both grip the sides of the table with their free hands.

Aza
Alright ready? Lu, count us down will you?

Lu
Uh, ok! Um, 3, 2, 1, go!

Aza and the bounty hunter begin the arm wrestle. The bounty hunter's face changes from disinterest to surprise as he notices Aza quickly forcing his hand to the side. He grunts as he tries to push back but Aza's strength wins and his hand hits the table.

Aza
And that's that!

Bounty HUNTER 2
H-how did you..

Aza

I told you! I'm really strong.

Bounty HUNTER 2
Give me a rematch! Now!

Aza
Now, now as much fun as I'd have arm wrestling all day, the outcome would always be the same. Now Mr. None of Your Business, I believe you owe us some information.

Aza smiles at him awaiting his answer. The other bounty hunters in the bar who had been watching the match now surround the two at the table.

Bounty hunter 1
Did you see that?

Bounty hunter 3
That little girl won in like 5 seconds.

Bounty hunter 1
Hey girl! Wrestle me next!

Bounty hunter 4
Yeah! Me too!

A group of hunters start encompassing Aza and the crew at the table.

Lu
Uh oh.

Karon
Of COURSE this happens.

Aza
Hey hey hey wait I can't wrestle all of you guys! Uh, just-ugh. Quick, Mr. None of Your Business, where is Jagar?

Bounty hunter 2
His penthouse is the room with the large window in the biggest

building on the main street. Just outside.

Aza
Thanks! Sorry everybody but we've got to go! C'mon guys let's get OUT of here!

Aza grabs Karon and Lu by their hands and pushes through the crowd, with the hunters still yelling. The crew dashes out of the pub and into the streets.

End of act 1

Act 2

Ext. Rehall mainstreet. Evening.

After running from the bar, Aza and the crew reach the main street. She lets go of Karon and Lu's hands as they all catch their breath.

Aza
(out of breath)
S-sorry about that guys...Didn't think...that would happen...

Karon
(out of breath)
It's like...the universe knows...you attract trouble.

Lu
(out of breath)
Is...is that...the building?

Lu points up to the tall building ahead of them on the street. Towards one of the top floors of the building lies a large glass window.

Aza
That's...one tall building.

Lu

And Jagar's all the way up top? Behind that big glass window? How are we gonna get all the way up there?

Karon
Well it's too dangerous to barge in. We can sneak in-

Aza
Except we don't have a floor plan of the place or any knowledge about how many people are inside.

Karon
That didn't stop you back on the casino.

Aza
Well this is a bounty hunter planet! Even I know better than that!

Karon
Well have you got any better ideas?

Aza glances over at the building. She examines it. And then smiles.

Aza
As a matter of fact, I do. C'mon boys.

Aza moves forward, the brothers following her. She walks over to the side of the building and places her hand on it.

Aza
Alright. You remember what the pitfall back in the ruins?

Karon
Don't tell me your planning to climb up this entire building?

Aza
Yup! We can do it! Right?

Lu
Yeah!

Aza
See? Lu knows what's up! Alright you two, you know the drill, just follow my lead.

Aza concentrates as her face marks glow. The building melts slightly beneath her hands and she begins to climb up. The brothers follow. They climb in silence and make it halfway to their destination before Aza looks back at the brothers.

Aza
How ya both holding up?

Lu
My arms are pretty tired.

Karon
I was worried about that. Lu why don't you climb back down and wait for us back at the ship?

Lu
What? And miss getting information about Mom? No way!

Aza
Hey if Lu wants to do it, just let him!

Karon
Not if it risks him getting hurt!

Aza
Nobody's going to get hurt!

Above Aza's head, a sentry attached to the side of the building activates. It fires a blast. Aza looks in its direction.

Aza
What's that??

Karon

A sentry!

Lu
It's firing at us!

Aza
I got it!

Aza puts a glowing hand up. As the laser hits her hand it dissipates.

Karon
You're blocking the blasts with you hand?

Aza
Yeah...but not for long. I think I'm wearing out. My powers don't work when I'm too tired. I don't know how much longer I can last if this keeps up. And I can't climb with one hand.

Karon
Hold on I'll blast it down.

Aza
Wait no! If it explodes you might alert someone! We need to turn it off somehow.

Lu
I bet I can do it! I just need to get up to it.

Karon
And how are you gonna do that?

Aza
I can throw him.

Karon
What?

Aza
Lu, on the count of three I'm gonna stop blocking the blasts and

reach my other hand down to you. Jump up and grab it and I'll throw you up there.

Lu
You're gonna throw me with one hand?

Aza
Yeah. Trust me I can do it!

Karon
No. I'm not letting you do this!

Lu
On the count of three right?

Karon
Lu!

Lu
We don't have any other choice! Trust me!

Aza
Okay Lu. 1, 2, 3!

Lu
Hup!

Aza takes her glowing hand and punches it into the side of the building to deepen her grip. She reaches her other hand down and Lu jumps up and grabs it.

Aza
Okay Lu, go for it!

Aza throws Lu high above their heads. Lu flies into the air, slightly above the sentry. He lands hard on top of the sentry, grabbing its sides to secure his grip.

Aza
He made it!

Karon
Lu! Are you okay?!

Lu
Yeah! Yeah I'm fine! Okay...okay I got this. Hold on guys!

Lu sits up and begins working away at the sentry. He opens the back and begins cutting wires. The blasts stop.

Lu
I got it!

Karon breathes a sigh of relief.

Aza
Great going Lu! Hold on we'll climb up to you!

Aza and Karon climb up to Lu. Aza clears a path for the brothers as they eventually make their way to floor where the window is located. They climb onto a ledge on the side of the building.

Aza
(out of breath)
We...we made it.

All three hunch over. Out of breath. Karon lifts himself up and walks over to Lu, grabbing him by the shoulders.

Karon
Lu what were you thinking! You could've been hurt! What if Aza missed? What if you didn't grab on? What if-

Aza
Lighten up Karon!

Lu
I-I'm sorry.

Karon
Just don't...don't do anything like that again. Now, c'mon. We've got a trafficker to visit.

End of act 2

Act 3

Ext. jagar's penthouse. Evening.

After scaling the building Karon and crew walk along the ledge to the window of the penthouse. They peek into the room and see Jagar and two other associates sitting around a table, their backs towards the crew.

Aza
So that must be Jagar huh? The one sitting at the head of the table in that big fancy chair? He matches the wanted poster.

Karon
Yeah.

Aza
Looks like he's got a couple friends in there with him.

Lu
Can we take on all three of them?

Karon
Shouldn't be a problem.

Karon pulls out his blaster and presses a button. It charges up making a whining noise.

Aza
Whoa Karon don't tell me you're just gonna blast through the window.

Karon
Yeah, I am.

Karon aims his blaster at the window and the glass shatters. He storms in and the three in the room stand up.

Jagar's friend 1

Hey, what the- ACK!

Karon aims his blast and shoots at Jagar's friends. They both fall to the ground.

Jagar
Who-who are you? What did you do to my men?

AZa
Karon you didn't-

Karon
No I didn't kill them. Hit them with a stun blast. But, as for you, Jagar, make one move...

Karon presses another button on his blaster. It charges up again with another whining noise.

Karon
And the next shot I fire won't just be a stun.

Jagar
You sure talk big kid. But if I call some more men in right now I could have you and your friends tossed out the window the way you came.

Karon
Lu, you still have those remote detonated charges on you? Take them and place them by the door and stand far away. You hear anybody try to open that door, denote them.

Lu
Uh, right.

Aza
Wait, hold on! Isn't that a bit much-

Karon

Stay out of this Aza!

Aza
Whoa...ok.

Lu
Aza, you asked me how Karon was able to take care of me on his own a couple days ago right? This is how. He can be really...scary sometimes.

Aza looks over to Karon, concern obviously on her face.

Jagar
Hmph. You've got guts kid. And with that terrifying look in your eyes I can tell you mean it. What did I do to deserve that hate stare? Did I drown your pet Tula fish or something?

Karon pulls the handkerchief away from his neck. He points at the tattoo.

Karon
You recognize this?

Jagar
That's...one of my brands.

Karon
So it is.

Jagar
Don't tell me, you're an escapee and now you're out to get revenge on me for whatever injustices my men put you through. Or you're here to steal my prized collectibles like one of my custom blasters or jetpacks.

Karon
I'm not here for revenge. I want information.

Jagar
Well that's a first. Usually people are only out to kill me.

Karon
I have no objections to that either.

Jagar
Hm. You know you're not bad kid. What information do you want?

Karon
I got this brand after your men separated my brother and I from our mother. They put us on a ship and left her behind.

Karon moves his blaster slightly to the side to look Jagar in the eye.

Karon
Where is she?

Jagar
Hmph. Well unfortunately I can't tell you that.

Karon
What?

Jagar
That brand on your neck is for a specific type of workers that I employ. The ones that my men originally didn't find. The ones that were given to me.

Karon
What?

Jagar
I'm saying, you and your brother were probably given to me by someone else. Whoever that person

was is the one that took your mother away from you.

Karon
Who gave us to you then?!

Jagar
Hmm sorry no clue. I don't ask for my patron's names. I'm a good businessman. And even if I did, what makes you think I would tell you? You're scary kid, but I can tell you're still soft underneath all that tough.

Karon
You KNOW who your patron is! Stop lying!

JAGAR
Y'know I was enjoying this at first but now you're just dragging it on way too long. Your time's up.

A cacophony of footsteps can be heard nearing the door where the charges are placed.

Lu
Kar there's people coming! A lot of them!

Karon
What?

Jagar
Did you really think breaking my window wouldn't have any consequences? You think I would install a nice big fancy window without a security system set up for it?

Karon
Tch-

Jagar

You play this game well kid but
you lost.

Karon
I don't think so.

Karon quickly presses a switch on his blaster and fires a shot at Jagar. It hits him directly causing him to fall over.

Jagar
Guh-!

Karon dashes over to Jagar and grabs something from his body before heading to the wall behind his fallen foe and grabs a jetpack from a shelf.

Karon
C'mon guys we're getting out of
here. Hold onto to me, we're gonna
jump out the window and I'm gonna
break our fall with this.

Lu
He said those were collectibles
though. Do you think it has fuel?

Karon
It does. It has to. Alright
everybody hold on.

Aza and Lu grab onto Karon as they jump through the glass window. The door leading into the penthouse open as Jagar's men come rushing in. Blaster shots are fired at the crew as they fall but none land.

Karon
Hope this works.

Karon presses a button on the jetpack and it turns on.

Lu
Oh, thank the stars it worked. I
really thought I was gonna hit the
ground that time.

Karon lowers the crew to the ground.

Karon
Okay back to the ship. We're getting out of here.

Lu
Right! Aza,` you okay?

Aza
Uh, yeah! Yeah I'm coming!

The crew run back to the ship and escape the planet.

Int. Aza's ship. Evening.

Karon sits in the pilot seat steering the ship as they fly away from Rehall. Aza and Lu are seated behind him.

Aza
Karon...Jagar...you didn't-

Karon
No. He's alive. I switched the blaster back to stun before I shot him. But I was about to. I wanted to. So bad. But it would be too much trouble if all his men came after us now. Especially now that I have this.

Karon pulls a card out of his pocket.

Lu
Is that...?

Karon
A code card. Jagar may not have exchanged names with whoever sold us to him but he definitely left a trail behind. Especially if units were involved.

Lu
So you're gonna trace his ID code?

Karon

Yeah.

Aza
Do you think you'll find your mom that way?

Karon
We better. No, we will. I'm gonna do anything I can to find her.

Karon pushes a button engaging the autopilot. He stands, and exits the cockpit.

Aza
Hm.

Lu
You okay Aza?

Aza
Yeah, I'm fine. It's just. I didn't think Karon could be that...desperate. I know I told him not to kill but I have a feeling if he were any closer to the edge he wouldn't listen to me or even you if we told him to stop.

Lu
Yeah...

Aza
Hey Lu? I'm gonna do whatever I can to help you and Karon find your mom. I swear on my life. I'm not leaving either of you.

Lu smiles.

Lu
Thanks Aza.

End of act 3

Atro bandits 106 - The Princess

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Ext. altura wilds. Day.

Aza are Lu are standing outside their ship on a new planet. Aza looks around, examining the surrounding lush green jungle as she holds the hologram in her hands.

Aza
So Mae, are you sure this planet has a converter?

Maerell
Yes, I am certain. These coordinates belong to the planet Altura. According to my records a Mass Converter is housed here.

Lu
Do you know where?

Maerell
I do not.

Lu
Oh, cool. I'm starting to see why my brother was mean to you back at the ruins.

Aza
Where is Karon anyway?

Lu
He's in the ship talking to Orion about the ID code we swiped off Jagar I think.

Aza
He uh, He seemed normal this morning compared to yesterday.

Lu
Yeah. That scary side of him usually only comes around when we-, well when I'M in danger. But

he usually calms down when he sees I'm ok.

Lu turns away from Aza to look at the ship where his brother is.

Lu
Sometimes I wonder what would happen if I wasn't around. Kar's taken care of me all my life but if something happened to me...I dunno-

Karon comes out of the ship walking toward Aza and Lu.

Karon
Hey, what are you two talking about out here?

Lu
Nothing! Just talking about where that converter might be. Right Aza?

Aza
Uh, yeah! Mae says she doesn't know where it's located. Right Mae?

Maerell
Yes, I cannot confirm it's location.

Karon
Ok so what do you wanna do? Find a village or something and ask some locals?

Aza
Well that would be the best option but I wouldn't know where to find any. Even as we were flying over this planet, all I could see was trees. There's nothing but green here.

Lu

Hmmm well we could try flying over again-

Voice (O.S.)
Halt! None of you move!

A group of soldiers pop out of the surrounding trees and form a circle around the group. Each one holds a spear towards the crew.

Karon
Well it looks like we found the locals.

Soldier 1
Who are you three? Have you come to harm the Princess?

Aza
Princess? What Princess?

Voice (O.S.)
What's going on out here? Did you all find something?

Aza
Wait that voice...

The soldiers directly in front of Aza part and LEZ steps out into the inner circle.

Aza
Lez?

Lez
Aza! What are you doing here?

Teaser end

Act 1

Ext. Altura wilds. Day.

The crew stand in the middle of a circle of soldiers with Lez directly in front of them.

Aza
Lez what are you doing here on Altura?

Lez
I should be asking you the same question.

Aza
We're here cause we're looking for something. But you- the Bandits aren't here are they? Why are you here?

Lez
Well I'm here because-

Voice (o.s.)
What's going on? Is something the matter?

A young teenage girl, the PRINCESS, steps in front of the circle. A smaller group of guards accompany her.

Princess
Oh, Mr. Al'Darian. Who are these people?

Lez
-I'm here because I'm protecting her.

Aza
Protecting her?

Lez turns to exchange glances with all the surrounding soldiers, then turns to the Princess.

Lez
Your Majesty, these three aren't threats. The girl with the similar uniform to mine is my sister and the other two are her friends. They probably gave your soldiers some scare but I promise they pose

no harm to you. I would suggest we keep moving forward.

Princess
Of course. I trust your judgement Mr. Al'Darian. If you say to move forward we shall. Soldiers, onward we go please.

The soldiers lower their weapons and begin moving forward. Lez walks over to Aza and the brothers.

Lez
Aza, you said you guys were looking for something here right? What is it?

Aza
Well, you remember how I told you over our last call about all the Mass Convertors I have to find? Mae said there's one here but we don't know where.

LEZ
Well, if you can't find it now, why don't you come along with us? We could use a little muscle. You can keep an eye out as we go along. And I can help you search later if needed.

Aza
Hmm. What do you guys think?

Lu
I don't know what's going on but it sounds fine to me!

Karon
We don't have much of a choice do we? Sure.

Aza
Okay, you heard 'em. Lead the way Lez.

The four begin walking alongside the lines of soldiers.

Aza
So, you gonna tell me what you're up to here or do I have to ask?

Lez
Oh right. Sorry.

Aza
Wait, don't tell me, you've finally realized that your life with a bunch of smelly pirates doesn't suit your princely personality and now you've decided to become royalty here?

Lez
What? No of course not. I'm here because it was a request from one of our own. He came up to me explaining that he was from Altura and that they were going through some political trouble with some of their royalty. He said it reminded him of me and asked if there was any chance I could come back and help out in his stead since, well for certain reasons, he's unable to. I asked Cap'n and he said coming here would probably be good for me.

Aza
Oh, I see. Then this Princess is...?

Lez
A political hostage. She was separated from her brother while young and given to a neighboring kingdom to keep the peace. But their father recently passed and her brother, now king, organized peace talks to return his sister

back home. Unfortunately there are some in the kingdom she was kept at that don't approve of this deal for various reasons and have resorted to threatening her journey home. So I came along with all these soldiers to make sure she's safe.

Aza
Ah, okay, okay I get it now. Well how noble of you Prince Al'Darian.

Lez
Don't call me that.

Lez lightly smacks Aza across the head.

Aza
Ha ha ow.

Lez
I just remembered, I have something to tell the Princess. Be right back.

Aza
'kay!

Lez runs ahead to join the Princess in her circle of guards in the middle of the line.

Lu
So Aza, is Lez really a prince?

AzA
Huh? Ha ha NO way. Before being taken in by the Bandits Lez was an aristocrat's son back on his home planet. He was raised to be prim and proper, the complete opposite to how most of us bandits behave. His sense of etiquette makes him a real jewel compared to the rest of us. Calling him "prince" is just a

little joke us Bandits use to tease him.

Karon

Hm, now that you mention it, he's the exact opposite of you. Straight-laced, noble, smart...

Aza

Mhm he really is-wait a minute I'm smart too!

Lu

You said the Cap'n found Lez when he was a kid right? What happened to his family?

Aza

Ah, well. It's not exactly a happy story. Lez's territory was subject to a coup by its own citizens. His parents fled but...they left him behind. A little kid left all alone to deal with an angry mob. So in order to save his own life Lez ran away. That's when Cap'n found him and took him in. He adopted him and gave him a second chance to live a good life. That's probably why he's here helping this princess. To pass on the second chance that he was given.

Lu

Cap'n must be pretty nice to rescue people like that.

Aza

Cap'n's the best! All us Bandits look up to him. But since he adopted me and Lez, the three of us feel especially like family. I don't know what I'd do without him. Now if only Lez could be just as nice as Cap'n and stop scolding me all the time-

Lez
I only do that for your own good.

Lez appears before Aza, having finished talking with the Princess.

Aza
Lez! You're done talking to the Princess?

Lez
Yes I am. Now I know you're here because of the hologram. But what about you boys? How's the search for your mother?

Lez looks at the brothers.

Karon
We're...still looking.

Lu
But we've got some clues to follow!

Lez
That's wonderful! I hope you're reunited soon.

Karon
Thanks.

Aza
So Lez? What exactly are we guarding the Princess from? I don't see anyone around.

Lez
Well we're a day away from the Kingdom and have only fought off a few ambushes so far. But we've yet to run into anyone today.

Aza

Maybe you defeated them all? Or
they all got tired and decided to
give it a rest?

Lez
Hmm well maybe-

As Lez speaks an arrow shoots forward into the group, zipping towards one of the soldiers. It hits him in the shoulder as he falls forward with a grunt.

Soldier 1
An ambush! Surround the Princess!

Lez
Looks like they weren't tired
after all!

Lez and the others pull out their weapons and prepare to fight as they are surrounded by a group of fighters, all armed with bows and spears. One steps forward.

Fighter 1
Return the Princess to us or
sacrifice your lives.

Lez
Apologies but I'm going to have to
decline that request!

Lez, armed with a spear of his own, charges forward. Using the side of the spear he attacks the fighter, causing him to fall to the ground.

Aza
Yeah! What he said!

Aza joins the fight, punching and kicking various fighters.

Lez
Your Majesty! Stay within the
inner circle! Don't move!

Princess
Alright-Behind you!

Lez

What-?

Lez turns around the see a fighter coming up behind him. He turns to react but is interrupted by a shot of blaster that causes the fighter to fall to the side. He follows the direction of the shot to see Karon.

Karon
You can't let your guard down out here.

Lez
Yes, you're right. Thank you Karon.

Karon nods and returns to the fight. Across from him Aza knocks out one fighter after another.

Aza
Ugh- these guys are-surprisingly tougher than they look! No wonder you needed some muscle!

Aza's fight gets pushed back to the inner circle of soldiers where the Princess resides. The Princess looks around the battlefield, a worried expression on her face.

Princess
All this fighting...just because I wanted to return home. And now I've dragged more civilians into this. I am so sorry all of you.

Aza
You have nothing to apologize for Princess! Nothing's wrong with wanting to be with your family and the people that love you!

Princess
But to have all you help me...

Aza
Asking for help is never a bad thing! And besides-

Aza punches another fighter unconscious and then turns to look the Princess in the eye.

Aza
Us Astro Bandits are always ready to help people in need!

The Princess stares at Aza while Lu begins heading closer to where Aza is fighting.

Lu
And we'll help you out too, your Majesty! Watch this!

Lu pulls out one of his remote bombs. He throws one at a group of fighters and presses the trigger. The small bomb explodes and sends fighters flying.

Lu
Ha! It worked! And I have plenty more bombs where that come from-

Lu reaches out to pull more but before he can a figure out where to throw it, one of the last couple fighters approaches Lu from the side, leaving him no time to react.

Aza
Lu look out! He's on you!

Lu
Huh-

Karon
Lu!

Karon sees Lu with a spear pointed at his head by the fighter beside him. Karon rushes over, pushing Lu to the side, and allowing the spear to graze his arm. Karon shoots at the fighter with his other hand and the fighter falls forward.

Karon
Lu stay out of the front lines! It's too dangerous!

Lu looks up at his brother.

Lu
Uh, yeah. Okay.

Aza runs over as Lez uses his spear to knock out the last standing fighter.

Lez
There...I think that's the last one.

Aza
Are you two okay?

Karon
We're fine.

Lu
Yeah, we're okay.

Lez walks over to where the Princess is huddled.

Lez
Your Majesty, are you alright?

Princess
Yes, thanks to you all. And you?

Lez
Uninjured, but tired, as I suspect all your men are. It's been a long day.

Lez looks around to the surrounding soldiers as they are all hunched over, exhausted from battle.

Lez
The sun seems to be setting as well. Why don't we find a safe place a little further ahead and camp out for the night? We can resume the last part of our journey tomorrow.

Princess
Sure. That sounds like a nice idea.

Lez
Alright. C'mon everyone, let's put some distance between us and these attackers before they wake up.

Lez motions for everyone to follow as he begins walking away from the scene. After catching their breath, they all follow.

End act 1

Act 2

Ext. Altura wilds. Night.

The sun having set, the Bandit crew, along with the Princess and her entourage, relax at a camp. Various soldiers are sleeping or conversing as the Princess, Lez, Aza and the brothers all sit near an open fire, sharing a meal.

PRINCESS
I must say, Mr. um, Lu was it?

Lu
Yes, your Majesty! Lu Delora Mileon! You can just call me Lu!

Princess
Mr. Lu, I didn't imagine you as much of a soldier at first glance but your bravery during that scuffle today was very admirable.

Lu
You think so?

Karon
That bravery almost got him killed.

Lu looks down, not meeting Karon or the Princess's eyes.

Princess

Well regardless of the outcome, the effort was still incredibly admirable. If it were me out there having to fight, I do not know if I would survive. I do not think I can ever be that brave.

Aza
Don't sell yourself short Princess! You're plenty brave!

Princess
No. I could never do what you all do in a fight.

Aza
Being brave isn't all about just fighting!

Princess
That may be so but I-

Lez
Your Majesty, when your brother called to have you return home, you could have easily declined the offer to keep the peace considering the danger it would bring. But you didn't. Why is that?

Princess
Well I didn't want to let my brother and all our people down. They worked so hard to bring me back.

Lez
So for the sake of your family, you're here doing your best, braving the dangers, courageously standing up for what your heart feels is right. I would not only consider that bravery, but also courage. And strength.

Aza
Lez, keep this up and you really WILL become a prince here.

Lez
I'm being serious!

Lez hits Aza on the top of her head with his fist.

Princess
I appreciate your kind words, Mr. Al-Darian. And yours as well, Miss..

Aza
Aza!

Princess
Miss Aza.

Lez
Oh and you shouldn't allow being fearful of situations to get you down too much. Feeling fear is only natural. Even the seemingly fearless Aza here used to be afraid of everything under the suns when she was little.

Lu
Like ghosts?

Aza
Hey!

Lez
Oh you two know about that? You know once when we were younger, Aza tried to sneak into the kitchen for some candy but before she could steal anything she thought she saw a ghost and ran out screaming all the way to Cap'n's room-

Aza

Ah you're a dead man Lez Al'Darian!

Aza gets up and attempts to tackle Lez. Before she succeeds Lez also arises and runs away, causing a chase between the two around the fire.

Princess
They seem like wonderful siblings.

Lu
Their family's wonderful too! It's a family worth fighting for.

Princess.
Yes, a family worth fighting for.

The Princess looks over at the soldier who have protected her through her journey.

Princess
And I will fight for my family as well!

Aza pauses her chase to look over at the Princess and smile.

Aza
And we'll be with you every step of the way Princess! Let's do this!

Everyone cheers in agreement.

End of act 2

Act 3

Ext. Altura wilds. Day.

After resting for the night, The Princess along with her entourage, continue their journey. Aza and the brothers stand toward the center of the line. Aza is talking to Maerell.

Aza

So Mae? Still don't know where that convertor is?

Maerell
No, I am not aware of its location.

Aza
Well guess we'll find it when we find it huh? The morning air on Altura feels really nice anyway! Honestly I wouldn't mind hanging out here for a few more days.

KARON
I don't know about that one.

Lu
Yeah, seeing the Princess trying so hard to be reunited with her family makes me wanna try harder with our search for Mom. As SOON as we hear back from Orion, we're going out to look for her!

Karon
Yeah. We definitely are.

Aza
And I'll help you guys out every step of the way!

Karon
I'd rather you didn't.

Aza
What? Why?

Karon
Cause every time you stick your nose into things, something ends up blowing up or fighting us.

Lu
Or we end up crashing somewhere!

Aza

Aw Lu, aren't you supposed to be on my side?!

LEZ
Hey Aza! Eyes peeled! Looks like we're coming up a bridge straight ahead.

Aza looks ahead and sees the bridge Lez mentioned.

Aza
Huh? Oh you're right.

The whole entourage stops to examine the bridge. The rock bridge extends over a deep gorge. Wooden poles and ropes line the sides of the bridge.

Aza
Looks pretty narrow to fit more than two of us at a time. How are we gonna cross it?

Lez
Hmm. How about the soldiers head across first, followed by Aza and the brothers. Then, once we've confirmed it's safe to cross I'll head over with the Princess. Does that sound alright with you all?

Everyone voices their agreements. The entourage begins crossing the bridge according to Lez's orders. The brothers and Aza then begin crossing after.

Karon
Don't know if it's just me but this bridge seems kinda...

Lu
Sketchy.

Karon
Yeah.

Lu looks over the side of the bridge to the bottom of the gorge.

Lu
Looks like a pretty long fall too...

Lez
Lu I think you're making the Princess nervous.

Princess
Ha ha, just a little.

Lu
Oh! I'm sorry!

Aza
Don't worry guys! We'll be fine! It's not like this an old wooden rickety bridge. It may be narrow but it's made of rock. It would an explosion to break a bridge like this-

As Aza finishes her sentence a large explosion is heard and the bridge shakes.

Karon
You mean like that?

Lez
Someone placed explosives on the bridge!

Lu
It's breaking!

Lez
Everyone hurry! Get across!

Everyone begins running as the bridge shakes and shatters. The soldiers, brothers, and Aza reach the other side just as the part connecting to the mainland breaks, trapping Lez and the Princess on a crumbling piece.. The rock beneath the Princess's feet begins to crumble and she falls back. The Princess screams.

Lez
Princess!

Lez reaches forward and grabs the Princess but ends up falling with her. Before they fall into the gorge, Lez grabs the edge of the bridge piece they were trapped on with his other hand. Aza watches from the mainland.

Lez
Don't worry Princess. I've got you!

Princess
Mr. Al'Darian. Your hand. It's slipping.

Lez
It's fine! I'll get us out of this!

Aza
Lez! Your Majesty! Hold on! I'm coming!

Aza gets up and readies to jump over to the piece of bridge where Lez and the Princess are trapped. Karon grabs her by the arm to stop her.

Karon
Wait Aza, you can't make that jump over to them. What if the part where you land breaks?

Aza
It doesn't matter! I have to try.

Aza shakes Karon's arm off and jumps. She makes a steady landing on the bridge and reaches down to grab Lez.

Aza
Lez! Here! I'll pull you up.

Lez looks up at Aza and sees her foothold begin to crumble.

Lez

Aza no! Let go! You're going to fall with us-

The foothold gives way and Aza falls forward. Aza and the Princess scream. With her free hand, Aza grabs the edge of the cliff.

Aza
Just like me. I come over to help. And now I'm hanging on for dear life with the both of you.

Princess
Miss Aza. Mr. Al'Darian. I appreciate all the help you've given me. But I can't possibly have you both die on my account.

Aza
Your Majesty not another word! I'm pulling you both out of here!

Lez
Aza the bridge is still crumbling. Your hand-

Aza
It's fine! It won't break! I won't let it!

Aza looks up at her hand and closes her eyes. Her face marks glow. The hand holding on to the cliff also begins to glow. Lez looks on in awe as the cliff begins to repair itself, the crumbling stopping.

Lez
Aza-what are you doing?

Aza
Fixing the bridge.

Aza opens her eyes and looks over the at cliff, now stable.

Lez
It stopped crumbling. How did you do that?

Aza
I learned how. One of my new powers.

Aza smiles at Lez and the Princess, relief spreading across everyone's faces. A hand then reaches over to grab Aza's.

Karon
Everyone hold on! We'll pull you guys up!

Karon along with a couple soldiers who made the jump begin to pull up the three from the edge of the cliff. They successfully save them and regroup on the mainland. A soldier runs over to the Princess.

SolDIER 1
Princess are you alright?

Princess
Yes, I am. Thanks to you all.

Lez
I know you told me about your new powers over our last call but I didn't think you'd be able to repair rock.

Aza
I didn't either. That's the first time I've ever tried that.

The Princess stands up and looks towards the horizon.

Princess
Alright everyone. It's only a little further to the Palace. We're almost there.

Soldier 1
Let's get you home, your Majesty.

Everyone agrees and begins walking forward.

End of act 3

Act 4

Int. Altura palace. Day.

After walking through the Palace town, the Princess and her entourage enter the Palace. A group of palace guards open the doors, as the entourage enters. In the middle of the entrance, a tall young man, the KING, stands. The Princess steps forward ahead of her group towards him.

Princess
I've...I've made it back.

King
Welcome home, little sister. We've missed you.

The two hug. Aza and her crew look on, smiling.

Lez
The journey was a little rough, but we got her home.

Aza
Yeah. We did.

Aza looks over to Karon, who is stood next to her. He is smiling.

Aza
Karon are you smiling?

Karon
What? N-no. I'm not.

Aza
You totally are.

Lu
He totally is.

Karon
Shut up!

The Prince then walks over to the crew.

Prince
I must thank you all for bringing my sister home safely. Is there anything I can do to repay you?

Aza
Oh well actually! I'm looking for something. Have you ever seen a large machine like fixture? It's should be lined with distinct markings and a have a console on the front.

Prince
Oh, yes. I think you're referring to the Otherworld Shrine. It's a monument left here by an old society our kingdom associated with. You can find it straight ahead if you wish.

Aza
Whoa really! Wow lucky me! Don't mind if I do!

Aza, Lez and the brothers walk in the direction the Prince instructed and find another Mass Converter.

Aza
Huh the King was right. It really is another Mass Converter. Well, hope he doesn't mind me messing with his people's shrine a bit...

Aza places her hand on the console, activating her powers, and the console in turn.

Aza
2 consoles down...2 more to go.

Lez
Well looks like I didn't even need to help you find it. What are you all going to do now?

Aza

Well I'll probably ask Mae where the next console is.

A beep interrupts Aza's thought.

Aza
What was that?

Karon pulls out the source of the sound, a communicator in his pocket.

Karon
My communicator. It's Orion.

End of act 4

Astro bandits 107 - brothers pt. 1

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. Trafficking ship. Night.

Lu is running down a long corridor with trafficker Jagar right on his tail.

Jagar
It's no use running Lu. You can't escape me. Not this time.

Lu
No! I'm not gonna let you get away with this!

Lu runs a few steps further before tripping and falling forward. He turns himself over as Jagar approaches him. From behind Jagar, Ku-Lei observes the two.

Ku-Lei
Lu!

Jagar stops in front of Lu, pulling out a small metal device used for branding from his pocket. He laughs.

Jagar
Sorry kid. But I think it's way past time you follow in your brother's footsteps and get your own brand.

Jagar brings down the branding tool, closer to Lu's neck. Lu stares on in horror.

End teaser

Act 1

Int. Ar-Lei's diner. earlier that Day.

The crew is back in Ar-Lei's diner. They gather around a table, with Ar-Lei and Ku-Lei, in a heated discussion.

AR-LEI

So allow me to get my information straight, Orion told you all to come back here because there might be some clues about your mother's whereabouts?

Karon
Yeah.

Aza
You remember how we busted that casino from squandering money from the market?

Ar-lei
I could hardly forget. You kidnapped my brother for a day. I was worried sick.

Aza
Sorry about that. Well according to Orion, the Unifiers came shortly after and arrested anybody who had stayed behind. They cleared out some of the place but there's a lot of ships belonging to racers and other patrons that are still there. And according to Orion, they identified a fighter ship that belonged to one of Jagar's crew.

Karon
He told us to check it out before the rest of the Unifiers make their way over here and remove any more evidence.

Ar-Lei
Oh, I see. You're all heading over there now then?

Karon
Yeah. As soon as we come up with a plan of attack in case anything goes wrong.

Karon glances over at Aza.

Aza
Why are you looking at me like that? I don't always attract danger!

Karon
Everyone here knows that's not true.

Lu
One step closer to finding Mom. I can't wait!

Karon
Wait, hold on Lu. I want you to stay here.

Lu
What? Why?

Karon
It's too dangerous. There's a chance owners of those ships'll send people to recover anything valuable before the Unifiers can take it.

Lu
Well I've been with you two for everything so far and I've been fine!

Karon
You've had some close calls though. Like on Rehall and Altura. Just stay here with Ar and Ku-Lei. You'll be safer with them.

Lu
But I promised that I'd help find Mom with you once we left Naviy! Just trust me! Let me help!

Karon

No! You're staying here.

Lu
I can fight if I need to!

Karon
You can't even use a blaster
properly.

Lu
Only cause you never let me
practice!

Aza
Hey c'mon guys let's not fight-

Karon
Look, you're not indestructible
and you're definitely not as
strong as you think you are.
You're staying here. That's final.

Lu
You...you're AWFUL Karon!

Lu runs out of the diner and towards the ship.

Ku-LEI
W-wait! Lu!

Ku-lei stands up and runs out to catch up with Lu.

Aza
That was a little harsh don't 'cha
think?

Karon
I don't care. He can be mad at me
all he wants so long as he's safe.
That's all that matters.

Aza
Shouldn't you go after him?

Karon
I'll give him some time to clear
his head while we come up with a

plan. Besides he's got Ku-Lei with him. Any sign of danger and he'll probably run back here screaming with Lu in tow. No offense, Ar.

Ar-LEI
None taken. My brother's a special one.

Ext. Aelsi plains. day.

Ku-Lei is running after Lu.

Ku-LEI
Lu! Wait up!

Lu
I can't believe him! We promised we'd find mom together! No matter what! And he thinks he can just shove me off somewhere while he and Aza do all the work?

Ku-LEI
I think he's only trying to look out for you. I'd be worried about Ar if she were ever to get into trouble.

Lu
And what was that bit about me not being strong enough? So what if I'm not good with a blaster? So what if I can't fight well. I don't need to know how to punch somebody to be strong! And I can prove it!

Ku-Lei
How?

Lu
I'm gonna get that information before my brother can.

Lu begins to walk off to the shipyard.

Ku-Lei
Wait don't tell me your going to the casino? By yourself? Wait! Wait, I'll come with you!

Ext. Casino shipyard. Day.

Ku-lei and Lu arrive at the abandoned casino shipyard. Dozens of ships are parked in the crowded lot. Lu and Ku wander among the ships inspecting them.

Ku-LEI
So...are you really sure there's a ship here that belongs to Jagar?

Lu
Yeah. Orion said one of Jagar's crew was here during the race and was arrested. He said he was 99.5 percent sure that guy's ship was still here.

Ku-Lei
(to himself)
Why .5?

Lu
Let's see...we're supposed to be looking for a navy blue ship with black wings and "K-1-2-G" written on the outside...there! That's gotta be it! C'mon Ku!

Ku-LEI
Wait hold on!

Lu runs over to a smaller navy blue transport ship.

Ku-LEI
Now how do we get in?

Lu
Orion said they left the ships unlocked. Let's hope that's still true...

Lu pressed a button on the side of the ship's entrance. The doors swing down, opening up a platform to enter the ship.

Lu
Alright. Let's see what we find.

Lu and Ku-Lei walk up the platform and enter the ship. They walk straight into a cluttered cockpit and begin looking around.

Ku-LEI
Do you know what we're looking for?

Lu
Anything. Holograms, memory disks, ID cards, whatever looks like it could be a clue.

Ku-LEI
Alright.

Lu
And while you do that I'm gonna try to turn this ship on and see if I can find his travel records.

Lu walks over to the main console and begins typing away. Ku-Lei rummages through trash strewn about the ship.

Ku-LEI
And Ar yells at me for having a dirty room. This place is gross.

Lu perks up from his stance at the console.

Lu
Hey I think I found something! Coordinate history! One of these is BOUND to be important! Maybe I can-

Voice (O.S.)
Hey, who the heck are you two?

Lu and Ku-Lei turn around to see a group of rough-looking men, JAGAR'S CREW, standing at the entrance of the ship. One steps forward ahead of the group.

JAGAR's crew member 1
What are you doing in our boss's ship?

Lu
We're um, we're from the nearby area. We heard about some ships being left unmanned nearby and decided to stop by to see if there was anything we can scavenge but if this ship belongs to you then my friend and I here'll just step out of your way-

Lu steps away from the console and grabs Ku-Lei by the arm. They begin to walk out of the ship but the main crew member blocks their path.

Jagar'S CREW MEMBER 1
Wait hold on kid. That scar on your face. You're one of the brothers the boss warned us about. The little Mileon brother. Lu Mileon. Ain't ya?

Lu tenses as the mention of his name. The lead crew member takes notice and grabs Lu by the arm.

Jagar'S CREW MEMBER 1
Oh so you are. Boss's orders were to capture you and your brother alive if we find you. Looks like you're coming with us.

Lu
Wait no! Hands off!

Ku-LEI
Let go of my friend!

Lu struggles to pry the Crew Member's grip from his arm but does not succeed. Ku-Lei jumps in and attempts to help.

Jagar'S CREW MEMBER 1
What you want in with your friend? Alright then. Guys grab the other one too.

Ku-LEI
What? Ah!

A couple of the other crew members come up from behind Ku-Lei and restrain him.

Lu
No let him go!

Lu attempts to struggle more but the lead Crew Member only tightens his grip.

Jagar'S CREW MEMBER 1
You fight too much for my liking. Think it's nap time for you kids.

The Crew Member lifts his hand and strikes Lu on the neck, causing the goggles on Lu's head to go flying. He signals for the other members to do the same with Ku-Lei. Both fall unconscious.

End of act 1

Act 2

Ext. casINO SHIPYARD. DAY.

Karon and Aza race through the casino shipyard searching for Lu and Ku-Lei.

Karon
Ugh where is he?

Aza
I told you, you shouldn't have yelled at him. Lu just wanted to help you find your mom. You should've let him.

Karon

He's helped enough. It's easier
for him to just stay here.

Aza
Easier for him? Or easier for you?

Karon stays silent a moment.

Karon
Let's just hurry up and find him.

Karon and Aza walk further into the shipyard. The sounds of a nearby commotion draw closer.

Karon
What is that?

Karon and Aza walk closer to the sound and see a group of Jagar's crew members surrounding his ship, unloading cargo.

Aza
Who are those people? That ship
they're unloading, think it's the
one we were looking for?

Karon
Yeah maybe...

Aza
Hey Karon? That thing on the
ground up ahead. Are those...?

Aza points ahead to the ground ahead of them. Karon follows with his gaze and sees Lu's goggles lying on the ground. Karon gets up and walks to them, picking them up with shaking hands.

Karon
These are...Lu's goggles.

Karon clutches his brother's goggles in one hand and reaches for his blaster with the other. He charges ahead to the group of Jagar's crew members in front of him, blaster drawn.

Aza
What-wait! Where are you going?

Karon
Hey! Where's my brother?!

The crew member's turn towards Karon as Aza comes running over.

Aza
(to herself)
I thought I was the one that always rushes in...

Jagar'S CREW MEMBER 2
What are talking about?

Karon holds out the goggles.

Karon
The kid that these goggles belonged to, where is he? What did you do to him?!

Jagar'S CREW MEMBER 2
Oh, I get it. You're that kid's brother aren't you? They said you might show up. Look, hate to break it you but your brother's long gone by now. We had orders to capture him and you. So if you could just put that blaster down, we can settle this nice and easy. I can reunite you with your brother and not have to do much work-

Karon
Give my brother back!

Karon fires at the crew member, cutting him off. The crew member dodges to the side.

Jagar's crew member 2
Ugh, that was close. Aww I didn't wanna have to fight more today. Thought I could go home and watch the newest Galati-cast of Family

Anti-Matters. But if I don't have a choice.

The crew member takes out a blaster and begins firing back at Karon. The other crew members follow suit. Karon continues firing while blasts fly past. Aza readies a fighting stance while Karon hits a few crew members. Aza glances in Karon's direction to see a crew member off to the side aiming straight for him. She runs over to him.

AzA
Karon get down!

Aza tackles him to the ground as the blast soars overhead.

Karon
Get off!

Karon pushes Aza off of him and struggles to his feet and rushes back into the fray.

Aza
(as Karon)
Wow you saved my life! Thank you so much Aza!

Aza rises to her feet and joins Karon. The two of them clear out most of Jagar's crew with ease. The lead crew member stumbles over as Karon shoots him in the shoulder. Karon walks up to him and points his blaster at him.

JagAR'S CREW MEMBER 2
Ugh, you're a lot stronger than I thought.

Karon
Now I'm gonna ask this again: Where is my brother?

End of act 2

Act 3

Int. Jagar's slave ship. Day.

Lu awakes to find himself on the floor of a holding cell. He pushes himself up slowly as he begins to examine his surroundings. Behind him, Ku-Lei, who had awoken earlier, notices his stirring.

Ku-LEI
Lu! You're awake!

Lu
Ku? Where are we?

Ku-LEI
A ship I think.

Lu
A ship?!

Lu gets up and runs over to the bars of the cell.

Ku-LEI
There's nobody out there. The hall's empty and there's no guards anywhere, trust me I looked. I really have no idea what ship we're in or where we are.

Lu
We're stuck here? Wait...

Lu reaches into his pockets.

Lu
Ugh, they took my remote bombs...

Ku-LEI
Oh man what am I gonna do about my sister? She's probably really worried about me. What if we never go home? I can't leave her alone.

Lu
Karon...and mom. What if...No. No, now's not the time for this. Gut instincts Lu. We gotta get outta here. Ku-Lei!

Ku-LEI
I was supposed to go to the market for her tomorrow. What if bad guys come back to Naviy and give her a hard time and I'm not there to help her? What if the diner goes out of business cause I'm not there to help her? What-

Ku-LEI
Huh?

Lu turns around to face Ku-Lei.

Lu
We're breaking out of here!

Ku-LEI
What? No! Are you crazy? We have no idea what's out there or how big this ship is! And if the people on here are as scary as the ones that kidnapped us-

Lu
Ku-Lei! Calm down! Look I'm scared too but right now my gut instincts are telling me we've gotta get outta here. So we have to think of a plan. You said you didn't see any guards pass by right?

Ku-LEI
No.

Lu
Okay.

Lu turns back to the bars again and presses his face against them. He strains to see as far down either side of the hall.

Lu
I don't see any security cams either. So all we have to do is

find a way out of this cell and we can sneak out!

Ku-LEI
You're really gonna try to escape?

Lu
Yeah of course! I'm not gonna let myself be afraid anymore. Besides Aza broke us out of a ship before. If she can do it, I can at least try! Now to find a way to get out of this cell...

Lu starts pacing around the cell, examining the whole structure.

Lu
I don't see any panels anywhere that I could hack so this is probably a mechanical cell. Which means the lock's probably controlled by a control station and we need a key to unlock it. Or maybe some sort of force strong enough to break the bars. But how...

Ku-LEI
I... I can help.

Lu
You can?

Ku-LEI
Yeah. If you really think you can get us out of here and back home then I trust you. I'll help.

Lu
Thanks Ku. But help how?

Ku-LEI
I can bend the bars.

Lu
What?

Ku-LEI
Just watch.

Ku-lei walks over to the cell bars and grabs two in either hand. With some effort he pulls the bars apart, creating a wide gap between them, large enough for the two to fit through.

Lu
Whoa! How'd you bend those bars apart? Do you have super strength?

Ku-LEI
Y-yeah... kinda...

Lu
Why didn't you say so sooner?

Ku-LEI
Well cause I don't like using it! Even back when we went to the casino, I was afraid I'd hurt somebody! I've broken lots of plates at the diner...

Lu
Well I think it's awesome! You should be more proud! Besides now we have a ticket out of here. I'm gonna be honest, I didn't really have an idea on how to get out so thanks Ku! Now let's go!

Lu walks out of the cell through the now open bars.

Ku-LEI
Wait you really didn't have any ideas? Oh man we're never getting out of here are we?

Ku-Lei follows Lu out of the cell and down the hall.

Lu
Okay now that we're out we need to see if this ship has any escape pods. I'm not that great a pilot

but if we need to hijack a ship too we can probably make do. But first things first, we need a layout of this place. If I can just find a place to get a map...

Ku-LEI
What about that?

Ku-lei points ahead to a room down the hall. The open door reveals a wall full of screens with surveillance footage.

Lu
Is that a surveillance room? That's perfect! Way to go Ku!

Lu taps Ku-lei on the shoulder and rushes to the surveillance room. Ku-lei smiles and follows along. Before entering the room Lu stops them both at the side of the entryway and peeks over into the room, making sure no one's inside. Once he sees the room's empty, Lu motions for the two boys to head inside. The two of them walk cautiously over to the wall of screens and begin scanning with their eyes.

Ku-LEI
That's a lot of screens. We're supposed to be looking for escape pods right? A ship hanger?

Ku-lei looks over to Lu for conformation but Lu's eyes are fixed to the screens.

Ku-LEI
Lu? What's wrong?

Lu
Look at the screens over here. Those are rows of cells...with people in them.

Ku-LEI
What?

Ku-lei walks over to where Lu is standing and examines the screens with him. They both stare in horror at the multiple screens full of live footage of several rows of cells. Each

packed with both alien and human life forms of various ages.

Lu
This isn't just a regular cargo ship. It's a trafficking ship. Like the one they put me and my brother on when they took us from our mom.

Jagar (V.O.)
Bravo kid. You're a smart one aren't you?

Lu and Ku-lei turn around to see the trafficker, Jagar standing in the entryway, accompanied by several of his crew members.

Lu
Jagar?!

Jagar
That's right. It's nice to see you again kid. Gotta say you and your brother are really good at causing me trouble. Escaping from me once, stealing from me, and now you're trying to escape again? You might be more gutsy than your big brother.

Ku-LEI
You know this guy Lu?

Lu
Yeah. He's the guy that took my brother and I away from our mom.

Jagar
Hey now remember what I told you last time. I didn't steal you away you two were GIVEN to me.

Lu
What difference does it make? You took us from our mom and were

gonna use us for whatever dirty work you needed right? Just like you're gonna do with everyone here!

Jagar
That's right. I am. Don't know what you're getting so worked up for. It's just business kid. That's just the way this whole universe works.

Lu
No it isn't! Nobody deserves to be trampled on by people like you! People deserve to be free and safe! Living happy lives with the people they love!

Jagar
Hmph. You know you and your brother impressed me kid. Figured if you could pull one over on me like you did back on Rehall, maybe I could use you in with my personal services. I even went through the effort of tracking down a list of my old patrons to see if I could figure out where your mom went for you.

Lu
What?

Jagar
But turns out I was wrong. You're just a kid with more lofty, naÃ¯ve ideals about the way life works. Still you can be useful somewhere else. Maybe a mining planet. We could always use more workers there.

Lu
Wait you figured out where my mom is?

Jagar
Sorry kid but you just lost your chance. You and your buddy belong to me now. And there's no way I'm letting you get away again. Men, take em in. And this time put them in a cell they can't break.

Jagar motions for his men to take action. They run over to Lu and Ku-Lei and put them in holds. They two kids try to fight back but are unsuccessful against their much larger opponents.

Ku-LEI
No!

Lu
Let us go! Jagar!

Jagar
See ya later kid.

Jagar waves goodbye to the boys as he walks out of the surveillance room.

End of act 3

Astro bandits 108 - Brothers pt. 2

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. Jagar's ship - secure cell. afternoon.

After being dragged from the surveillance room, Lu and Ku-Lei are tossed into a another cell, with bars much thicker than the last. The both fall to the ground as the guards close the cell doors, locking them in.

Ku-Lei
Ow!

Lu
Hey!

Guard 1
Try escaping again and Jagar's not gonna let you off so lightly.

The guards walk away as the two boys begin to gather themselves off the floor.

Ku-lei
Ow...that really hurt.

Lu
We're locked up again! Ku, think you can open these bars?

Ku-lei
Um, I dunno.

Ku-Lei stands up and walks over to the bars. He tries pulling them apart, like the other cell, but fails.

Ku-LEI
Ugh, no. These are too big.

Lu
Ugh, of course they are. We gotta get out of here.

Ku-lei
We're really gonna try to escape again?

Lu
Yeah. We're gonna break out of here. All of us.

Ku-LEI
All of us?

Lu
Yeah. Me, you, and everyone else trapped on this ship. I'm gonna break us all out.

Teaser end

Act 1

Int. Aza's ship. Day.

After gathering information from Jagar's crew, Aza and Karon left Aelsi. Karon pilots Aza's ship as she sits in the passenger seat in silence. After studying Karon for a minute she speaks up.

Aza
So this place we're going, the guy said it was a trafficker ship hub? What does that mean?

Karon
A coordination hub. They're large tower ships where traffickers and smugglers set up trades for all sorts of goods. The one we're heading to is owned by Jagar. And according to the guy we just beat up, Lu was taken away on Jagar's own personal freighter. So there's gotta be a way to contact that ship from that tower.

Aza
But that tower's where a bunch of trades happen right? Won't it be

crawling with hunters and other people?

Karon
Yeah. But we don't have a choice.

Aza
Even if we have to fight all of them?

Karon stays silent. Aza sighs.

Aza
We really don't, do we?

Karon
I used a hub tower like this to escape Jagar the first time. Snuck away with Lu in my arms and hid in a smuggled goods ship. Somehow nobody found us. And a day later we landed on Naviy.

Aza
So that's how you two ended up stuck there...

Karon
I was only 10 years old. But in a matter of days I lost my mom, almost got sold to a life of slavery, and ended up fully responsible for the life of my little one year old brother on some planet I had never even heard of.

Aza
You didn't have any help?

Karon
I met Q about a year after we got to Naviy. Her and her boss helped me out when they could. I owe them a lot. But still, for a long time it was just me and Lu. It's...hard

taking care of a kid. Especially when you're a kid yourself. Some days the only thing that kept me going was the promise I made to mom.

Aza
That you and Lu would find her?

Karon
Yeah. That was the last thing I said to her before they dragged us away. You know Lu doesn't even remember her. Lu's middle name, "Delora," that's...that's our mom's name. I gave it to him so he'd have some sort of connection to her. I just want him to met her. But he can't do that if he's hurt or...

Aza
Hey stop that! I promised Lu that I'd help you find your mom no matter what! Which means we're getting Lu and Ku-Lei back safe and sound! There's no time for doubt!

Karon
Yeah...

Aza
Now come on! We've got a hub tower to infiltrate! I'm your back up all the way!

Karon
(to himself)
Back up huh...thanks Aza.

Aza
What was that?

Karon

Nothing. Buckle up. We've got a hub tower to catch up to.

Int. Aza's ship. Afternoon.

After flying for about a few more hours, Aza and Karon see a large tower-shaped ship come into view. Several other smaller ships are docked on the tower's side. Karon and Aza slowly inch closer to the ship.

Aza
Is that the hub?

Karon
Yeah. It matches the tracking code the guy gave us. This one's a lot smaller than the one we escaped from as kids.

Aza
Good. Small's good right?

Karon
Yeah. Less people probably.

Aza
Okay then! Let's try getting closer. Maybe we can dock at the ship like everyone else and they'll just let us onboard.

Karon pushes the ship forward but before they can get too close, shots are fired at their ship.

Aza
They're firing at us already?! Why?!

Karon
One of Jagar's people probably told them we were coming. So much for the element of surprise. Hold on!

Karon spins the ship to the side as the tower continues to fire shots at them. He expertly dodges them all.

Aza
So what do we do now?

Karon
I'm gonna destroy those sentries on the tower before we bust in. Do the blasters on this ship work?

Aza
They should! But can you actually do this?

Karon
We're about to find out.

Karon pushes the ship closer to the tower, dodging the sentry blasts. A few scrap the ship as he nears the first sentry. Aza points at it.

Aza
Is that the sentry?

Karon
You mean the thing firing at us? Yeah. It is!

Karon fires at the sentry. It explodes.

Aza
Well it's not firing anymore. Nice job Karon!

Karon
Don't congratulate me yet. There's still more.

Karon pilots the ship to the other side of the tower. Two other sentries begin firing at the ship. Karon aims for one of them. The shot lands and the sentry explodes.

Aza
Nice! 2 out of 3!

Karon
Last one.

Karon speeds up towards the last sentry at the end of the tower. He moves the ship dangerously close to the tower's side as he barrels towards the sentry.

Aza
Hey...Kar? Aren't we a little too close to the tower?

KaroN
The sentries can't reach this close to their own ship's surface. The closer we are to the ship the less likely the sentry'll hit us.

Aza
Okay but now we're heading straight for the sentry!

Karon
Just trust me.

Aza
We're gonna crash into it!

Karon
No we're not!

At the last second Karon fires in close range, exploding the sentry. Karon pulls the ship back and takes a sharp turn away from the tower's surface into the outer atmosphere, clearing the explosion the sentry made.

Aza
Whoa! We're in the clear! Nice moves Karon!

Karon
Now we've gotta get in.

Karon begins moving the ship closer to the tower and finds an empty dock. He docks their ship and the two get up and head towards the ship door. Karon pulls out his blaster and Aza stands in a fighting position.

Karon

Get ready Aza. Once these doors open, we're in for a fight.

Aza
And this is one fight we're not gonna lose! Let's go Karon!

Int. Communication hub tower. afternoon.

Karon presses a button on the wall and the ship door opens revealing a crowd of miscellaneous bounty hunters, guards and men-for-hire surrounding the entryway.

Aza
Hi everyone! Sorry to intrude but this'll just be a quick visit I promise!

The tower inhabitants begin firing and running up to attack Karon and Aza. Aza blocks blaster shots with her powered hand and attacks with her other. Karon dodges and returns fire as it comes.

Karon
Aza! Head to the top floor! That's where the communications room should be!

Aza
Right!

Karon and Aza push through the attackers and up the floors of the tower. They make it to the top with very few scratches on them. Before they enter the communications room they both pause to look behind them. Their attackers lie in a trail of unconscious bodies up to them.

Aza
Huh. We cleared out this entire tower? That was easier than I thought. I got a lot better at blocking blasters with my powers. I should tell Mae.

Karon turns around and walks to the communications room door. He examines the panel to the side and realizes the door won't open.

Karon
Ugh, course the door's locked. Think you can melt it down or something?

Aza
Uh, yeah the whole door? Probably not.

Karon
Alright, I'll open it myself then.

Karon pulls the door panel off the wall and begins messing with the wires.

Aza
Wait I thought Lu was the hacker.

Karon
Hey, I can manage on my own. Besides this wall's mechanical anyway.

Aza
Hey, you had your blaster on stun this entire time right?

Karon
You're asking that now?

Aza
Well I just thought about it.

Karon
Yeah...Yeah I did. If you weren't here, I probably wouldn't have cared. But I...I didn't want you yelling at me.

Aza
Hm. Someone's going soft.

Karon
Shut up.

Karon pushes two final wires together, creating a spark. The door opens.

Karon
C'mon. We've got a ship to track.

End of act 1

Act 2

Int. Jagar's ship. night.

Lu and Ku-Lei are standing in their new cell. They're huddled close together discussing their breakout plan.

Lu
Okay so that's the whole plan. Do we need to go over it again?

Ku-LEI
No I got it. I think.

Lu
"I think" is good enough for me. Let's do this! Get into position. I'm gonna call the guard over.

Lu walks over to the cell bars as Ku-Lei crouches down in a fetal position on the floor. Lu pushes his face in between the bars as far as it can go and looks to the GUARD standing down the hall from them.

Lu
Hey excuse me, Mr. Guard sir. I think something's wrong with my friend here!

The guard turns to look at Lu before walking towards him.

Guard 1
What are you on about kid?

Lu
I think he needs medical help!
He's bleeding pretty badly from
his nose! Look at it!

The guard hesitantly leans down to look more closely at Ku-Lei.

Guard 1
What blood? I don't see any-

Ku-Lei
Why don't you look a little closer
sir!

As the guard becomes within grabbing distance of Ku-Lei, Ku-Lei reaches out and grabs the guard's head, pulling him hard against the bars. The guard falls to the floor, unconscious.

Ku-LEI
Really sorry about that sir.

Lu
Nice one Ku! He's really out cold!
Now lemme just get that keycard...

Lu reaches out to grab the guard's keycard from his belt. He runs over the side of the cell with lock and scans the card. The cell unlocks.

Ku-Lei
It's open!

Lu
It sure is!

Lu and Ku-Lei exit the cell.

Lu
Oh, hold on.

Lu reaches down and grabs the unconscious guard's stun blaster and bag.

Ku-LEI

You're taking the guard's blaster too?

Lu
We might need it. Now c'mon, if I'm remembering correctly, when they were dragging us here I saw the control room down that way. Let's go!

Ku-LEI
Right!

Lu and Ku-Lei begin running down the corridor. They turn a few corners before finding the control room. They stop in front of the door.

Lu
This is it! The control room!

Ku-Lei attempts to walk through the doors, but they don't open.

Ku-LEI
It's locked!

Lu
Not for long!

Lu scans they keycard on a panel on the side. The doors open.

Lu
Thanks, trusty keycard.

The two enter a control room filled wall to wall with various screens, similar to the surveillance room they were last in. They walk over to a console and begin examining it.

Ku-LEI
So now we've gotta unlock all the other cages? Do you know how?

Lu
Uh, well at the moment, no. But in a minute, I will!

Lu walks the length of the console, closely examining every panel.

Lu
Let's see....Oh! Here! It's gotta be this one-

Voice (O.S.)
Hey! How'd you two get out of your cell?

Lu and Ku-Lei turn around to see another guard standing at the entrance of the control room.

Ku-LEI
Uh oh.

Lu pulls out the stun blaster he took and points it at the guard. The guard looks Lu once over and smiles.

Guard 2
Heh, you're pointing a blaster at me kid? Don't tell me you think you can shoot that thing. Your hands are shaking.

Ku-lei
Lu what are you waiting for? Don't you know how to shoot?

Lu
Y-yeah I do! I-I just-

Guard 2
He can't. Boss warned me that you had a ruthless, scary brother. Looks like you're nothing like him.

Lu
No...no I'm not like him. I'm not strong like he is. I'm small and weak. I don't even think I can shoot you. But-

Lu fumbles with the handle on the blaster. He clicks a button and the stun charge falls out into his hand, sparking.

Lu
It's okay if I'm scared! I can beat you anyway!

Lu takes the sparking charge out and shakes it before throwing it at doorframe where the guard stands. The charge hits the frame and explodes. Lu tackles Ku-Lei to the ground as electricity extends from the blast radius, causing the guard to convulse slightly before falling to the ground unconscious.

Ku-LEI
Whoa! Lu what...what'd you do?!

Lu
Karon taught me that certain stun blaster cartridges can be used as stun grenades if you shake them up enough. So I thought I'd try it out.

Ku-LEI
Wait, was that your first time trying that?

Lu
Yeah. But it worked! When you can't fight your way out, use your brains! Now c'mon, we've got people to save.

Lu gets up off the floor and goes back to the button he had been hovering over before. He pushes the button down with his entire hand. An alarm sounds. Lu and Ku-Lei look at the surveillance cameras and see rows of cell doors open. The prisoners slowly step out. Guards come rushing over, but the newly freed prisoners refuse getting pushed back in their cells. A fight ensues.

Ku-LEI

The prisoners are fighting back against the guards!

Lu

There's no way they can hold all those prisoners back! This is perfect! All according to plan! Now one last thing to do here...

Lu walks to the other side of the console and starts pressing some buttons.

Ku-LEI

Are you sending the distress signal?

Lu

Yup. I'm using a special signal pattern Kar and I have for emergencies. If he sees this broadcast he'll definitely know it's me. And with everyone on board busy with the prisoners, hopefully no one'll notice I'm sending it out.

After finishing his typing, Lu turns away from the console and looks at Ku-Lei.

Lu

Alright, final phase. You ready?

Ku-LEI

Let's do it.

Lu and Ku-Lei rush to the doorway. Lu reaches down to take the guards blaster before the two run down the hall towards the main deck.

End of act 2

Act 3

Int. Communication hub tower - communications room. night.

Karon is sat in front of several large screens, searching through various files for information on Lu. Aza, illiterate with technology, stands behind Karon, visibly confused.

Aza
So I wanna say, I know what you're doing. But I don't. I don't know what you're doing.

Karon
I'm trying to track the ship that Lu's on but I can't seem to find it nearby. It hasn't made a single stop anywhere. I can try bouncing a signal off another communication tower to increase the range but-Ugh. We're never gonna find him at this rate!

Karon slams his fist down on the keyboard and lowers his head.

Aza
Whoa, hey, hey, hey, no use losing our cool now. I said we're gonna get our boys back and that's what we're gonna do. An Astro Bandit never gives up! There's gotta be another way...

After a moment of silence, one of the screens beeps. Both Karon and Aza look at the screen.

Aza
What's that?

Karon
A signal's being broadcasted by a ship. Maybe...

Karon presses a button allowing the signal. A distinct pattern of beeps begins playing.

Aza

What's with this signal? It's just beeping.

Karon
That's Lu! That's our distress signal!

Karon begins typing furiously.

Aza
Wait really? You guys made your own distress signal? Can you find him?

Karon
I just have to track the ship this signal's coming from-There! I got it! Hold on Lu! We're coming!

Int. jagar's ship - main deck. Night.

After running through the ship Lu and Ku-Lei reach the main deck. They run through the halls looking for the ship's control deck.

Ku-LEI
So the control deck's somewhere on this floor right?

Lu
Yeah, should be near the front of the ship. I hope. You remember our plan if we run into Jagar?

Ku-LEI
Yeah.

Lu
Good. Ok, this way.

Lu and Ku-Lei turn the corner, reaching a long hallway. Jagar stands down at the end, arms crossed. Behind him, the door to the control deck.

Jagar

There you are. You're giving me WAY more trouble than you're worth kid.

Lu
Jagar!

Jagar
This was just supposed to be a regular day of work. But now you've broken out twice, started a riot on my ship, and spread my men out thin. But that's fine. I can deal with getting you two under control by myself. And then we'll be on our way, and I'll sell you and everyone else on this ship off for big money.

Lu
There's no way we're letting you do that!

Ku-Lei
Yeah! No way!

Jagar
Kid, did you know you have an echo?

Ku-lei
I'm not an echo! I'm his friend!

Ku-Lei screams as he runs straight towards Jagar. Jagar stands still as Ku-Lei throws a punch. Jagar blocks it, with effort.

Jagar
Oof. So that's how you escaped that first cell.

Ku-Lei
Lu! Go! Get to the deck!

Lu
Right!

Lu runs past Jagar and Ku-Lei towards the control deck.

Jagar
You're a strong little echo, I'll give you that. But you're not strong enough.

Jagar tosses Ku-Lei to the side of the hall. Ku-Lei slams against the wall and falls to the floor. Lu turns around to look at him.

Ku-Lei
Argh!

Lu
Ku!

Jagar turns and begins walking towards Lu.

Jagar
You're up next Lu Mileon.

Ku-Lei begins struggling to get up.

Ku-LEI
Forget about me Lu! Keep going!

Lu
Okay!

Lu turns around and continues running down the corridor. Jagar follows after him.

Jagar
It's no use running Lu. You can't escape me. Not this time.

Lu
No! I'm not gonna let you get away with this!

Lu runs a few steps further before tripping and falling forward. He turns himself over as Jagar approaches him. From behind Jagar, Ku-Lei observes the two.

Ku-Lei

Lu!

Jagar stops in front of Lu, pulling out a small metal device used for branding from his pocket. He presses a button and the machine sparks. He laughs.

Jagar
Sorry kid. But I think it's way past time you follow in your brother's footsteps and get your own brand.

Jagar brings down the branding tool, closer to Lu's neck. Lu stares on in horror. Then smiles.

Lu
Ku! Now!

Ku-LEI
Okay!

Jagar
What?

Ku-Lei, now standing, pulls another stun blaster cartridge from his pocket. He shakes it and throws it as hard as he can at Jagar. The cartridge explodes, shocking Jagar with a large shockwave. Jagar screams in pain and then falls to the floor.

Ku-LEI
It worked! Our plan worked!

Lu
Nice one Ku! But we're not done yet! C'mon! We've gotta find a place to land this ship!

Ku-Lei helps Lu to his feet and they run to the control deck.

Int. jagar's ship - control deck. Night.

Lu and Ku-Lei walk into the control deck and head straight towards the pilot's station. Lu begins examining the screens.

Lu
Okay, let's see, where in the galaxy are we and where can we land?

Ku-LEI
Do you even know how to fly?

Lu
Well I've never tried. But there's a first for everything and we've had pretty good luck so far. Okay, there! That planet looks good! I would, uh, hold on to something if I were you.

Ku-LEI
Oh, uh, RIGHT!

Ku-lei screams as Lu takes the controls off auto-pilot and the ship lurches. Lu begins piloting the shaky large ship and heads for the nearby planet. The ship quickly breaches the planet's atmosphere, showing a forest planet, littered with trees. Lu closes in the distance to the surface.

Lu
Gonna pull an Aza and crash land. Hold on tight!

Ku-LEI
AHHHHH!

Lu crashes the large ship in an open field of trees. The ship skids several acres before screeching to a halt.

Lu
Huh...that went a lot better than I expected.

Ku-LEI
We...We're alive? Ha-ha-ha, We're alive!

Int. aza's ship. Dawn.

Karon and Aza breach the atmosphere of an unfamiliar forest planet. The tracker locked on to the distress signal beeps.

Aza
Is Lu really on this planet?

Karon
The tracker led us here so-wait!
There! That ship!

Karon flies their ship down to an apparent shipwreck. As they near the wreck they notice a large ship surrounded by fallen trees. Dozens of people stand outside the ship. They land in the clearing.

Ext. UnknOWN FOREST PLANET. dawn.

The second the ship touches the ground, Karon hops out of the pilot seat and exits the ship. Aza follows. They walk out into a sea of rescued prisoners. Karon and Aza run around, scanning for the boys.

Karon
Lu! Lu!

Aza
Lu, Ku-Lei! Where are you?!

Karon
Lu!

Lu
Karon?

Karon and Aza turn around to see Lu and Ku-Lei behind them.

Karon
Lu...Lu you're safe!

Karon runs over to Lu and hugs him. Aza does the same for Ku-Lei.

Aza
Thank the stars you're safe, Ku!

Ku-Lei cries.

Ku-Lei
Aza, you're here! You're really here!

Lu
(crying)
Kar, I-I'm sorry.I-

Karon
No. No, I'm the one that's sorry. I shouldn't have said you weren't strong enough. I mean look at all this.

Karon releases Lu and gestures to the ship and their surroundings.

Karon
I don't even know what to make of this. You're every bit of a troublemaker as I am. I'm proud of you little brother. And I'm just glad you're okay.

Lu smiles and wipes his tears.

Karon
But don't you ever do anything like this again.

Lu laughs.

Lu
You got it.

End of act 3

Astro bandits 109 - The Cap'n and Aza

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. Unifier headquarters - hallway. Day.

Aza, Karon and Lu are walking down a long hallway at the Unifier Headquarters, escorted by two Unifier guards.

Karon
Remind me again why we have to be here?

Aza
Look, I don't wanna be at Unifier Headquarters any more than you do but we single handedly took down a central trafficking hub and Lu sorta caught one of the galaxy's most wanted men. So yeah, makes sense why they'd want us here.

Lu
Yeah I understand.

Karon
We could've just said no to Orion. Or not shown up here at all.

Aza
You really hate the Unis don't you? Well, if we didn't show up, trust me, they'd spend forever tracking us down and trying to bring us here. And I'd rather not do more things to be on their "wanted" list. Besides, I need to stay on the Uni's good side for now. I might need their help finding the last two convertors. Speaking of...

Aza reaches into her pocket and pulls out the hologram. She opens the sides and Maerell appears.

Aza

Mae! Are any of the last two convertors nearby? If there is, we can head to one after this!

Maerell
I do have the coordinates to the next convertor, however there seems to be a strange presence in this facility as well.

Aza
A strange presence?

Karon
Wait since when did Mae get scanning features? I thought this thing was just a hologram?

Maerell
I have an elementary scanning feature as well.

Karon
You've never mentioned that before-

Lu
Guys! We're here!

Aza
Talk to you later Mae!

Aza collapses the hologram and places it in her pocket as they come to halt in front of two large doors, their Unifier escorts standing on either side. The officers open the doors, slowly revealing a large open hall. At the end of a hall, elevated by a large flight of stairs sits a middle-aged alien woman, the head Unifier GENERAL. To her side, stands Orion. On level ground, below the elevated platform stands two familiar figures.

Orion
Well, well, looks like the whole party's here.

The familiar figures turn around. Cap'n and Lez, turn to face Aza and the brothers.

Cap'n
Hi little one. Seems like you and your friends have been getting into all sorts of trouble lately haven't you?

Aza
Cap'n? Lez?

End teaser

Act 1

Int. UnIFIER HEADQUARTERS - audience hall. Day.

Aza and the brothers walk to the front of the audience hall where Cap'n and Lez stand. Orion and the Unifier General observe them from above.

Aza
What are you two doing here?

Lez
Well it seems like a little well-known Astro Bandit and her friends got caught at the center of yet another diplomatic incident.

Cap'n
And since you have apparently gotten the honor of joining me on the Unifier watch list, we got called in!

Aza
Wait, they *called* you in?

General
Unbeknownst to many, the Captain of the Astro Bandits and the Galactic Unifiers have been on somewhat...amicable terms. We communicate when necessary.

Cap'n
She means to say we're old friends. Isn't that right, General?

Aza
I didn't know this.

General
We're acquittances. And your Captain took an oath of secrecy. Now onto the matter at hand, you three...

The General gestures to Aza and the two brothers.

General
Aza of the Astro Bandits, brothers Karon and Lu Delora Mileon. You three, in addition to destroying an entire trafficking communication tower, have also successfully defeated a man the Galactic Unifiers have been unable to capture for many years. And for that...I must thank you.

Lez
A head officer of the law thanking a pirate. Never thought I'd see the day.

General
As a token of the Galactic Unifier's appreciation, if you three have any requests you think our organization can fulfill, we will grant them.

Lu
We're getting rewarded? Cool!

Karon
Actually yeah, there's something we could use your help with.

General
And what would that be?

Karon
Well it's something I've already been working on with your Captain over there.

General
Oh?

Karon
My brother told me that Jagar possibly has some information we need. About the location of a certain...someone.

Orion
Oh does he?

Karon
I want you to let Orion see if he can get Jagar to talk.

Orion
I've been told I'm a pretty great conversationalist. You got it.

General
And may I ask what this "something" you've been working on with our Captain is?

Karon
Sorry but I can't tell you. More like I won't. No offense, but I don't trust your organization. Back when my brother and I were stranded on Naviy, I tried reaching out to nearby officers for help. But they all turned a blind eye to our situation and the rest of the crime on that planet. Orion's the only Uni I know that's actually been somewhat useful. So

he's the only one that gets to know.

General
The Galactic Unifiers do their best to tame crime across the galaxy-

Karon
Well your best obviously isn't good enough.

Aza
Yeah, I mean I get away with lots of things that you Unis don't catch.

Lez
I don't think that's something you should be bragging about...

General
Alright, as you wish Karon. I'll allow Orion to carry out whatever interrogation you wish. Is there anything else I can grant you all?

Aza
I have a request too!

Aza reaches into her pocket and pulls out the hologram. She shows it off to the General. The General and Orion visibly stiffen at the sight of it.

Aza
I stole- uh, found this hologram on one of your ships. Apparently this is a relic of my culture. A people known as the Architects. You wouldn't happen to know anything about them, would you?

General
I...I can't say that we do. However, I believe that thing you are holding is Unifier property.

I'll have to ask you to return it to us.

Aza

What? No! This was made by my people, if it belongs to anyone, it belongs to me. Wait, you do know something, don't you?

General

I said I do not. Now, I'm going to ask again, will you return this relic to the Galactic Unifiers?

Aza

No, I won't.

Aza pulls the hologram into her arms and glares at the General.

Lez

Aza maybe you should-

The General sighs.

General

Fine, have it your way. You can keep it for the time being I suppose.

Orion

Boss are you sure that's-

General

I've made my decision Orion. Now is there any last requests you all have? Lu?

Lu

I only want the information Jagar has.

General

Alright. If that's all then Astro Bandit Captain and First Mate-

Cap'n

Yes, General?

General
Keep these three out of trouble. This fiasco may be excused because of its impact, but other meddling in official Galactic Unifier affairs may no be so easily forgiven. For the sake of your organization, keep these three under control. Understood?

Cap'n
Yes ma'am.

Lez
Yes, of course General.

General
Alright, then that is all. You're all dismissed. Guards escort them out please.

The General gestures to the guards standing on either side of the room. The guards move forward as they motion for Aza and friends to vacate the room. They exit.

Int. unifier headquarters - hallway. Day.

Aza, Cap'n, Lez, and the brothers all stand outside the audience hall.

Lu
Well that was a short talk. You think Orion will be able to get Jagar to tell us where mom is?

Karon
I hope so.

Aza
Hey did anyone else think the General and Orion's reactions to me having this hologram were weird? They definitely know something.

Cap'n
The General and I have known each other since I was just a young solo pirate and she was just a new Unifier recruit. She can hold onto secrets very well so unfortunately If she knows anything I'd doubt she'd tell you.

Aza
Hm. Well it looks like I'll have to stick to my original plan of finding the convertors myself.

Aza opens up the hologram to speak to Maerell.

Aza
Hey Mae? What were those coordinates to the nearest convertor?

Cap'n
Well this is the first time I get to see this hologram working in-person.

Lez
Me too. This is unlike anything I've seen. What amazing technology...

Aza
It's pretty neat isn't it! The coordinates Mae?

Maerell
The nearest convertor is located on the planet Quaren.

Aza
Quaren huh? Alright boys, you ready to go?

Cap'N
Wait, I think I'll come with you all this time.

Aza
Really?

Cap'n
It's been a while since I took a trip away from the main ship. Besides, it's been even longer since I've gone on an adventure with you Aza! Lez, think you can hold down the fort for a while?

Lez
Well I can but Cap'n, maybe you shouldn't make such rash decisions-

Cap'n
Good then it's settled! I leave the Bandits in your capable hands Lez! Now come on you three, adventure awaits!

Aza
Yeah!

Lez
What am I gonna do with those two...

Cap'n pats Aza and Karon on the shoulders as they all walk away from Lez.

End of act 1

Act 2

Int. Aza's ship. Day.

Aza, Cap'n and the brothers sit inside Aza's ship as they near the outer atmosphere of Quaren.

Karon
Ok, here we are. The planet Quaren.

Lu
Looks pretty...swampy.

Cap'n
Those trees look pretty dense, don't they kid? Think you can handle the landing okay?

Karon
Yeah. Think I can.

Karon brings the ship closer to the planet's surface. They near a growing swamp landscape with large trees filled with vines. Karon looks around for a place to land and spots a clearing.

Karon
Okay, that looks like a safe place.

Aza
There's a lot of vines on the trees nearby. Don't let em catch on the ship's wings.

Karon
I know what I'm doing. Besides, I don't think anyone should take your flying advice.

Aza
Hey!

Karon flies the ship closer to the ground. After a moment, the ship lurches to the side as a wing becomes caught on some tree vines.

Lu
What was that?

Aza
"I know what I'm doing," he says.

Karon
Urgh, it's just a little caught on some vines. I got this.

Cap'n
Hey, kiddo, mind passing me the controls? I'm pretty good at flying you know.

Karon
What?

Aza
Don't be so modest Cap'n. You're one of the best fighter pilots in the entire galaxy! If anyone can land us safely you can!

Karon
Well, I don't-

Lu
Don't be stubborn Kar, let him help!

Karon
Ugh, okay fine. It's all yours.

Karon stands up from his pilot seat and allows Cap'n to take his place. Cap'n grabs hold of the controls.

Cap'n
Now, hold on kids and watch a pro at work!

Cap'n deftly untangles the ship from the forest vines and moves forward. He skillfully weaves his way between all other hazards.

Lu
Whoa! That's some flying!

Cap'n
This is nothing! You should've seen me in my prime!

Aza
The best fighter pilot pirate on this side of the galaxy! That's our Cap'n!

Cap'n flies the ship forward to the clear landing and successfully lands.

Cap'n
And that's how you land a ship in tough terrain! Were you watching closely Aza?

Aza
'course I was Cap! I never miss a lesson of yours! What about you Mr. Expert Pilot?

Aza looks at Karon.

Karon
Uh, yeah, saw it all. Thanks for the landing.

Cap'n
Don't mention it! I'd be happy to teach you more anytime. But right now we've got a convertor to find right little one?

Aza
Yeah! Let's go!

Cap'n and Aza stand up and begin to exit the ship.

Lu
Wow it's like there's two Azas.

Karon
Oh boy, this'll be fun.

Karon and Lu follow.

Ext. Quaren swamp. day.

Aza, Cap'n, and the brothers all exit the ship and walk out into a dense swamp. Aza attempts to examine her surroundings but the dense trees and vines cloud most of her view. She pulls out Maerell.

Aza
Hey, Mae. We're here at Quaren. Do you have any information about where on this planet the convertor might be?

Maerell
The exact coordinates for the shrine where the convertor is located are not too far from here. You should be able to make the journey on foot if you head north.

Aza
Okay cool! Thanks Mae. One step closer to finding out more about my people. Let's go!

Aza places Maerell in her pocket and motions for the boys to follow her. They proceed north through the swamp, Aza and Cap'n ahead of the two brothers.

Cap'n
You know, Aza, while I'm glad you're finding out more about your past, we do miss you back home.

Aza
I miss everyone too! It's been a while since I was away from the ship for this long. But hopefully I can find these last two convertors and bring back my home planet real fast!

Cap'n
Do you really think you'll be able to do that?

Aza
I think so! Mae said there was a way. And I believe her. I don't see why she'd be programmed to lie. Ah, just thinking about maybe getting to see my birth parents

and other people like me just gets me so excited!

Cap'n
I'm very happy that you're excited. You've been searching for the truth for so long, it's about time you get rewarded. But, please never forget, you have a family with the Astro Bandits too. Always have and always will.

Aza
Oh, yeah of course! I know! The Bandits have always been my family but... I guess I just wanted something a little different. A real-, uh well a different family. People that look like me and can do the things I do.

Cap'n reaches down to pat Aza on the head.

Cap'n
Don't be too greedy, little one. That's how a lot of good pirates fall you know? Don't wanna end up in that Unifier slammer.

Aza
Pfft, please no jail cell can hold a Bandit for too long!

Cap'n and Aza laugh as Karon and Lu watch from behind.

Lu
Wonder what they're laughing about.

Karon
Who knows.

Lu
They seem real close. Think I can be like that with Mom?

Karon

Yeah. Yeah of course you can.
She's not gonna be able to help
but love you.

Lu
Okay. Cool. Cool.

Lu smiles before looking around to examine his surroundings.

Lu
Oh, whoa what's that?!

Lu points towards a nearby tree and runs over. He comes up to a bright red flower and takes a closer look at it.

Lu
Whoa, Kar look at this flower!
It's huge!

Karon
Yeah, it sure is.

Karon walks over to join Lu. He doesn't realize a vine on the floor of the swamp is moving on its own, closer to him.

Lu
Hey think we should be picking up
souvenirs on our adventures to
show to Mom? I think she'd like
that.

Karon
Yeah, that seems like a good idea.
Maybe we-whoa!

The vine that was following Karon grabs him by his ankles. Karon is pulled into the air upside down and wrapped with more vines, restrained.

Lu
What? Kar-Ahh!

More vines appear from the tree nearest Lu and restrain him just as they did his brother.

Lu

Ahhh! Aza! Cap'n!

Aza and Cap'n turn around to witness Lu and Karon hanging upside down among the trees.

Aza
Guys? What happened? How'd you all get up there?! What are you doing upside down??

Karon
These vines, they're alive. They're-uh, behind you!

Aza and Cap'n turn around. Two large green swamp creatures emerge from the trees.

Cap'n
Well it looks like we angered some swamp monsters. But this is nothing we can't handle, right Aza?

AzA
You bet we can! An Astro Bandit-

Cap'n
-never loses a fight!

Aza
Hold on tight boys! This'll be fast.

Aza and Cap'n ready their fighting stances as the swamp creatures roar.

End of act 2

Act 3

Ext. Quaren swamp. Day.

Aza and Cap'n rush forward towards the two swamp creatures. Without showing much effort, Aza's face marks and hands

began to glow. She punches one of the swamp monsters in the legs, causing its vined legs to begin dissolving.

Aza
Hah! No monster's a match for my new powers! Man, I've gotten SO much better at using them.

Cap'n
Don't think that just because you have those fancy powers of yours that you're a better fighter than me little one!

Cap'n runs up to the other swamp monster and punches it in the leg twice. It stumbles and falls forward.

Cap'n
Your best teacher's still got it!

Aza
Nice one Cap'n! But watch this!

Aza jumps up, kicking the unstable swamp creature in front of her. The creature falls to its side. She jumps on top of its back, and slams her fists down on the back of its head. The swamp creature comes crashing to the ground and remains motionless.

Cap'n
Impressive! Now watch your old man work!

Cap'n runs to the other side swamp creature in front of him and punches its other leg. The creature falls forward further. Cap'n circles around to where its head is located and begins throwing a series of punches. He punches one last time and the creature goes limp.

Cap'n
How's that?!

Aza
Not bad, not bad! Still think my powers make me way cooler though.

Cap'n

That they do. You've become a great fighter, Aza. Those punches were precise and clean. I'm proud of you.

Aza
Thanks Cap'n! I learned from the best!

Karon
Um, hey!

Aza and Cap'n turn their heads towards Karon and Lu, as they continue to hang from the trees.

Karon
I'm glad you guys are having fun. But we're still stuck here.

Lu
Yeah, please don't leave us hanging. Literally.

Aza
Oh sorry guys! Uh hold on, Cap can I use your dagger? I'll climb up and cut em down, you catch em?

Cap'n
Sure thing, kiddo.

Cap'n reaches to pull out his dagger and hands it to Aza. Aza rushes over to the nearby trees and climbs. She cuts both Karon and Lu down, with Cap'n catching them both as they fall. Aza climbs back down to join them.

Karon
Okay, I never wanna do that again.

Lu
Oh, Aza when I was up there I thought I saw a wide open area past those trees ahead! The convertor might be there!

Aza

Oh wow nice going Lu! Okay guys, straight ahead it is then!

Aza marches forward with the boys following her. They climb over the trees to find a wide open area. Below their feet stands a rock platform with Architect symbols. In the center of the rock platform is a large empty indent, the size and shape of all the mass convertors Aza and the brothers have previously seen.

Lu
Whoa, what's this?

Aza
The floor...those are Architect symbols. Like the ones on the convertors.

Karon
Yeah, but where's the convertor?

Lu
And what's with that giant hole in the ground?

Aza reaches into her pocket and pulls out Maerell.

Aza
Mae, I think we found where the convertor should be but...it's not here. There's just this *hole*.

Maerell
The Convertor on this planet should be at these exact coordinates. But yes, you are right, it does seem to be missing. I do not sense its presence here either.

Aza
Where could it have gone...?

Maerell
If I may, the presence I felt at the Unifier Headquarters, it felt strong and incredibly familiar.

Karon
What are you saying Maerell?

Aza
The convertor...it's at the Headquarters. The Unifiers took it.

End of Act 3

Atro Bandits 110 - The Galactic unifiers

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. Astro bandit main ship. afternoon.

Aza, the brothers, Cap'n and Lez are all walking through the halls of the Bandit ship, heading towards Aza's room.

Aza
I'm telling you Lez, I know it's there! I know the Unifiers have one of the mass convertors at their main base. They know a lot more about the Architects then they're letting on.

Lez
You don't really have proof of that.

Aza
Mae said there was a presence similar to the convertor at the base.

Lez
That still doesn't prove the convertor's there. And since when has that thing had a sensor in it?

Karon
Yeah, I was wondering about that too.

Aza stops walking as they reach her bedroom. She turns around to face everyone.

Aza
Look the scanner doesn't matter, I found this hologram on a Unifier ship anyway. They obviously know something and they only way I'm

gonna get answers is if I go to them and ask!

Cap'n
Aza, the General won't tell you anything. She's the most steadfast woman I know, even more than you. And besides, we promised to keep you out of any major trouble for a while.

Aza
Since when have you been one to follow orders? You're a pirate captain!

Cap'n
Since it concerns your safety. Look, I know you want answers little one, but I don't think this is the way to get them. Why don't you all turn in for the night and we'll talk more about this tomorrow.

Cap'n reaches down and pats Aza on the head.

Aza
Ugh...fine.

Cap'n
That's a good pirate! C'mon, Lez.

Lez
Yessir. Just- Karon, Lu, c'mere a sec.

Lez motions for Karon and Lu to come closer to him. They huddle together.

Lez
(whisper)
Watch out for her will you? I think she trusts you two more than she does us now.

Lu

Sure thing!

Karon
Uh, yeah. Sure.

Lez
Thank you.

Lez stands back up and walks to join Cap'n down the hall. The boys turn back to Aza as she enters her room. The boys follow.

Aza
Can you believe them? We're a bunch of pirates! We're made to stir up trouble! Why are they trying to stop me?

Lu
I think they're just looking out for you.

Aza
We do dangerous things all the time and now they start worrying?

Lu
Well, Cap'n said that even if you confront the General she probably wouldn't tell you anything anyway.

Aza
So then I'll sneak in. We've done it before.

Lu
That's doesn't sound like-

KaroN
You know I hate to say it, but I'm with her.

Lu
Kar!

Karon

Look I do have a bad feeling about that hologram of yours. But you know how I feel about the Unis. I trust them even less. It's obvious they're hiding something and that no matter what we say you're gonna sneak in anyway. So why fight it? We're going with you. That's what teams do yeah?

Aza
Yeah...Yeah a team! Alright, another break-in! Sweet!

Lu
Oh boy...

End of teaser

Act 1

Ext. unifier headquarters. Evening.

After landing outside the Unifier Headquarters, Aza and the brothers sneak up to the maintenance entrance. They huddle around the door. Aza studies the panel by the entrance.

Lu
Wow I can't believe we're back here again. It hasn't even been a day!

Karon
Yeah me either. Even though this was partially my idea. Still, lifes moves fast with this one around doesn't it?

Karon points at Aza.

Aza
You say that like it's bad thing! I just like to live life like it's a big adventure! Isn't that more fun?

Lu
Yeah. Yeah it is.

Aza
Ok, Lu, looks like this door is locked. Think you can get it open?

Lu
Can I? CAN I? That's no question for a master hacker like me!

Lu walks over to the door and begins working away at it. After a few seconds the door slides open.

Lu
Ta-da!

Aza
Nice job!

Aza walks into the door.

Karon
You're getting faster at that Lu.

Lu
I am aren't I? Guess I've had lots of practice recently.

Karon and Lu enter the building after Aza.

Int. Unifier headquarters hallway. Evening.

As the boys enter the maintenance hall, Aza reaches into her pocket to bring out the hologram. She opens it and Maerell appears.

Aza
Ok, Mae, so there's not a lot of time to explain everything, but me and the boys came back to the Unifier Headquarters. Do you still sense that weird presence here?

Maerell

Yes, it is still present. In fact, it seems much closer than before.

Aza
Okay, good. Think you can lead us to it if I keep you out?

Maerell
I can attempt.

Aza
Well, lead the way Mae!

Maerell
I believe you should head straight down this hallway.

Aza leads as the crew walks down the hallway.

Karon
So Maerell, just how advanced is your scanning feature?

Maerell
As I said, it is an elementary feature. Only attuned to picking up Architect technology.

Karon
Only Architect technology huh? So how'd you know we were in a hallway?

Aza
Karon is now really the time for this? Mae's trying to lead me.

Karon
C'mon, I know I'm not the only one that thinks Maerell is a little fishy. She seems pretty advanced for just hologram technology.

Lu
Well, some holograms can sense surroundings better than others! And we still haven't seen a lot of

other Architect stuff at work so may this one's just really advanced?

Maerell
Yes, it's as Lu said. We have incredibly advanced holographic technology.

Karon
How nice of you to answer after Lu explained for you.

Maerell
Aza, turn left here.

Aza
Sure thing. And Kar, keep it down will you? Just because the maintenance crew probably doesn't work nights doesn't mean there won't still be people here. We don't want a repeat of our first breakout.

Karon
Why are you scolding me? You're the one who's default voice volume is screaming.

Aza
(loud)
I do NOT always scream.

Karon
Case in point.

Aza
Soon as we get out of here I'm gonna punch you real good.

Karon
I think I'll pass. Doesn't sound real fun.

Aza
You can't pass that!

Lu
What happened when I was gone? You guys seem a lot closer now!

Aza
We do not!

Karon
We do not!

Lu laughs.

Maerell
Aza, make one more left and the room should be on your right.

Aza
Okay!

Aza and the brothers follow Mae's instructions. They eventually reach the door to a storage room.

Aza
Is this it Mae? This storage room?

Maerell
Yes, I can sense a strong presence coming form inside.

Karon
Seems to be locked. I got it this time.

Karon walks over to the panel on the side of the door. After fiddling for a few moments, the doors slide open revealing a dark room.

Aza
Okay...let's hope it's in here...

Aza and the boys cautiously enter.

End of act 1

Act 2

Int. Unifier headquarters storage room. Evening.

Aza and the boys enter a large dark storage room. A dim light shines at far end of it.

Lu
Sure is dark in here.

Karon
Yeah...there a light anywhere?

Karon walks over to the wall and begins searching for a light switch.

Aza
Mae, the convertor, do you sense it?

Maerell
Yes, it is in this room. Straight ahead, toward the far wall.

Aza
Alright, well might as well turn it on.

Aza walks toward the dim light and begins to make out the silhouette of a mass convertor, vines still wrapped around its structure.

Aza
Yup, that's it alright. Okay, now I don't think I need light to turn it on do I?

Aza holds Maerell in one hand while she places her other on the convertor structure. She closes her eyes, her face marks glow, and the machine shines in response.

Karon
Oh, here it is.

Karon finds the light switch in the room and presses the switch, revealing a room full of Architect ruins and memorabilia. Multitudes of shelves full of small artifacts

line the sides of the room with larger artifacts scattered across the floor. Aza opens her eyes and turns around to take it all in.

Lu
Whoa...what is all this?

Aza
Architect...artifacts...

Karon
All of this? The room's full of 'em.

Aza
Mae...are all these real?

Maerell
Yes, as far as I can tell. I sense everything here belongs to us Architects. All these artifacts may be responsible for the strong presence I sensed.

Aza
Why...how did they get all this?

Aza wanders around the room, examining every shelf.

Karon
They must've spent years collecting these things. No way they got all this overnight.

Aza
But if it took them years to collect all this, then they must've known who I was. The General, maybe Orion. They must've known who my people were. So then why are they trying to hide it?

Maerell
Now that you've activated the third convertor I suppose I can offer one other truth. The Galactic Unifiers of 300 years ago

were directly responsible for the obliteration of our people.

Aza
What?

Maerell
They were opposed to many of our technological and even medical advancements. They fought tooth and nail to keep us silenced. But in the end, we proved too much of a threat. So they eradicated our planet.

Aza
Eradicated?

Orion (o.S.)
Oh, boy. You weren't supposed to see this. What a mess.

Aza and the brothers turn around to see Orion, leaning against the entrance doorway to the storage.

Aza
Orion...

End of act 2

Act 3

Int. Unifier headquarters storage room. Evening.

Aza and the brothers stare down Orion as he leans against the doorway.

Aza
Orion, what is all this?

Orion
Ah, see well the thing is, all this-

Aza

Don't lie to me Orion. These are all real Architect artifacts, aren't they?

Orion hesitates to answer.

Orion
Yes...yes they are.

Aza
Did you know these were all here?

Orion
I...well you know I'm only a Captain, I'm not privy to a lot of information-

Aza
Did you know Orion?

Orion
(sighs)
Yeah...yeah I did. Man it's really hard to lie to you isn't it? I was told about all this back when I first met you.

Aza
By who?

Orion
Only the General and I know. She wanted to make me aware after I met you, since I now knew of your existence. The last of the Architects.

Aza
You knew I was the last of my kind?

Orion
Yeah, well we don't know if you're the last of your kind but it's possible others survived the explosion.

Aza
Explosion?!

Orion
Ugh, man maybe I DO talk to much...

Aza
What explosion?

Orion
The explosion that destroyed your planet, wiped out your people. Listen I heard what your hologram said before I walked in. I don't where it got its information from but the Unifier organization back then was very different from now and made lots of questionable decisions-

Karon
Hold on, so you're saying that Maerell was right? The Unifiers are responsible for the death of the Architects?

Orion
Well, yes, I mean, no, not really, WE aren't but it's-

Aza
So it's true?!

Orion
Look Aza, calm down and let me explain-

Aza
And you've known all this since you met me?!

Orion
Aza-

Aza

And you didn't once think to tell me?! Why?! I thought we were friends!

Orion
I was sworn to secrecy. I know I seem like I don't care about my job but I took an oath. I have a duty to uphold.

Aza
There must be a lot of secrets you guys keep hidden. I get why Karon doesn't like you all now.

Orion
Aza, look I'm sorry, why don't we just-

Aza
No! I don't want to hear anything else from you!

Orion
Just come with me and-

Aza
No!

Without much thought, Aza's face marks and hands begin to glow as she swings her free hand out in front of her. A blast of energy releases from her hands and flies towards Orion. Orion dodges and falls to the ground as the energy blast makes direct contact with the doorframe. The doorframe melts upon impact. Nobody moves as they attempt to examine the situation.

Lu
What-what was that? Was that you Aza?

Aza
I...I think it was. I didn't know I could do that.

Orion
That...that could've killed me.

Aza
Orion I'm-

Karon
Aza, we can't stay here anymore. We've gotta go. C'mon Lu.

Lu
Yeah!

Karon grabs the still-shocked Aza by her free arm and begins pulling her forward. The two, along with Lu, begin running towards the doorway. Orion starts to get up to stop them.

Orion
Guys wait-

Karon
Sorry but no!

Karon slams into Orion with his shoulder, launching him to the side. Orion trips and falls as the three keep running down the hall. Karon eventually lets go of Aza's hand. Aza holds Maerell back up.

Aza
Mae, that energy blast that melted the door. Did that come from me?

Maerell
Yes, some more powerful Architects have been known to utilize our abilities for combat purposes as well.

Karon
Aza, you can talk more to Mae later! Focus!

Aza
Uh right! Sorry!

Aza folds Maerell back up and places the hologram in her pocket. The three continue running back in the direction they came. Soon they hear footsteps from behind them.

Unifier guard 1 (o.S.)
Stop right where you are!

Aza and the brothers turn to see several UNIFIER GUARDS chasing them down the corridor.

Karon
Sorry! Not in the mood to get caught by a bunch of Unis again!

Still running, Karon reaches to pull out his blaster and begins firing behind them. The guards begin to fire back. Aza blocks a few with her powered hands. After a few misses, Karon's blasts land and the guards fall. The three keep running.

Lu
Why do I feel like we're always running from something?

Karon
That's cause we are. C'mon, we're almost there.

The three eventually reach the maintenance entrance. They begin to run through the doorway.

General (o.S.)
Aza! Wait!

Aza and the brothers turn around to see the General with Orion and several Unifier Officers standing down the hallway.

General
Aza, I can understand why you're upset. But if you'll come with me and allow me to explain-

Aza
No offense General, but no amount of explanation could ever justify all the secrets that you've kept from me.

General

There are valid explanations as to why we-

Aza
I don't trust your explanations. I'd rather hear what Maerell has to say.

General
Maerell? The Hologram? You'll ask a program for answers before us?

Aza
I trust her way more than I do you all right now.

General
Don't forget the agreement we made with your Captain this morning.

Aza
How could I forget. As far as I'm concerned, any actions I take after this are my own, not the Bandits.

General
Aza-

Aza
Goodbye General. Karon.

Aza makes eye contact with Karon. Karon immediately understands what she wants.

Karon
Right.

Karon lifts his blasters and aims at the General. The Unifier Guards raise their blasters but before they can act, Karon switches targets to the light fixture on the wall. He fires at the fixture and it explodes. The guards, General and Orion duck while Aza, Lu and Karon run out the door back towards their Aza's ship.

End of act 3

Astro bandits 111 - family

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. Astro bandits ship - lez's room. evening.

Lez is sitting in his room, a hologram communicator out and open at his desk. Orion's face is projected.

Lez
And that's why Aza is upset with you and the General?

Orion
Yeah. Look you know, I'm good at keeping secrets, a little too good in fact. But being a chatterbox is my true nature. There was so many times where I wished I could tell her. I wanted to tell you too.

Lez
Well gee, I'm flattered.

Orion
You're welcome. But I watched Aza trace bread crumbs for years, tracking down truths that she never knew existed. And I couldn't give her any hints. Or tell her anything.

Lez
Well, lucky for you Aza's pretty forgiving. Just give her some time. She'll come around.

Orion
Aw, thanks. I knew I could count on you to console me.

Lez scoffs.

Lez
That wasn't really my intention. But I had another reason for calling you. A request.

Orion
Okay, fire away.

Lez
I want a closer analysis of Aza's hologram. You said she was talking to Maerell while in your Headquarters right? Is there any way you can analyze the outgoing transmissions coming from your headquarters during the time that she was there?

Orion
Well, well great minds really do think alike. I've also been thinking something's a little fishy with that hologram. There's no way they could've found that room without having a map of our building or some sort of real time search mechanism. Don't tell me, you're also thinking Maerell's not just some hologram?

Lez
Yes, I am. And that's why I'm worried. So, can you do it?

Orion
I sure can. Just add it on to the list of things I'm already doing for that wild bunch of kids.

Lez
Thanks, Orion.

Orion
Anything for you Lez! Maybe you can make it up to me by coming over for dinner! The General says I'm good enough to be professional chef-

Lez

Sorry, gonna have to cut you off there. I've have to some business to attend to.

Orion
Hm, what a shame. What business?

Lez
Aza's birthday banquet.

End of teaser

Act 1

Int. Astro bandits ship -hallway. Evening.

Karon and Lu walk down the hallway of the Astro Bandits ship toward the distant sound of a party in the banquet room.

Lu
I can't believe Aza forgot about her birthday!

Karon
Well we've been pretty busy. But doesn't she seem like the type to forget her own birthday anyway?

Lu
Ha ha, yeah. I'm really glad they're throwing a banquet for her though! She's been pretty upset the past couple days after the whole Uni thing. It doesn't feel right seeing someone who's always so happy be just...sad.

Karon
Yeah. It doesn't feel right does it?

Lu

Nope. So let's do our best to be there for her and cheer her up! 'kay?

Karon
Ha, sure.

Lu
Alright! Party time! I've been looking forward to another banquet since the last one! C'mon Karon!

Lu begins running down the hall towards the banquet room.

Karon
Hold on Lu, wait for me!

Int. Astro Bandits ship - banquet hall. Evening.

Karon chases after him. Once Karon catches up, Lu opens the doors to the banquet hall revealing a mass of Astro Bandits mingling and eating together. Lively, instrumental music comes from a small band of Astro Bandits playing in the corner of the room. Cap'n, who stands at the center of the room, notices Lu and Karon by the open doors.

Cap'n
Ah! Boys! You've made it!

Lu
Hi Cap'n!

Karon
Thanks for inviting us.

Cap'n
Well of course! You're friends with our Aza, you're staying in our ship, why you two are practically part of the Bandits already!

Lu
Really?!

Cap'N

You sure are! You know, you two have long since proved yourselves to be trustworthy and loyal individuals. We would be honored to have you both as official members of the Astro Bandits, if you would like.

Karon and Lu exchange glances before Karon looks back at Cap'n.

Karon

We appreciate the offer Cap'n but Lu and I are still searching for our mother. And once we find her...well, we'd like to take her some place safe. Maybe live there. Who knows.

Cap'n

Well even after the time to decide comes, this offer will always stand. Just like Aza calls this place home, this could be a home for you too.

Lu

Oh yeah, where IS Aza?

Lez (o.S.)

She's finished getting ready and is on her way.

Karon and Lu turn around to see Lez walking to join their conversation.

Cap'n

So she's finally ready!

Lu

Ready for what?

Lez

You'll see in a minute. C'mon.

Lez begins to guide the two boys to the side of the rooms as Cap'n walks further towards the center and raises his hands.

Cap'n
(shouting)
Bandits! The star of our banquet is on her way! Everyone take your seats for the dance!

The Bandits cheer in excitement as they clear the center of the room and take their seats on the floor lining the sides of the hall. Lez, Lu, and Karon do the same. Cap'n walks to join them.

Lu
Dance?

Lez
It's a tradition. We hold parties and banquets for every Bandits' birthday if they so choose. We usually follow the traditions of that Bandit's culture. But since Aza never knew her home, she celebrates most of Cap'n's home traditions, which for birthdays means a big banquet and a dance.

Karon
I can't picture Aza dancing.

Lez
It's not really-well, you'll see. There she is.

Lez points to the banquet hall doors as they open. Aza steps inside, no longer in her Astro Bandit uniform. Instead she wears longer, loose fitting robes. Her arms and neck are adorned with gold bands and jewelry. Her head covering is gone revealing short, cropped white hair with a crown of beads laying on top. Everyone claps and cheers as she walks towards the center of the room.

Lu

That's Aza?!

Lez
Oh right, this is the first time you both are seeing her without her uniform huh? Looks a lot different doesn't she?

Karon
Yeah...

Aza stands at the center of the room. After a moment of silence the band begins to play a new song and Aza begins her routine. Her dance resembles a fight, as if she is sparing with herself.

Karon
Her dance, are those fighting stances?

Lez
Well, Cap'n did come from a warrior race. Oh, here comes the fun part. Now Aza gets to pick a dance partner. Wonder who she'll pick this year?

Karon
What?

As the music hits a lull, Aza stops her routine and makes eye contact with Karon. She runs over to him and grabs him by his arm pulling him up.

Aza
C'mon Karon!

Karon
Whoa, hey, Aza no-

Lu
Woohoo go Karon!

Aza drags Karon to the center of the room and readies a fighting stance.

Karon

Aza, I don't know how to dance.

Aza
It'll just be like we're sparing. Just follow my lead!

Aza begins by throwing a few punches and kicks as the music becomes livelier. Karon responds by blocking and throwing a few punches of his own. The fight picks up pace and becomes more fluid as Karon becomes more comfortable. Eventually the song dies down and the fight comes to an end. Aza gestures for Karon to return to his seat and he plops back down, exhausted. Aza stands at the center stage and bows as the music comes to an end and the Bandits cheer.

Int. Astro bandits ship - banquet hall. night.

After the party finishes, Bandits begin clearing out towards their rooms. A handful of Bandits remain in the room with Aza, the brothers, Lez and Cap'n. The brothers are sitting towards the outer edge of the room. Aza runs to join them, holding the hologram in her hands.

Aza
Hey boys! Hope you've enjoyed your second Bandit party!

Lu
We did!

Karon
You seem much happier.

Aza
I am! A party's just what I needed to clear my head! Thanks for dancing with me by the way! Didn't think you'd actually do it.

KaroN
You literally didn't give me a choice but sure.

Aza
Anyway now that I'm in a much better place...

Aza opens the hologram and Maerell appears.

Aza
Mae! We have one last convertor right? Where is it?

Maerell
The last convertor is located on the planet Toredon.

Aza
Toredon! I know that planet! It's full of the most beautiful beaches I've ever seen!

Lu
Whoa a beach? I've read about them in books but we haven't seen one yet!

Aza
Okay boys, whaddya say? One last convertor adventure together?

Lu
Yeah!

Karon
Hm. Sure, as long as there's no more vine monsters.

Aza
First thing tomorrow morning, we head out!

End of act 1

Act 2

Ext. Toredon beach. Day.

Aza, Karon and Lu exit Aza's ship and walk out onto a long stretch of beach. They walk out further onto the sand.

Aza

Welcome to Toredon! One of the prettiest and most peaceful planets I've ever been to! Although I don't really go to a lot of those anyway...

Lu runs over to the water. Karon follows. Aza begins examining the waters and the trees on the coastline behind them. She walks off into the trees.

Lu
Whoa Kar! Look at this water! It's so...blue! A never-ending big blue puddle!

KaroN
Very astute scientific observation.

Lu
Shut up, I'm excited! You can't tell me you aren't?

Karon
I am.

Lu
Man to think we never would've seen the amazing things we have if Aza hadn't helped us off Naviy. We gotta thank her someday!

Karon
Yeah, we should. We will.

Aza (o.S.)
Karon! Lu! Come over here! I found the convertor!

Karon and Lu turn to see Aza peeking out from the trees. She beckons for them to follow and then disappears into the trees again. They both follow her through the trees and eventually find the last mass convertor.

Aza

I thought I saw it while we were landing! There it is boys! The last mass convertor!

Karon
The last one huh?

Lu
Well, what are you waiting for Aza? Turn it on!

Aza
Yeah!

Aza walks over and places her hands on the convertor. It activates and lights quickly. Aza looks up at the convertor and smiles.

Aza
That was the last one...Now I can bring my home back. My family, my parents. I can have them all back!

Aza reaches into her pocket and pulls out the hologram and activates it. Maerell appears.

Aza
Mae! I did it! I activated the last convertor! Look!

Maerell
I can see. Congratulations and a job well done Aza. By completing this task you've grown in your Architect abilities and have now demonstrated that you should be able to carry out our Revival plan for our home world. Now I believe I owe you an explanation on how to do just that.

Aza
Yes! Yes you do!

Maerell

The Architect home world, known as Envirion was home to our Architect society.

Aza
Envirion huh? Cool name!

Maerell
As you know, we value the harnessing and usage of energy, as it is the core of our cultural identity. We not only believe that energy is stored in all things but also that this energy has memory.

Karon
Memory?

Maerell
Yes. Energy cannot be destroyed, only redistributed. This is the very cycle which sustains our universe. A common thread that connects us all, even you three. This belief is the basis of our revival plan. The Mass Convertors you have been activating do just as their title suggests. They serve to replicate Architect powers of destruction.

Aza
What?

Maerell
They use the mass of the planets they are attached to in order to create energy which is then transferred to a separate convertor located on Envirion.

Aza
There's another convertor?

Maerell

Yes. Except this single convertor will replicate the Architect power of creation, receiving the energy from the chosen planets and using it to recreate our planet and any Architects who may have passed on its grounds.

Lu
Whoa...that's...

KaroN
Insane. You think that'll really work?

Maerell
Yes. These calculations were well thought through in the case that the Galactic Unifiers succeeded in the eradication of our society.

Karon
But you couldn't have possibly known Aza would've come along to set your whole plan in action?

Maerell
Well we had hoped that at least one Architect with the powers needed would have survived.

Karon
We?

Maerell
We, as in the Architects. Aza, there is one last step needed to bring our planet and its people back. You must travel to Envirion and turn on the Revival Convertor. Then all shall be as it was.

Aza
But...wait. If the convertors I've been turning on replicate my destructive powers then, the

planet's are gonna suffer right? Planets have to be destroyed in order to supply enough energy to bring back Envirion yeah? That's how my powers work.

Maerell
Yes, that is the reason for the construction of four convertors on somewhat remote planets with stable cores.

Aza
But one of those planets isn't remote anymore. And one of the reactors is in the Unifier Headquarters.

Maerell
Although these plans have never been tested, I assure you any sacrifices needed to fuel our revival will be well worth our while. Besides, having a convertor located inside the Unifier Headquarters will surely provide citizens of Envirion with peace of mind knowing proper retributions will have been paid.

Karon
Retributions?! Ok hold on, I've never been a fan of the Unifiers and I can understand the need for revenge, believe me. But there's innocent people at that Headquarters I'm sure.

Lu
And on Altura.

Karon
Aza there's no way you're okay with this.

Aza

I...I want to. I really do. But no. I'm not okay with this. I'm sorry Mae. I want to bring Envirion back but I think I need some time to think about this.

Maerell
Well that is a shame. Maybe you just require proper motivation. But alright. As you wish. Let me know when you change your mind.

Aza closes the hologram.

Aza
C'mon guys. Let's get back to the ship.

Aza places the hologram in her pocket and the three begin walking back to Aza's ship.

End of act 2

Act 3

Int. Astro bandits ship - loading bay. Evening

Aza's ship pulls into the Bandits loading bay. Karon lands and the three step out. Aza, deep in thought, begins to head to her room. The brother follow her without a word.

Int. Astro bandits ship - cap'n's quarters. Evening.

Lez stands outside the door to Cap'n's Quarters. He knocks.

Lez
Cap'n, I have the revised inventory reports from yesterday.

Cap'n
Ah, Lez! Come in!

Lez opens the door and enters. He walks over to Cap'n sitting at his desk and places the paperwork on the table.

Cap'n
Thank you much son. What a reliable first mate I have.

Lez
Thanks Cap'n. I have to say, we really pulled out all the stops for Aza's banquet yesterday didn't we?

Cap'n
Well she deserves nothing but the best! Besides, she's been going through some rough, confusing times. It seemed like she was forgetting about the home she has with us.

Lez
Yeah. I'm worried about her.

Lez's communicator in his pocket begins beeping. He pulls the device out and examines the screen.

Lez
Cap'n it's Orion. Do you mind if I take this?

Cap'n
Of course, go ahead.

Lez answers. Orion's voice comes through the speaker.

Orion
Lez! I finished looking into Aza's hologram and well, I've got some bad news and even worse news.

Lez
Oh great. Go ahead.

Orion
Well the bad news is, our hunch was right. I traced any outgoing transmissions coming out of our headquarters the day Aza was here

and well, that device isn't a hologram at all. It's sending out transmission signals to an untraceable endpoint. So unfortunately, whoever Aza's talking to on that device isn't a program, they're a real being.

Cap'n
What?

Orion
Was that your Captain I just heard?

Lez
Yes, he's in the room. What's the worse news?

Orion
Well the worse news is that these transmissions are being sent constantly. Even when that thing isn't in use. Which means whoever's in contact with Aza has been monitoring and observing every move she makes, even when she doesn't realize.

Lez
Huh...you're sure?

Orion
100% certain. The General and I have been holed up in our rooms on a probationary period ever since we- well ever since we ran into a little escapee snafu. I've had plenty of time to look into this.

Lez
Well, thank you Orion.

Orion
'course.

Lez
What do you think we should do Cap'n?

Cap'n
Well we've gotta tell Aza. C'mon let's-

Cap'n begins to stand as an explosion rocks the ship. Lez and Cap'n lose their footing slightly.

Lez
What was that?

Cap'n
We're under fire! Let's go Lez!

Lez
Gotta go Orion!

Orion
Whoa wait are you guys okay-

Lez hangs up the communicator and follows Cap'n out the door.

Int. astro bandits ship - obesrvation deck. Evening.

Cap'n and Lez rush onto the observation deck, to meet some of the Bandits piloting crew.

Cap'n
Men, put the shields up!

Astro Bandit 1
Yessir!

Another blast hits the ship as Aza, Karon and Lu enter the deck.

Aza
Cap'n are we under attack?

Cap'n
Yes.

Aza
By who?

Lez
Look! Out there!

Lez points out the giant window of the observation deck to a large ship floating several miles away. A Galactic Unifier seal is painted across its side.

Karon
Is that...a Unifier ship?

Aza
What are they attacking us for?!
Wait Orion and the General-

Lez
I was just speaking to Orion. He and the General couldn't have planned this. Or he would've warned me...

Lez runs over the ship's control board and presses a button. He leans forward to a speaker on the board.

Lez
Unifier ship, this is Lez Al'Darian, first mate of the Astro Bandits. I request a parley. Please, identify yourself and your reason for attack.

They wait a few moments in silence.

Lez
I repeat this is Lez Al'Darian, first mate of the Astro Bandits. I request a parley. Please, identify yourself and your reason for attack.

Another few moments of silence. Then a third shot is fired. It clashes with the shields shaking the ship.

Lez

Ugh, they're not responding!

Cap'n
I recognize that model ship. It's a dated model, but it's fast and carries heavy ammunition that could do us irreparable damage. Or worse.

Aza
Well, if they're not gonna listen to us then we should get out of here!

Cap'n
I'm afraid we can't.

Aza
What why not?

Cap'n
As much as I hate to admit it the Bandit ship is an old girl. She isn't fast enough to outrun that one.

Aza
Well we can fight back!

Lez
Something tells me that won't work either will it?

Cap'n
No, it won't.

Aza
What are we gonna do?

Cap'n closes his eyes as he and the others attempt to think of a solution. After a few moments, Cap'n opens his eyes.

Cap'n
Alright, I have a plan.

Aza

I knew you would come up with something Cap'n!

Cap'n
Lez, gather the crew for a retreat, full speed in the opposite direction. Head to the nearest one of our safe zones. All hands on deck.

Lez
Yessir!

Aza
I thought you said we couldn't outrun them?

Cap'n
You won't on your own. But with a distraction, maybe we can buy enough time. So that's what I'll be doing.

Aza
What are saying?

Cap'n
I'll put my old attack pilot skills to use and distract that ship so you all can get away. Then I'll rejoin you all when I can. Men, get my ship out on the deck if you please! I'll be right there!

Cap'n signals for a few Bandits to head to the loading bay. They run off. Cap'n begins to follow but Aza grabs his arm.

Aza
Cap'n wait you can't do this! You said they have heavy ammunition, what if one of those hits land? You could... you could-

Cap'n

Don't worry, little one. I'll be back before you know it. And even if it takes me a while, wherever you go, I'm always with you. And this will always be your home.

Cap'n turns to look at Karon and Lu.

Cap'n
Watch out for her alright boys?

Karon
Yeah.

Lu
Yessir.

Cap'n turns to look at Lez.

Cap'n
Lez, you're in charge for this mission. Take good care of them all. I believe in you.

Lez
Y-yes, Cap'n. I will.

Cap'n begins walking out of the observation deck. Aza attempts to follow but is held back by Karon.

Aza
Wait, Cap'n no! You can't-

Karon
Aza, stop! You have to stay here.

Lez turns to face his crew.

Lez
Alright men you heard Cap'n! Let's get this ship turned around and out of here!

The Bandits shout in agreement as they all get to work.

Int. Astro bandits ship - loading bay. Evening.

Cap'n reaches the loading bay to see several Bandits finishing preparations on his old ship. He relieves them of their duty and steps into his old fighter. He turns ship on and sighs.

Cap'n
Well old girl, it's time to see how well we can protect our family.

The loading bay opens and Cap'n flies out to battle.

Int. Astro bandits ship - obeSRVATION DECK. EVENING.

Lez and other Bandits are running around the observation deck. Another shot is fired as Aza and the brothers stand at the opposite side of the deck, looking out towards their enemy. Cap'n's ship appears in their view.

Aza
There's Cap'n! That's his ship!

They watch as Cap'n begins his battle with the Unifier ship.

Karon
You weren't joking. Cap'n really is one of the best fighter pilots I've ever seen.

Aza
Please make it back safe Cap'n.

Lez continues walking around the control console.

Lez
Men, how's the lightskip charge looking?

Astro bandit 1
Just a few more moments and we can lightskip out of here sir!

Lez
Good. Tell me when it's ready.

Aza places her hand on the observation deck window as she watches Cap'n expertly fire away at the Unifier ship. He dodges any blasts coming his way.

Lu
Cap'n's doing a lot of damage. Think he can come back now?

Aza
Yeah, maybe we should contact him-

As Aza speaks, Cap'n fires another blast at the ship. A piece of the outer hull breaks off, crashing into Cap'n's fighter, sending the it spiraling.

Aza
Cap'n!

Karon
Oh no.

Astro bandit 1
Sir! The lightskip's ready for travel!

Lez
Alright, everyone! Get ready for a lightskip to the nearest haven!

Aza
Wait, Lez! Cap'n! He's- He's gonna get hit!

Lez
He'll meet up with us Aza! Just trust in him!

Aza stares as Cap'n's spiraling ship stabilizes. With its wing on fire, the fight continues. But Cap'n's ship struggles to stay stable. It begins a retreat, back towards the Astro Bandit ship.

Aza
He's-he's coming back. Cap'n...

One final blast is fired from the Unifier ship towards Cap'n. His fighter swerves to the side, in an attempt to dodge. However the broken wing delays the action and the blast makes impact. Cap'n's ship is caught in an explosion.

Aza
Cap'n! Nooo!

AsTRO BANDIT 1
Lightskip initiated! Everyone hold on!

Aza and the brothers are pushed to the ground as the lightskip propels the ship forward. The Astro Bandits ship disappears from sight, as the remnants of Cap'n's ship spread from a dying explosion.

End of act 3

Astro bandits 112 - aza's home

Written by

Ashley Jimenez

Teaser

Int. astro bandits ship - Lez's room. Night.

Lez enters his room and walks over to his desk. He slowly sits then leans forward and sighs, placing his head in his hands. He closes his eyes and sits in silence for a few moments. Without opening his eyes, he reaches forward and feels for the hologram communicator on his desk. He finds it, pressing a button at its base. The hologram turns on with a beep.

Lez
Call Orion.

The hologram beeps in response. Shortly after Orion's face appears.

Orion
Lez- there you are! I was wondering what happened when you guys ran off. Are you guys-

Lez
Orion. Where are you?

Orion
Still in my room working on that little request from the brothers. Why?

Lez
Where's the General?

Orion
In her quarters too. Why?

Lez raises his head to look at Orion.

Lez
Who's in charge in her stead, and why did they authorize an attack on our ship?

Orion

Whoa whoa whoa whoa hold on. What?

Lez
A ship with a Unifier logo came and attacked us. We were able to lightskip away but...

Orion
There's no way it was one of ours. The council determined that they wouldn't retaliate against you all for Aza's trespassing. And besides, attacks can't be authorized without the General's approval even under probation. Did you attempt to make contact with them?

Lez
Yes, but they didn't answer.

Orion
Then there you go! It wasn't us! Case closed! Although I could probably get more proof later if you really want. But if you guys got away then all's good-

Lez
Cap'n's gone.

Orion
What?

Lez
That ship had heavy ammunition. So Cap'n agreed to go out and distract them and he-

Lez stops and lowers his head, unable to finish.

Orion
I'm sorry Lez. Is Aza okay?

Lez
I don't know... I don't know.

Int. Astro Bandit's ship - aza's room. Night.

Aza sits on her bed, alone, her head resting on her knees. After resting for a few moments, she raises her head and reaches for the hologram sitting next to her. She opens it and Maerell's face appears.

Maerell
Hello Aza.

Aza
Mae...I've made up my mind.

Maerell
Have you?

Aza
Yes. Tell me where Envirion is. I want to bring our home back. No matter the cost.

Maerell
Of course, Aza. As you wish.

End of teaser

Act 1

Int. Astro bandits ship - karon and lu's room. night.

Karon sits on his bed and Lu paces around their room.

Lu
I know Aza said she wanted some time for herself but I dunno, I don't think she should be alone right now. Shouldn't we be with her?

Karon
She asked for some time alone so we should give it to her. She'll come out of her room when she's ready.

Lu
(sighs)
Alright. Maybe you're right. It's just...I'm worried about her.

Karon
Yeah well...I am too.

Karon's communicator beeps from his pocket. He pulls it out and looks at the caller ID.

Karon
Orion?

He presses a button, answering the call.

Orion
Hey-

Karon
You have some nerve trying to contact us after what your people did to the Bandits-

Orion
Okay wait wait! Before you go any further, that wasn't us! No Unifier ship was authorized to attack you guys I swear.

Karon
And why should I believe that?

Orion
I just finished proving our innocence to Lez. I know I'm guilty of a lot, and I won't make excuses for myself, but the Captain, Lez and especially Aza are all good, honorable people who just happen to occasionally steal things. I wouldn't approve of anybody harming them. Believe me.

Karon thinks for a moment before sighing.

Karon
Why did you call Orion?

Orion
Oh, right. I found your mom.

Lu
WHAT?

KaroN
Why didn't you lead with that?!

Orion
Well the minute you picked up you went all broody antagonist on me! I didn't get the chance!

Karon
You got Jagar to talk? Where is she?

Orion
Well yes, I can always get people to talk, I told you. Turns out your mom was sold to a textile manufacturer on the black market. She's locked down with the rest of their workers in their compound on a planet named Desol for the time being.

Lu
Desol? You know where that is Kar?

Karon
No. Do you have anything else Orion?

Orion
Well, I did a little scouting and wrote up a little briefing since I assume you're gonna storm the place and save her. I'll send it your way. Oh and you may have to hurry. I've heard they rotate

their workers pretty frequently to different planets.

Karon
Thanks Orion. For everything.

Orion
Of course. I didn't have my parents around when I was your age. So I really hope you find her alright. Keep me updated! I'm invested now!

Karon
We will. Thanks again.

Karon hangs up on Orion and stands.

Karon
C'mon Lu, we gotta tell Aza where we're heading before we leave.

Lu
Yeah let's go!

Karon and Lu exit their room.

Int. Astro bandits ship - hallway. Night.

Karon and Lu are walking towards Aza's room. Once they are a few feet away, Aza's door opens and she steps out.

Lu
Whoa, is Aza coming out of her room already?

Karon
Looks like she is.

Aza makes eye contact with the brothers and runs over to them.

Aza
Karon! Lu! Perfect timing! I've decided to go to Envirion after all. I just...I wanna see what my

home planet was like at least once. I think I need that right now.

Karon
Well if it's for sight-seeing then sure. Just don't make any rash decisions.

Aza
I...I won't- wait. Why are you saying that like you aren't coming with me? We're all going together right?

Karon and Lu exchange glances then look back at Aza.

Lu
We'd love to go with you, but Orion called us. He found our mom.

Karon
And we don't have very long to get her.

Aza
Oh.

Karon
Yeah.

Aza
Well, what were you guys planning to do after?

Karon
I don't know. We never really came up with a plan for after. But we've got to get her some place safe for sure. After that, stay with her and...I don't know.

Aza
Right. Well, then I guess this is it for our little trio huh?

Karon

Yeah...

Aza
Well...You guys can take my ship. Consider it a farewell gift. Stay safe you two. And say hi to your mom for me!

Lu
We will! You stay safe too Aza!

Aza
I will. Bye guys.

Lu
Bye Aza!

Karon
Bye.

The two parties separate and head in opposite directions.

Int. Aza's ship. Dawn.

Karon and Lu sit inside Aza's ship. The hustle and bustle of the slums of Desol can be heard from inside the cockpit.

Karon
So if what Orion says is true then this is the route that'll take us to where mom's housing unit is. Or at least where we hope her housing unit is.

Karon points to a map on the projected screen ahead of them, a part of Orion's briefing.

Karon
Hopefully we made it during one of the windows where she'll actually be inside and not in the factory.

Lu
Yeah. You know flying over, this place really reminds me of Naviy.

Just, slightly cleaner and less smelly.

Karon
Yeah, it does, doesn't it?

Lu
Funny how even apart we had some things in common with mom.

Karon
Ha, yeah.

The ship's console beeps, alerting Karon to an incoming call. Orion's name appears across the screen.

Karon
What? Why is Orion calling again?

Karon presses to receive the call.

OrioN
Guys! I forgot to tell you something earlier!

Karon
What? Is it about Mom?

Orion
No it's about Aza. The hologram you guys have been talking to, it's not a hologram, it's a communicator. Somebody has been actively talking and observing both you two and Aza's every move.

Karon
What?!

Lu
What?!

Orion
Yeah, Lez had me look into it. Thought I should let you guys know.

Karon
You tell us this after we land on Desol?!

Lu
You're really not that great a talker are you?

Orion
Hey cut me some slack! There's a lot going on right now! Alright I gotta go. You do with that information what you will. Bye guys!

Orion ends the call. Karon is sitting with his head in hands.

Lu
Kar, Aza said she was going to Envirion. What if Mae tries to influence her to finish their revival plan? Do you think she'll go through with it?

Karon
(sighs)
I... don't know. But for now, we've gotta focus on Mom. We've already come this far.

Lu
Right.

Karon
Okay, as soon as we enter the housing complex we're probably gonna get jumped. You ready?

Lu
Always!

KaroN
Now let's go get Mom back!

Karon and Lu stand and head towards the ship doors.

Ext. Desol workers compound. Dawn.

Two guards stand outside the entrance to a gated community of old worn down buildings. Lu appears, walking towards them.

Lu
Excuse me misters!

The guards look over to Lu.

Lu
I think I'm lost. I can't find my mom. Can you help me look for her?

Guard 1
Get lost kid. We can't help you.

Lu
Aw, well okay. But I'll leave you with a little gift to thank you for your time!

Lu pulls out one of his makeshift stun grenades from his pocket and throws it on the ground by the guards. It explodes, catching the guards and knocking them out. They fall to the ground.

Lu
Got em Kar!

Karon
Nice! Let's go!

Karon, blaster drawn, runs into the streets of the compound, Lu following behind.

Karon
Mom should be down here! C'mon!

A couple guards hear the commotion and appear from the nearby houses to confront Karon and Lu.

Guard 2

Hey! Stop!

Karon easily shoots down the handful of guards coming at him. Lu examines Karon's blaster.

Lu
Still using stun blasts? Even though Aza's not here?

Karon
Yeah-I, ugh now's not the time Lu!

Karon and Lu continue running down their marked path. Karon looks around and sees the heads of workers emerging from their houses.

Karon
Everyone! We're here to break you guys out! Leave while you can!

More guards emerge as some workers begin leaving their houses.

Guard 3
Hey you guys can't-

Karon shoots them down with ease. More workers emerge into the streets and begin leaving the compound.

Lu
We're really helping them all escape?

Karon
Yeah. Thought I'd take a page from your book. Now c'mon, I think mom's place is right around the corner.

Karon and Lu turn the corner into a dead-end row of houses. They run down to the last house and stop at the door. The word "Mileon" is written across a nameplate on the outside. Karon runs his hand over the writing. The brothers exchange glances. They nod at each other. Karon turns to the door and raises his hand to knock. He hesitates a moment before lightly tapping the door, his hand shaking.

Karon
Mom? Mom are you home?

Karon reaches for the door knob and twists the handle. The door opens slowly, revealing a small room. In the corner, a petite woman with long hair, the boys' MOM, stands in front of a table. A bowl and spoon in her hands.

Mom
Who is-

She turns around. When she notices the visitors at the door, the bowl and spoon fall to the floor. Her hands come to cover her mouth.

Mom
Oh my-you two...you can't be...

Karon
Mom. It-it's me, Karon. Your son.
And this-

Karon gestures to Lu, who is stood fidgeting beside him.

Karon
This is Lu. We came to get you.

The boys' mother slowly walks towards them then places her hands on their faces. She examines both of their faces closely. Tears begin to fall from her cheeks. She pulls them both in for a hug. The brothers return the embrace.

Mom
It's really you. My boys. All grown up. You look just like your father Karon. And Lu, my baby, just look at you. Look at how big you've gotten.

Lu
(crying)
Mom...Mom you're here. You're real.

Mom
I am.

Karon
I kept my promise Mom. We found you, just like I said we would.

Mom
You did. And I'm so proud of you.

Mom releases the boys from her embrace.

Mom
I'm proud of both you. So proud. I have so many questions to ask you. There's so much I've missed.

Lu
We'll tell you everything as soon as we get out of here! Right Kar?

Karon
Yeah, we will. But... it might have to wait a bit. Lu, I'll take you and mom someplace safe but there's somewhere I gotta be.

Lu
You're going to Aza aren't you? I'll go with you!

Mom
Aza?

Karon
She's...a friend. She helped us out on our journey to find you. A lot. We've been staying with her and her people but she lost someone important to her before we left and I'm just worried she's-

Mom
Say no more. She means a lot to you doesn't she? I can tell. I can wait to hear your stories. It's okay.

Their mother smiles at Karon. Karon smiles back.

Karon
Thanks Mom. Alright, let's all get out of here. We've got lots of ground to cover.

End of act 1

Act 2

Ext. Envirion's atmosphere. Day.

Aza, in a new ship, reaches Envirion's atmosphere. As she nears the surface she overlooks a never-ending sea of rubble in awe. The hologram sits on the ship's console next to her.

Aza
So this is Envirion?

Maerell
Yes, welcome to your home Aza.

Aza
Home huh?

Maerell
The Mass Convertor is a large structure which should be located straight ahead. It has four tall pillars with a large elevated platform at the middle. Do you see it?

AzA
Yeah, I do.

Maerell
See if you can land somewhere near it.

Aza
Uh, yeah sure.

Aza flies closer to the Mass Convertor and eventually finds a clearing to park her ship not too far away. She lands and exits the ship, taking Maerell with her. She walks slowly towards the Mass Convertor, taking in her surroundings. Remnants of large, tall buildings surround her.

Aza
These buildings...used to be much bigger huh?

Maerell
Yes. Where we are currently is where the core of our developmental distract would have been located. We had many tall buildings, large enough to touch the sky. Each and every one filled with scientists and engineers dedicated to their work.

Aza
When I would...when I would ask Cap'n about the time he found me, he would say this planet looked like it was hit by a war nothing could ever recover from. He was right. To think that a place like this was filled with so much life at one point. Why would the Unifiers do this?

Maerell
The Architects used to work closely with the Galactic Unifiers, utilizing their resources to help export advanced technology all across the Galaxy. I imagine some of the tools they use today were also developed by us.

Aza
Then why did they attack?

Maerell

It was shortly after our first endeavors into connecting our control of energy with organic life. The redistribution of energy in order to revive organic life to be exact. We did several trials with redistributing energy from plants to small animals and were successful. And that is what unsettled the Unifiers. They were scared of our newfound, promising abilities. They were afraid of our ability to create entirely new life, or revive past ones, a miracle that would normally excite the rest of the universe. But soon they'll see. The very contained experiments they feared were replicated on a large scale with our mass convertors. We put them in place during the war, and placed shields across Envirion, successfully trapping any lost energy within the planet's atmosphere. Soon we will complete the biggest life trial ever attempted.

Aza

But in order to do that we're taking away energy, life, from other planets...

Maerell

But it will all be worth it in the end. You'll get to see your family again Aza. Isn't that what you wanted? Your blood-related family? People that look like you and share your powers? A mother? A father?

Aza

I...

Maerell

It is time to put our plan into its final phase. Head up the stairs to the middle of the platform, from there you will place your hands on the activation panel and activate the reactor.

Aza does as she's told, walking up a set of stairs and towards the center of the reactor. Once she reaches the top she looks around her and examines the four other pillars several feet away from her. She notices large machine-like fixtures on them, all connected by a platform. Parts of the platform are broken off. She then looks at the console in front of her. It is similar to the consoles of the other Mass Convertors she's seen, a slate at its center. She places the hologram on the ground.

Maerell

Now, Aza, all that's left is to place your hands on the console and concentrate. Use your power of creation to activate it just like you have all the others. It's all up to you.

Aza

Was I really the only one left to do this?

Maerell

Yes, you were. Now, go ahead. Activate the reactor.

Aza reaches her hand down closer to the console. She hesitates as her hands hover over.

Karon (o.S.)

Aza stop! She's lying to you!

Aza raises her hand from the console and turns around. She sees Karon and Lu standing at the base of the main Mass Convertor, staring back at her.

Aza

Karon? Lu? What are you doing here?

Lu

We had a bad feeling you might do something you'd regret so we came to stop you!

Karon

Aza, Maerell's been lying to you. Orion looked into it and she's not just a hologram, she's an actual person. She's alive somewhere and has been spying on us this whole time!

Lu

She's lying to you to manipulate you to bring your planet back at whatever the cost!

Aza

Orion told you this? Why should I believe him?

Karon

Because your brother's the one who asked him to look into it. And Orion swore that the Unifiers weren't behind the attack. I could tell he meant it. Please Aza, I know you believe all this. I know you believe us.

Aza

I...Mae, is what they're saying true?

Maerell

Of course not. They are lying to you.

Aza

But why would they-

Lu

Aza, I know you're hurting cause Cap'n's gone but, you have a home. With the Bandits, and me and Karon! You don't have to go looking for a new one.

Karon
Not at the expense of so many other lives. Do what you know is right Aza. Don't do this. Come home.

Aza sighs. She looks over at the console and Maerell, who is watching with a stern face.

Aza
You know, Mae...I started looking for answers about my past because I felt so different from everyone in the Bandits. My face, my powers... even though that was my home I still felt so out of place and empty. Like there was a part of me missing. I wanted to find other people like me cause I thought it would help me fill that hole. Make me feel better. And after finding you, I actually did feel better. But...

MAERELL
Why the hesitation Aza? If knowing of the Architects and myself brings you joy then place your hands on the console.

Karon
She doesn't want to. Right?

Aza
I..

Lu
Aza, it doesn't matter that you aren't the same species as any of the Bandits. They're still your

family! They love you! We do too! Right Kar?

Karon
Uh, yeah. You know Cap'n even asked us if we wanted to be Bandits. He was always looking out for you Aza.

Aza
Yeah...he was, wasn't he? Since the day he found me here. He didn't have to raise me. But he did. Me and all the Bandits, he was there for all for us. Like a real family.

Maerell
Aza-

Aza
I was wrong to feel out of place. I'm sorry Mae but I know where I belong. I'm an Astro Bandit.

Maerell
What are you saying?

Aza
I don't know if Kar and Lu are telling the truth about you but, even if they aren't, I can't help you Mae. I won't risk anybody's safety, no matter how bad I feel. Cap'n would be disappointed in me if I did.

Maerell
I was afraid you'd say that. What a disappointment. But it's alright. We don't need you for this last bit anyway.

Aza
What?

The console in front of Aza lights up. The ground begins shaking violently and Aza is sent flying back down the stairs towards the brothers. The hologram also goes flying off the platform. The brothers catch Aza and watch as the four pillars surrounding the main reactor begin to light up. Beams of visible energy break through the planet's atmosphere and make contact with the machine-like structures on the pillars. As all four structures light up, smaller beams of energy shoot off of them, meeting up in the middle of the reactor, in front of the console where Aza once stood. A small ball of energy begins forming.

Lu
What's happening?!

Aza
The reactor turned on? But I didn't do anything!

Karon
If you didn't touch it then...Maerell. She must've turned it on remotely from wherever she is.

Aza
You two were right. She was lying to me.

Lu
But the machine's on now so people are in danger right? We've gotta do something!

Aza
Yeah...yeah I can feel bad later. We've gotta do something!

Karon
Well, we're looking to you. What's the plan, Captain Aza?

Aza looks up at the machine structures on the pillars and back to the ball of energy at the core.

Aza

Do you guys have a blaster or explosives?

Karon

Always.

Lu

I've got some more grenades I made!

Aza

Okay good. You see those four pillars? If we can sever all four connections to the other reactors on the pillars maybe we can stop the main one from working. You two, split up and blow up those machine things on the pillars however you can and I'll try my best to control the energy at the core and slow things down. Got it?!

Karon

Got it.

Lu

Got it!

Aza

Alright! Let's go team!

The three break off running across the shaking ground. Aza runs up the stairs to the platform. She closes her eyes and concentrates. As her face marks light up she places her hands on the glowing ball of energy and struggles to contain its growth.

Karon and Lu run to opposite ends of the reactor and climb up the ledges to the reach the machine structures. Karon reaches the first structure, pulls out his blaster and aims.

Karon

Alright, let's hope blaster is strong enough to do some damage!

Karon shoots several times and the machine breaks apart. The beam of energy attached to it dies off.

Karon
Nice! On to the next one.

Karon climbs the connecting ledges to reach to the other structure on the pillars next to him.

Lu on the other side, places explosives on his first structure and steps aside.

Lu
Alright homemade grenades, don't fail me now!

Lu presses his handheld denotator and the structure explodes. The beam of energy dissipates.

Lu
Alright! Let's go!

Lu runs up towards the next pillar and begins placing more explosives.

Lu
Okay, last one...

Again, he steps towards the edge of the platform and detonates. The structures explodes, rattling the platform.

Lu
Yeah! I-whoa!

The shaking platform knocks Lu off balance as he falls to the side, off the platform. He grabs the edge of the platform before he falls and dangles off the side. Karon, now near the second structure, hears his brother scream and looks over towards him.

Karon
Lu!

Lu tightens his grip on the edge of the platform.

Lu

I'm okay! Don't worry, I got this!

Lu pulls himself up to the platform and onto this feet. He turns around and gives his brother a thumbs up and a wink before running back down to the ground floor. Karon sighs in relief.

Karon
Okay Lu's fine. Now this...

Karon shoots his blaster at the structure and it breaks just as the first one did. Karon looks around sees that all the energy beams have dissipated.

Karon
Alright, got em all.

Karon begins running down the ledges and reaches the ground. He meets up with Lu at the base of the middle platform where Aza stands, still intensely focused.

Karon
Aza! We did it! All the connections are severed!

Aza
(strained)
Right! Stand back. I'm gonna use this energy to blow this thing up!

The boys back up several feet. Aza sighs.

Aza
(to herself)
I'm sorry I didn't listen to your warnings Cap'n. But I won't let you down ever again. I'm ending this. The Bandit way.

Aza screams as she pushes the now large ball of energy towards the pillars ahead of her. It clashes, breaking the pillars and shaking the whole structure. A series of explosions begins as Aza begins running down the platform to Karon and Lu who wait with open arms.

Lu
C'mon Aza jump!

Karon
We've got you!

Aza jumps down the last few steps of the platform as the boys grab her. They crouch to the floor as the large mass convertor falls around them.

After several moments, the dust begins to settle and the brothers and Aza open their eyes and begin to look around them.

Lu
Did-did we stop it?

Aza
We did...we did. Thanks for coming to stop me guys.

Karon
We'll always be here to fix your messes.

Aza laughs.

Karon
Now, c'mon. Let's get you home. There's someone we want you to meet.

Int. astro bandits ship - loading bay. Dusk.

Aza and the brothers exit Aza's ship. Ahead stands Karon and Lu's mother. Aza makes eye contact with her. The mother smiles.

Aza
Is that-?

Karon
Aza, meet our mom. Hope you don't mind but the safest place we thought to bring her to was here.

Their mother walks closer to Aza.

Mom
Nice to meet you, Aza.

Aza
Y-yeah. Nice to meet you.

Mom
Thank you keeping my sons safe and for being their friend. And, I'm so very sorry about your the loss of your Captain.

Mom leans forward towards Aza and embraces her. Aza stiffens at first. And then begins to cry. She returns the embrace as Lu joins in. Karon slowly joins the group hug as well.

Aza
It's...it's nice to be home. Where I really belong.

End of act 3

Post-credits

Int. dimly lit room. Dusk.

A small figure sits hunched over a large console full of various buttons and keyboards, their face in their hands. Above several screens, the only source of light in the room, display various scenes on of the main reactor wreckage on Envirion. The small figure, Maerell, raises her face from her hands and looks over the screens.

Maerell
It's over sir. The damage to the reactor cannot be repaired from here. We're done.

A large FIGURE appears behind Maerell's chair.

Figure
We are far from done Maerell. We will bring our people back. Then

Aza will see the error of her ways. They all will.

Astro bandits season 1 - end