

WBUR's  
**THE MIDNIGHT REBELLION**  
**CHAPTER 13 - JUMP SHIP**  
By Dean Russell

[MUX]

**NARRATOR:** You're listening to *The Midnight Rebellion*.

Chapter 13, "Jump Ship"

[MUX]

**EXT. DOCKS, BRIGHT FACTORIES CAMPUS - CONT'D (FROM CH12)**

[SFX: Final scene from Chapter 12. PIRATES V. TINS; MELEE!]

**NARRATOR:** Joule hangs off the giant Bright shipping vessel, hands on the anchor chain, bouncing against the steel hull. The machine is somewhere on board. She could find it. She could go home ...

**JOULE:** (to self) ... and all of this would go away.

**NARRATOR:** Then she peers one last time at the skirmish. A pirate raid on Bright's factories. On the dock ... Buggy ...

**BUGGY:** [gasping]

**NARRATOR:** ... and Nico ...

**NICO:** GO, JOULE! GO!

[SFX: CUT TO BRIEF SILENCE]

**JOULE:** No. I won't leave. Not like this.

[SFX: SCENE NOISE RETURNS]

**NARRATOR:** She jumps.

**JOULE:** AH HHHH!

**[SFX: SPLASH! UNDERWATER ... BACK UP, JOULE SPITTING]**

**NARRATOR:** She surfaces and reaches for the dock's edge.

**[SFX: More water/swimming SFX]**

**NARRATOR:** And that is when she notices the black boots, the black vest, the black tattoos. A man she has before in the attack on Mud Market. He bears a harpoon on his back and towers over her.

**PIRATE:** [growls] Nowhere to run, girly. You're comin' with me.

**[SFX: Cutthroat LIFTS JOULE OUT OF WATER]**

**JOULE:** (being lifted) Hey, put me down! PUT ME DOWN!!!

**[MUX]**

**EXT. PIRATE SHIP (THE SUNDIAL) - DAY**

**[SFX: Seabreeze, ship bell!]**

**SEAGULL (DISTANT):** SQUAWK!

**INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS, SHIP (THE SUNDIAL) - DAY**

**[SFX: DOOR KICKS OPEN, creaky wooden quarters]**

**PIRATE:** Get in there.

**JOULE:** OOF!

**NARRATOR:** Not long after her capture, Joule is on what appears to be a pirate ship. The man had slung her over his shoulder like a bag of garbage and ran with the other pirates to the marsh ...

**[SFX: Ship rocking, pirates yelling outside indistinctly]**

**NARRATOR:** ... and aboard a wooden ship with genuine black flags. Joule could feel the crew eyeing her. Apparently capturing a twelve-year-old girl is quite the feat, because everyone kept saluting the tattooed man and bowing and saying things like ...

**CREW:** Tock-tick!

**NARRATOR:** ... which sounds congratulatory even though it is gibberish. In any case, Joule now finds herself below decks with the man, in a swampy cabin with a splintery table and chairs, stacks of rotting maps, and an unhealthy number of wall clocks.

**[SFX: Wall clocks TICK]**

**PIRATE:** Sit down, girly.

**JOULE:** What's with the clocks?

**CUTTHROAT:** Ain't like bein' late. Now, *sit down*. We need to chat.

**JOULE:** You don't scare me.

**NARRATOR:** Yes he does. But she is tired of being pushed around.

**JOULE:** Where am I? And what'd you do to my friends?

**PIRATE:** [grunts] You are in the captain's quarters of the two-masted brigantine The Sundial. My name is Captain *Cutthroat*.

**NARRATOR:** As he speaks, he draws a finger across his neck, where a jagged purple scar curls like an evil smile. Joule shivers.

**JOULE:** Ugh ... And my friends?

**[SFX: FOOTSTEPS down WOODEN STAIRS]**

**CREW [BLACKFISH]:** Captain!

**NARRATOR:** Just then, two figures appear in the door, and Joule's heart lifts. She lunges, wrapping her arms around them.

**JOULE:** Buggy! Nico! You're okay.

**NICO:** You stayed.

**JOULE:** (apologetically) I know. I couldn't-

**NICO:** I would've done the same.

**BUGGY:** (wheezing, raspy) Me too.

**JOULE:** Buggy, where's your inhaler?

**NICO:** The pirates crushed it.

**NARRATOR:** Nico thumbs at a ragged figure coming up behind them, with a brown-speckled seagull perched on their shoulder.

**NICO:** This pirate, I mean. I think their name is Blackfish?

**BLACKFISH:** That's right. And the gull is Fin, *Finito*.

**SEAGULL:** Squawk!

**BLACKFISH:** He's a great black backed. 'Course you can't tell yet, he's got his juvenile feathers. That's why he's all spotty and brown. Ain't that right, there, Fin?

**FIN:** Meh-meh. Squawk!

**JOULE:** (to self) *That* bird? (to others) We saw it in the marsh, and I saw it before too. It tried to steal my pocketwatch.

**NARRATOR:** Joule rounds on Cutthroat, an idea forming.

**JOULE:** Are you pirates ... *following* me?

**CUTTHROAT:** Who told you we were pirates?

**BUGGY:** (wheezy) [cough] Uh ... it's pretty obvious.

**CUTTHROAT:** Blackfish, off with ya. Take the bird.

**BLACKFISH/FIN:** Tock-tick, Cap. / Meh-meh.

**[SFX: DOOR CLOSSES]**

**BUGGY:** (wheezing, raspy) I like Fin. He's cute.

**CUTTHROAT:** Cute? He's an *endling*, boy. Last of his kind. We found him on a Bright vessel. The CEO ships in endlings for sport.

**JOULE:** What sport?

**CUTTHROAT:** The deadly kind. [cocks gun] POW. [crazy laugh]

**JOULE:** (shocked) That's demented.

**CUTTHROAT:** That's power, girly. One shot to kill generations—huh?

**BUGGY:** [coughing] Sorry [coughs more] for the coughing ...

**NARRATOR:** The captain cuts Buggy a hard look. He yanks open a cabinet, reaches in, and then throws something at Buggy.

**[SFX: TOSS!]**

**NARRATOR:** It's an inhaler.

**CUTTHROAT:** Can't have him dyin' 'fore you three answer my questions, can we?

**BUGGY:** [uses inhaler, wheezing stops] Thank you.

**[SFX: KICKS BENCH]**

**CUTTHROAT:** Now, sit. Ya've wasted enough of my time.

**NARRATOR:** He studies them, one hand on the hilt of an unsheathed knife in his belt.

**CUTTHROAT:** First things first. That was the dumbest thing I've ever seen: Three kids waltzing into Bright territory, unarmed, no plan from what I can tell. *Tides*, if weren't for us, you'd be chained up 'bout now, canning goop and shovelin' coal. Fools.

**NARRATOR:** Joule glares at the man. His eyes are the color of a snowless winter.

**CUTTHROAT:** What? You got somethin' to say?

**JOULE:** Yeah, you're *crazy*. You didn't save us. If you hadn't tackled Nico and Buggy, we were just about to—

**NICO:** Joule! *Stop*.

**CUTTHROAT:** About to *what*? (beat) Board the ship? Stow away? Not even rats are witless enough for that. You know how many people make it to Sky that way? Zip. Sero. Ling. Nada. None.

**BUGGY:** (beat) Uh. What's sky? Like, *the* sky?

**NARRATOR:** Cutthroat narrows his eyes, then his face falls.

**CUTTHROAT:** Are you saying you don't know?

**BUGGY:** I mean, we've heard of the sky. Blue usually. Above us. Rain falls from it.

**CUTTHROAT:** No. *Sky Island*. Bright headquarters? That's where the shipping vessels go.

**JOULE/BUGGY/NICO:** We didn't know. / Never heard of it. / Sounds made up.

**NARRATOR:** Cutthroat is clearly annoyed. He strokes his neck scar, thinking. At the same time, the ship lurches. They're pulling out of the marsh.

**JOULE:** Look, whatever you think's going on, we don't want any part of it. We're just kids. Let us go.

**CUTTHROAT:** You already said that.

**JOULE:** Yeah, well, your head's pretty thick. Just wanted to make sure it sinks in.

**BUGGY:** Joule. Maybe we should hear him out.

**JOULE:** What? No. He's being a jerk.

**CUTTHROAT:** The boy's right. I'm only trying to help.

**JOULE:** Help? HELP? I'd rather eat robo-boogers than look at your ugly mug one more second. Now, for the last time, LET US GO!

**NARRATOR:** The room is quiet but for the ticks of the clocks and the creak of the ship. Cutthroat grins.

**CUTTHROAT:** Huh. I thought you were supposed to be the nice one.

**JOULE:** What's that supposed to mean? You don't know me.

**CUTTHROAT:** I know Bright is after you. I know your name is Joule, and you spell it funny. I know *when* you're from. And I know that timepiece hanging 'round your neck don't belong to you.

**NARRATOR:** This last mention catches Joule off-guard. Because anyone following her might have known her name and the rest. But the pocket watch ... how would he know it isn't hers?

**JOULE:** Who are you?

**CUTTHROAT:** I told you my name. Clearly that ain't enough.

**NARRATOR:** Carefully, Cutthroat pulls a folded up paper from his vest pocket. He slams it down on the table in front of them.

**JOULE:** What is this?

**NARRATOR:** Joule unfolds ... a photograph. The colors are faded, the image blurry. But ...

**BUGGY:** Joule, that's the machine. He has a photo of the machine.

**NICO:** ~~And~~ ... who's that in the photo?

**NARRATOR:** Joule can't speak. She stares at the woman posing with the machine. Frizzy hair, amber eyes, and two too-big ears.

**JOULE:** (almost crying) That's my mom ... How do you ... ?

**CUTTHROAT:** She's alive, Joule ... your mother is alive.

**NARRATOR:** We'll be right back after the break.

[MUX]

[\*\*\*MIDROLL\*\*\*]

[MUX]

EXT. THE SUNDIAL - DAY

[SFX: Pirate ship on roaring waves, BOOM! - CUT TO:]

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS, SHIP (THE SUNDIAL) - CONT'D

[SFX: Creaking Captain's Quarters, waves outside]

**NARRATOR:** Joule's very dead mom - Dr. Elizabeth Green a.k.a. Lightning Lizzie - is alive. The police found ashes in her lab. And yet, this man, Captain Cutthroat, stands here, showing Joule a picture of her mom with the machine. Smiling ... and alive.

**CUTTHROAT:** She's here, Joule. In the "future," as you might say.

**JOULE:** Are you ... You know her?

**CUTTHROAT:** Aye.

**NICO:** Hold on. This picture could be fake. It could have been taken a hundred years ago.

**JOULE:** Yeah, I guess. He could have found it somewhere.

**CUTTHROAT:** D'you think I spend my time goin' around searchin' for old photos of people I don't know? Look closer. The gray in your mother's hair. It weren't like that the day ya last saw her, I'll bet. *That* is what happens after twenty-six years livin' here.

**JOULE:** What? Twenty-six years? ~~No.~~ She died a year ago.

**CUTTHROAT:** She *vanished* a year ago in your time, sure. But you've jumped forward a hundred years. Your ma only jumped seventy-five. Do the math, you got your answer.

**JOULE:** (reflective) Twenty-six. (then) Why would she stay here? Why wouldn't she come home?

**CUTTHROAT:** She couldn't. The Horologium [hoar-ah-LOH-jee-um] was destroyed when she jumped. That's, uh, what the "machine" is actually called.

**BUGGY:** I knew it had a cooler name! *Horologium*. [hoar-ah-LOH-jee-um] I like it.

**CUTTHROAT:** Means "clock." It's Latin.

**NARRATOR:** Scientists love Latin. Almost as much as they love dirt.

**CUTTHROAT:** It took her twenty-six years to rebuild it. Then, last week, she was captured by Bright.

**JOULE:** *What?*

**CUTTHROAT:** She's bein' held. Don' know where. We thought Bright took the Horologium with her. Thank the tides we were wrong about that. Once I saw that pocketwatch round your neck at the market, I knew who you were, and I knew you must've used the Horologium to come here.

**JOULE:** So you've been following me to ... find the Hora-whatever?

**BUGGY:** The *Horologium*, Joule.

**CUTTHROAT:** That device is dangerous in the wrong hands.

**NICO:** And let me guess, your hands are the right ones?

**CUTTHROAT:** Well, hold on—

**JOULE:** *What about my mom?* My mom's been trapped in some tin box and this whole time you've been chasing the machine?

**BUGGY:** The *Horolo*—

**JOULE/NICO:** Not now, Buggy.

**NARRATOR:** The captain's veins show. His scar pulses. His hands become fists.

**CUTTHROAT:** You don't understand.

**JOULE:** Then explain it.

**CUTTHROAT:** That machine is powerful.

**JOULE:** Yeah. I figured that out when it sucked me into this nightmare.

**CUTTHROAT:** Wherever ye're keeping it, it ain't protected enough. Bright's searching for it as we speak. Tell me where it is. And I promise, once it's secure, we'll save yer mother.

**JOULE:** Save her, and I'll tell you.

**NARRATOR:** Cutthroat's nostrils flare. He raises a fist.

**CUTTHROAT:** AHHHHH!

**[SFX: Cutthroat SLAMS FIST ON TABLE!]**

**NARRATOR:** Joule blinks. The table is broken in two. Cutthroat bites a large splinter in the bleeding fat of his hand and yanks it out.

**[SFX: CUTTHROAT SPITS OUT SPLINTER]**

**CUTTHROAT:** You don't have to be my friend. But you should trust me. This ain't about her. Or you. We need that machine. Tell me where the Horologium is, or I'll lock ya down here 'til ya wise up.

**NARRATOR:** Nico shakes their head "no." Buggy hesitantly nods "yes." Joule has the deciding vote. Can she trust Cutthroat?

**CUTTHROAT:** I'll give ya thirty seconds.

**[MUX]**

**NARRATOR:** What *should* she say? To trust Cutthroat, go to Chapter 14, "Truth." To trick him, go to Chapter 16, "Lies."

Chapter 14, "Truth."

Chapter 16, "Lies."

Choose wisely. This is *The Midnight Rebellion*.

**[CODA]**

**JOULE:** So I could have gone home. I had the chance right in front of me – climb up the anchor chain, find the machine on Bright's ship. I chose to go after my friends instead.

Whether Bright wins remains to be seen. But what is clear is that helping others can mean giving up something you really want. Making sacrifices. And that choice is how heroes are made.

Keep listening for more tips and more pulsing neck scars. Up next: Chapter 14, "Truth." Or Chapter 16, "Lies."

**[CREDITS]**

**BASMA:** *The Midnight Rebellion* is a production of WBUR in Boston.

Created by Ben Brock Johnson and Dean Russell.

Written and produced by Dean Russell.

Directed by Emily Jankowski and Dean Russell.

Mix and sound design for this episode by Paul Vaitkus.

Additional post-production by Mumble Media.

This episode is starring ...

Me, Basma Ayatte, as Joule,

Jett Dinh as Buggy,

K. Zedric Acruz as Nico,

Jay Preston as Cutthroat,

Cadden McArthur as Fin,

and ... Erik Ransom as the narrator.

Additional performances by Giselle Fernandez, Marc Graue, and Sarah Jiang.

Managing Producer: Samata Joshi.

Production Manager: Paul Vaitkus.

Director of Digital Audio: Ben Brock Johnson.

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See the full list of cast and crew at [wbur.org/midnight](http://wbur.org/midnight).