

Among the Stacks

Tale 3

“Pier 18”

Script by

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CONTENT WARNINGS:

Memory Loss

Death

Destruction

Falling

Existential Dread

NIGEL

Hiyah, Showrunner Nigel popping in ahead of today's episode to remind you to stay around til the end of the episode to hear a trailer for Transmission Folklore.

AMONG THE STACKS TALE 3: PIER 18

(FOOTSTEPS, PEOPLE TALKING INCOHERENTLY, OCCASIONAL ANIMAL SOUND; INDICATIVE OF A BUSY MARKETPLACE)

LAN (NARRATING)

Throughout the ages, many people have told each other stories of lost places, cities fallen to dust or sunk beneath the ocean. Atlantis, Vineta, Lemuria... This is my city and it is all of these at once. Every lost city, every fallen continent, every missing planet you could ever name, is me. I am their stories, their ideas, their people. People, who never existed. And I am always watching them. Today, it seems to be a fair place, full of fair people. I couldn't describe them to you, they are your ideal form of beauty.

(BUSY MARKETPLACE CONTINUES; PIPE MUSIC BECOMES MORE PRONOUNCED, FOLLOWED BY THE CLINKING OF A COIN)

STREET MUSICIAN

Thank you, kind lady.

ZAIDA

My pleasure.

LAN (NARRATING)

Hm.. Zaida. She is one of the few constants in this world of mine. No matter what shape it takes, there is always a woman named Zaida. And a man named Atlan. And a cat named Paws. I have counted up to 13 constants at this point. Not many, in a city of potentially millions, but still a significant amount. I wish I knew exactly why they existed, since I never wrote them.. but there you are. To elaborate, a constant, as I define it in my story, is someone who, no matter the incarnation I take, is always.. there. The same name, the same personality, the same.. everything, aside from appearance. And, most strangely, sometimes they remember. They remember the downfalls of these cities, worlds and civilizations. Not overtly, but in their dreams. They dream of doom and destruction, only it is not their doom and destruction.

(SEAGULLS IN THE AIR AND THE RUSHING OF WAVES)

Perhaps I should stop thinking of them as constants and more as protagonists? I should consult the others on this. But for now... I wonder what Zaida is up to.

ZAIDA: Good day, master fisher.

MASTER FISHER

Good day, fine lady. And what a good one it is.

ZAIDA (BRIGHTLY)

Indeed. And it would be even better, if you had some salt-water salmon and a lobster to sell.

MASTER FISHER

Lobster, no problem. I can hardly get rid of the things.

(RUSTLING) As for salt-water salmon, I'm afraid I sold the last batch. I can offer some cod, though. Freshly caught this morning.

ZAIDA

Hmm.. I'll take the cod, then. It pairs just as well with beans.

MASTER FISHER

Very good, fine lady.

(SOUND: RUSTLING PARCHMENT AND CLINKING COINS)

LAN (NARRATING OVER THE SOUND)

Classic Zaida. No matter whether she takes the form of a human, an elf or an extra-terrestrial, she always enjoys cooking. Just like Atlan loves to sculpt and Paws has a taste for coffee beans. Another thing to note...

ZAIDA

Say... where is Pier 18? Wasn't it over there, just yesterday?

MASTER FISHER

Pier 18? I'm sorry, fine lady, but this harbour has always only had seventeen piers, not eighteen.

ZAIDA

Did it? I could have sworn...

MASTER FISHER

I have been a fisherman on this harbour for decades and I think I know how many piers are in my home. There are only seventeen piers.

ZAIDA

Right... My apologies. I must be misremembering.

LAN (NARRATING)

And there it is. Another memory, resurfacing within Zaida, just like Paws' anxious glances at the night sky, looking for

meteorites on the city's roofs. And what a marvellous city it is. A shame it must fall. It is always a shame to lose such a jewel of civilization and architecture, but that is the way of the story. This place must fall. It must sink beneath the waves, be crushed by the earth, burn together with its moon.. It must fall. It must always fall. That is the purpose of this story, to watch a city fall. I wonder what will cause it this time. War? Hubris? Catastrophe? Something else entirely?

(BEAT)

Though.. as much as Zaida is prone to remember falls from previous incarnations.. I could have sworn myself that this harbour had eighteen piers, not seventeen.

NIGEL

Today's tale "Pier 18" was written by Alex Nightingale. It starred the voices of David Ault as Lan, Noori as Zaida, Cameron Weldon as the Master Fisher and Rhys Subitch as the street musician. It was directed and produced by Alex Kingsley. It was scored by Linwood with end credits music by Alex Schwartz. For more information about the show, you can find us on our Twitter at amongstacks or on Tumblr at amongthestackspodcas.t Rate and review us on your pod catcher of choice. It means the world to us that helps us find more people who may enjoy the show.

And now a trailer for transmission folklore. Transmission Folklore is an urban fantasy audio drama podcast produced by the Lavender Lemonade Collective about an accidental kidnapping-turned-road-trip, repairing burned bridges worth fixing, the formation of found family, and the life-or-death connection between boy and car. You can find transmission folklore wherever you listen to podcasts, and it has already just started its second season. And now the trailer but until then, stay tuned. Stay listening and Sapere Aude.