Opening 1 / 7

Good evening, everyone. I'm Imani, Brooke's sister. People sometimes say half-sister, and Brooke and I have a rule about that. Nobody does the math.

Part 2 2 / 7

I met Brooke when I was eight and she was eleven. Our dad drove me two states over to her town, and I sat in the back seat holding a bag of pretzels like a shield. She was waiting on the porch. She looked at the bag and said, 'Are those for sharing?' I said yes. That was the whole interview.

Part 3 3 / 7

We only had summers at first. Every June, Brooke cleared half of her bedroom closet for me and taped a paper sign on it that said IMANI, in marker, with a star. Every August, I left, and the sign stayed up. She kept it up all year. She told me she wanted the closet to remember.

Part 4 4 / 7

I think of that sign whenever someone asks how close we are. Brooke made room before she knew me. Most people wait until they're sure. She made space on faith, and she has been making it ever since: a seat on her couch, a spare key, a place at every holiday table.

Part 5 5 / 7

Felix, you do the same thing. The first time I visited your apartment, you had cleared a shelf in the hall and put a plant on it. You said it was mine to take care of. It is still alive. I am as shocked as you are.

Part 6 6 / 7

Brooke, you were my first proof that a family can grow without anything being taken away. Thank you for the closet, the pretzels, and the porch. I love you, and today I get to say what I never needed to say out loud. You are my sister, with nothing left out of the number.

Closing 7 / 7

Everyone, please raise your glass to Brooke and Felix. May your home always have one more shelf, one more seat, and a bag of pretzels for sharing.