

GRAVE 14



When mankind finally colonized the stars, we named our new homes after the great explorers and astronomers of our past: Armstrong Station, Grissom Base, Lovell Orbital Platform.

When the corporations followed two decades later, they named everything after themselves. That's how I ended up with family in the Galileo Mars settlement while I'm stuck on Grave 14.

Grave 14 is named after John Grave, the

CEO of Stellar Mining Incorporated. It's a tiny little refinery far out in the asteroid belt, near Jupiter. Well, as "near" as anything gets out here. Space is big.

Every old settlement, every dark outpost where man has made a home has ghost stories. When we went to the stars, we brought our folklore with us and added new stories of our own. I think we do this because space is such a cold, dark, dangerous place. Something about being

out here taps into primal, instinctual fears written into our very DNA.

That's why I didn't think anything of the noises at first. The refinery is over 40 years old and things around here bang and creak a lot. But now the comms are out and the bodies are piling up.

Grave 14 was mostly automated about 10 years ago, only requiring a crew of four. We found Kelsey's body first, dead in their bunk. It was

easy to chock that one up to natural causes. Zero-G and cosmic background radiation are hard on a body.

Next was Tibbet. He'd been outside, doing a safety check when he'd called in screaming bloody murder. Ellie found him with his helmet shattered, tethered and floating gently. His face was a bloody, frozen mess.

Ellie. That one hit me the hardest. I cried real tears then.

We'd been frantically trying to call for help after she found Tibbet, but the damn radio just wouldn't work. She said she was going down to check the med kits while I worked on the comms. She wanted to be sure we were prepared in case something happened.

Two hours later, when she hadn't come back, I went to check on her and found that her throat had been slashed with a surgical scalpel.

So that's it. It's just me. No way to call

for help, no way out.
The power went out 20
minutes ago and I'm
just sitting here by
an emergency heat lamp
waiting for the end.

The worst part? I don't
even remember how I got
all of this blood on me.

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