

Bronwyn. Hey. Bronwyn here, the voice of Alice Harlow. Want to own your own Station Arcadia merch? If you head on over to stationarcadia.com, you'll see a shiny new merchandise page where you can purchase buttons, facemasks, hoodies, and more. Shipping is international and included in item prices for your convenience. Thanks, and enjoy episode 4 - The City of Sinclair.

INT. STATION ARCADIA

KASS. Welcome, anyone, anywhere. You're listening to Station Arcadia.

[THEME MUSIC PLAYS]

KASS. Things have been pretty quiet around here lately, so I think instead of chattering about nothing let's just see if the Station has anything to share.

[TRANSITION]

EXT. UPTOWN SINCLAIR, HARDIZAN

[THE SOUNDS OF A HARDIZAN TOWN. RUMBLING OF A CAR GOING PAST, PEOPLE TALKING, STEAM COMING OUT FROM VENTS IN THE GROUND. THE MAIN SOUND IS A MOTORBIKE COMING DOWN THE ROAD. IT STOPS IN FRONT OF A HOUSE.]

COURIER MARKS. Good morning Mrs. Emmeline.

[THEY GET OFF THEIR BIKE AND APPROACH THE PORCH, WHERE EMMELINE IS SITTING.]

EMMELINE. Hey there! Lavinia, the Courier's here!

LAVINIA. *(from inside)* Which Courier?

EMMELINE. The new one, love. *(to COUR. MARKS)* Come in for some lemonade, dear! We've just made some.

COURIER MARKS. I'd love to Mrs. Emmeline, but I'm on a tight schedule.

EMMELINE. Always working hard. What have you got for us today?

COURIER MARKS. Your grandson again, he seems to enjoy sending you letters.

EMMELINE. Oh yes, that's our William. Always a sweet one, isn't he Vin?

LAVINIA. Oh yes, but the Courier gives him a run for his money.

COURIER MARKS. Well thank ya Mrs. Lavinia. I appreciate that.

LAVINIA. Of course, dear. Oh, Emmeline that reminds me! Remember I was telling you to introduce them to that nice young man down the street? They'd get along with him!

EMMELINE. Oh yes! Courier, have you met him yet?

COURIER MARKS. Which one?

LAVINIA. Oh, the one that just moved in! Few houses down, see? Poor thing, his parents passed away recently and he's on his own now.

COURIER MARKS. Oh. Well I'm headed there now. I'm sure I'll get the chance to introduce myself.

EMMELINE. Oh you should, Maxwell's a dear. I'm sure you'll like him, Courier.

COURIER MARKS. I sure hope so. But now, I have to be off. Have a nice day missus and missus Rose!

[AS THEY WALK AWAY.]

EMMELINE. You too Courier! Make sure to say hello to that fella of yours you keep talking about!

COURIER MARKS. Ah... will do!

[THE MOTORBIKE REVS AND SPEEDS OFF, STOPS. A MAIL BOX OPENS AND CLOSES. THE BIKE GOES AWAY.]

[TRANSITION]

INT. STATION ARCADIA

KASS. Interesting. This one comes from Hardizan, I think, though I can't say I know much about the place. Judging by the stories the Station has shown to me, we may be able to learn a bit more.

[TRANSITION CLICKS]

KASS. One day, Amelia Blackmore decided she was done.

There wasn't anything special to it— no singular, great event that sparked the decision. It was a day like any other— a day so much like every other monotonous, back breaking work day that Amelia just couldn't stand.

So she skipped work.

Now, skipping work in Hardizan can be dangerous—

[A DOOR OPENS]

Z. Hey, Kass! Jo wanted me to tell you his pronoun calendar updated—

KASS. *(interrupting her, irritated)* I'm broadcasting.

Z. Oh, I know. Does anyone even listen to this?

[Z TAPS ON THE MIC]

KASS. I— I don't know.

Z. How does this even work? What'd you call it, radio?

KASS. Yes, radio. I'm really not sure— I haven't seen anything like it before.

Z. Well, nobody can listen to it if nobody knows how radio works.

[Z TAPS ON THE MIC AGAIN]

Z. Hello? Hello?

KASS. *(annoyed)* Z.- I'm trying to broadcast!

Z. I'm in here for a reason! Jo's pronoun calendar updated! Tuesday through Friday next week are now going to be he/him days.

KASS. Jo wouldn't want you to disrupt the program to tell me that.

Z. He kinda sorta specifically told me not to bother you while you were broadcasting, or he might have specifically asked me to tell you before you started, but I have a duty to fulfil.

KASS. *(grumpy and quiet)* What, a duty to be annoying?

Z. A duty to liven this place up! A solemn and important mission to spread joy through the halls of the Station. A quest, to-

KASS. *(cut the bullshit)* Z.

Z. . Hey Kass, what do you call your "talking on the radio" again?

KASS. A broadcast?

Z. I think you mean... a broadKASS. [pause] Have fun with your recording!

[Z LEAVES THE ROOM. KASS SIGHS]

KASS. Where was I- right. Um, skipping work.

[BEAT]

KASS. Skipping work in Hardizan can be dangerous.

Amelia knows she's making a bad decision when she turns away from the path to her workplace and ducks into an alley. She looks at her pocket

watch, reading 6:16am. She thinks to herself that she just has to make it until six. Just until six, when her job lets out, and she has had her day of freedom. And that's all she needs. One day.

She goes to visit her family first. Her watch reads 6:49am when she knocks on the door and is greeted by her grandparents, who are too old to work in the factories. They are supported by the four other family members that live in their home. Amelia can't help but feel guilty about her visit- she helps support them too, and losing her job might mean a few missed meals for them. She sits at their kitchen table anyway and has a proper breakfast as they discuss the new mail courier and Amelia's soon to be born cousin. They don't like the new mail courier as much, and they ask Amelia's opinion on the names they have on a list for the baby- in Amelia's family, it's traditional for grandparents to name their grandchildren.

When she leaves, her pocket watch reads 9:32am and she pauses at the doorstep to figure out how much of the day is left. Amelia only made it halfway through first school before she dropped out to work, and math was never a strong suit of hers anyway. She gives up after a few minutes and starts walking.

[TRANSITION]

EXT. UPTOWN SINCLAIR, HARDIZAN

[COUR. MARKS MOTORCYCLE, A DOG BARKS.]

COURIER MARKS. Ah. Right.

[THEY GET OFF OF THEIR BIKE AND HEAD UP TO THIS HOUSE. THEY MAKE IT TO THE PORCH, THE DOG IS STILL BARKING WILDLY BUT THE CLINK OF A CHAIN CAN BE HEARD. COUR. MARKS SETS DOWN A PACKAGE AND RAPS ON THE DOOR, BEFORE QUICKLY WALKING AWAY. BEFORE THEY CAN GET BACK TO THEIR BIKE, HOWEVER, THE DOOR OPENS.]

OSWALD. Hey, Marks!

COURIER MARKS. *(clearly not happy about this interaction)* Hello Oswald.

OSWALD. Don't I have to sign something for this?

COURIER MARKS. Oh uh... *(painfully cheerful)* yeah I suppose you do.

[THEY WALK BACK OVER TO THE DOOR. THE DOG CONTINUES TO BARK.]

Just sign here for me.

[OSWALD SNATCHES THE CLIPBOARD AND SIGNS HIS NAME.]

OSWALD. This sort of thing can't be allowed, Courier. I might have to speak with your manager. What if someone else picked up my package, because you didn't have me sign for it? Signatures are very valuable, you know.

COURIER MARKS. Yes. Apologies, it won't happen again.

OSWALD. It had better not.

COURIER MARKS. Have a good day, Oswald.

OSWALD. Hmph.

[THE DOOR SLAMS SHUT. COUR. MARKS SIGHS AND THE DOG CONTINUES BARKING.]

COURIER MARKS . Shut UP Fluffers.

[THEY WALK BACK TO THEIR BIKE, REVVING IT UP AND RIDING AWAY.]

[TRANSITION]

INT. STATION ARCADIA

KASS. You know, Z. keeps saying we should get a dog here, but if this is what they're like then that cord's too short. Maybe dogs are different in the Empire? ...Sorry, off topic.

KASS. Work at the factories is in full swing by the time Amelia leaves. She pulls her scarf over her nose and mouth to shield her lungs from the smoke. Several of the people passing have nasty sounding coughs.

Her feet subconsciously start taking her to work, one of Sinclair's many canneries. As soon as she realizes where she's going, she turns away from her current route and heads down the nearest side street, looking around the corner at the smokestacks of the cannery as they grow smaller behind her.

She takes out her pocket watch with one shaking hand and checks the time. 10:03am. She knows with absolute certainty this was a terrible idea but it's far too late to clock in now. She ran the risk of being demoted which was possibly deadly, as it increased her likelihood of being killed in a factory accident- or worse, fired. The only thing to do now is make it through the day and hope they didn't notice. It's not like the manager comes down to the factory floor often enough... So Amelia turns and walks away, wandering without a direction in mind.

[TRANSITION]

EXT. UPTOWN SINCLAIR, HARDIZAN

[THE MOTORCYCLE COMES UP TO ANOTHER HOUSE AND SHUTS OFF.
COUR. MARKS APPROACHES THE HOUSE WITH A PACKAGE. THEY SET
THE PACKAGE DOWN AND KNOCK ON THE DOOR. THERE'S SOME
SHUFFLING FROM INSIDE, THEN THE DOOR OPENS.]

DARYN. Well, if it ain't Courier Marks.

COURIER MARKS. Hello Daryn, I've got a package for Mr. Moseley.

DARYN. Ah yes, do I need to sign for it?

COURIER MARKS. Yep! Just right here.

[PEN SCRIBBLING.]

Why doesn't he come out to get his own mail? As much as I enjoy seeing you, I'd like to see the old man do some work for once.

DARYN. Jebediah hasn't worked a day in his life. I'm the one getting paid to be here, so I get the mail.

COURIER MARKS. Are you getting paid well?

DARYN. *(Slightly bitter)* What do you think?

COURIER MARKS. Fair enough. Seems like we're in the same boat.

[HANDING HIM THE PACKAGE.]

(professional again) Here you are Mr. Willis.

DARYN. Thank you, Courier. Have a good day.

COURIER MARKS. You too.

[THE DOOR CLOSSES AND COUR. MARKS WALKS BACK TO THEIR MOTORCYCLE. TURNS IT ON, AND DRIVES AWAY.]

[TRANSITION]

INT. STATION ARCADIA

KASS. The city of Sinclair is split into three official districts: uptown, downtown, and the canneries. There's also the slums, but the government does their best to hide that from the public view. Everyone knows about them though. It's hard not too.

Amelia works in the canneries, the district of factories and slaughterhouses. She lives downtown, and walks almost two miles to work, six days a week, twelve hours a day. She dreams about canning fish every night, her fingers making the same repetitive motions even in her sleep.

The smell of factories and slaughterhouses cling to Amelia as she hurries away from the canneries, back downtown. She just needs her one day of freedom until 6pm. Her watch grows heavy.

Downtown Sinclair is packed with buildings, tall and shabby. She passes the stalls and shops that line the bottom floors of the buildings, they sell everything from food to crude prosthetics, medicine and spare bits of clockwork. The air is smokey and smells of fish, full of people loudly going about their daily lives.

Amelia passes one of the many fish sellers and waves to em. Amelia has been friends with Raj since she was a teenager. Raj is just one of the many people Amelia knows from downtown, people she buys from and has seen at least once a week since she was a little kid.

The markets are crowded, filled with people shouting advertisements for their wares from stalls and carts and blankets. Amelia passes two fish sellers set up across from one another, their voices climbing in volume in an attempt to draw attention to themselves. She passes a person in a dark coat, standing guard for someone selling illegal goods in an alley. Two ragged children run across the road in front of her, one of them holding a bundle of smoked fish.

[TRANSITION]

INT. BACK ROOM, POST OFFICE

[THERE ARE MUFFLED SOUNDS OF MAIL BEING FILED AWAY AND THINGS OF THAT NATURE. THE DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES AGAIN, AND A CHAIR SCRAPES ACROSS THE FLOOR.]

CHARLIE. Long day?

COURIER MARKS. Usually is.

CHARLIE. Oh, I'm sure there was something good.

COURIER MARKS. Yeah, Emmeline and Lavinia say hello.

CHARLIE. Well, hello to them too. But, uh, that can't be all.

COURIER MARKS. Why do I feel like you're not telling me something.

CHARLIE. Because I wanted to see if you'd tell me first.

COURIER MARKS. He... did he really complain?

CHARLIE. If you mean Oswald, then yes. He did.

COURIER MARKS. You're joking.

CHARLIE. I wish I was joking, believe me I do.

COURIER MARKS. Charlie, it's--

CHARLIE. I know. He's a horrible man. But he's on your route, and you know I can't change that.

COURIER MARKS. Unfortunately. Too bad being a manager doesn't come with that perk. *(sigh)* I'm tempted to just skip his house.

CHARLIE. You can't just--

COURIER MARKS. *(mischievously)* Maybe I'll give one of the packages to that dog. Then he'll be mad at Fluffers.

CHARLIE. *(holding back laughter)* You can't just skip his house. That's not how the system works. *(sarcasm)* And cogs know we have to cave to the system... *(a pause while he collects himself.)* Look, I know you don't like him, but we need you to have this route.

COURIER MARKS. I know, and we can't afford to lose the contacts. But it's just so *annoying* to deliver to him every day. No man needs that much mail. And I mean what kind of person doesn't have the decency to at *least* be a *little* polite?

CHARLIE. Oswald. And I guess you're going to have to deal with it.

COURIER MARKS. I guess so.

[A PAUSE. MAIL ROOM SOUNDS.]

So about the complaint...

CHARLIE. He'll forget about it by tomorrow, though I guarantee he'll find something else to bother you about.

COURIER MARKS. Likely.

CHARLIE. Just try to be a bit more patient? If not for your job, for yourself. You don't need to let him ruin your day.

COURIER MARKS. *(sigh)* You got it, boss.

CHARLIE. *(a short, amused laugh)* Can it, you know I'm not qualified to be here.

COURIER MARKS. You are, it just didn't get you anywhere. *(joking)* You're lucky to have me!

CHARLIE. *(genuine)* I guess I am.

[BEAT OF SLIGHTLY AWKWARD SILENCE.]

COURIER MARKS. My parents are cooking a big family meal tonight. You're welcome to come if you're not too busy?

CHARLIE. I've... got a lot of paperwork to catch up on tonight. I- I'm sorry.

COURIER MARKS. It's fine, I understand. But you can't avoid it forever.

CHARLIE. Hm?

COURIER MARKS. You're going to have to come to dinner eventually.

CHARLIE. I want to, I do. I'm just... I'm busy.

COURIER MARKS. I know.

[THEY GET OUT OF THE CHAIR AND HEAD OVER TO THE DOOR. THEY OPEN IT, THEN PAUSE.]

Don't work yourself too hard, okay? Get some rest.

CHARLIE. *(with a smile)* Go home, courier.

COURIER MARKS. See you tomorrow, Charlie.

[THE DOOR CLOSSES.]

[TRANSITION]

INT. STATION ARCADIA

KASS. It is 11:15am when Amelia passes into uptown. The smoke is thinner here, and the houses are bigger and nicer, with lush green gardens. She sees people, taking walks and gardening. She sees kids playing. People who aren't at work. People who don't have to work.

Amelia feels out of place among the fancy buildings and clean streets. Here, she doesn't see anyone scarred or missing limbs from factory accidents. She doesn't hear any of the racking, sharp coughs that come from the smoke and fumes of factory work.

She passes two women wearing dresses that would each have to cost a year's worth of her wages- not that Amelia wears dresses. Too much flowing fabric could get caught in the machinery. The only worker she sees is a mail courier delivering a letter to a young man in a crisp pressed suit, and even the courier looks more carefree than she's felt in months.

Amelia tips her hat lower over her face to hide the burn scars across her nose and right cheek from an exploding can. She'd been lucky to keep her eye, the doctor had said.

As she walks, Amelia can't shake the feeling that she just doesn't belong. She takes out her pocket watch and holds it tightly in her hand, feeling it tick under her fingers.

It is 12:06pm when Amelia is stopped by the police and asked if she should be at work. She never was a good liar, and it is 12:25pm when the door to her bosses' office closes behind her.

She closes her eyes tightly and waits for her sentence, expecting the word as it's spoken.

Demotion.

KASS. Well, there we are folks. I was right, I did learn a few things about Hardizan. Namely, that I'm glad I don't live there.

That being said, the show's not quite over. I think Arcadia has one more thing to share. I'm not sure why we've been following this mail courier, but I trust her to broadcast what needs to be heard. She hasn't let me down so far.

[TRANSITION]

EXT. MARKS HOUSE

[FROM IN THE HOUSE THERE ARE LOTS OF MUFFLED SPEAKING FROM A BIG FAMILY, AND AS SOON AS PEACHES OPENS THE DOOR, THE SOUND BECOMES LOUDER.]

PEACHES. Hey everyone!

MAMA MARKS. Canned Peaches Marks! Not only are you back late, but where is that boy of yours?

PEACHES. He's just my *friend*, ma. I've told you.

[MOMMA MARKS LAUGHS IN A "SURE HONEY" WAY.]

But he had to work late tonight. He's not coming.

MAMA MARKS. You told me he'd be here tonight!

PEACHES. I never said--

MAMA MARKS. You need to put your foot down and tell him that your momma wants him here for dinner within the next week.

PEACHES. I tried to get him to come but he's busy!

MAMA MARKS. You tell him that's no good excuse. Now come in, I...

[THE SOUND MUFFLES AGAIN AS THE DOOR SHUTS.]

[TRANSITION]

INT. STATION ARCADIA

KASS. Well, that's going to do it for us tonight. Stay safe, stay moving, and stick close. You've been listening to Station Arcadia.

[THEME MUSIC PLAYS]

ELI. Station Arcadia is a podcast by Metal Steve Productions, and licensed under a creative commons attribution noncommercial share-alike 4.0 international license. It is produced by Eliana Esdi and C.V.V.M., and directed by Tovah Brantner. It is edited by Eliana Esdi and J. R. Steele, with soundscaping by Becker Hoang and music by Theo Goodwin. Today's episode was written by Quinn O.A. Feinberg with scenes by Tovah Brantner and J.R. Steele. It featured featured Jade Virginia as Kass, Tizzy Trusler as Z, CaraLee Rose Howe as Canned Peaches Marks, Corey Repass as Charlie, Grace Loerstcher as Emmeline, Josefin Berntsson as Lavinia, Noel Miller as Oswald, Felix Kaiser as Daryn, and Taylor Maimone as Momma Marks.

Join us on twitter and tumblr, @stationarcadia, for more content. Check out our website, stationarcadia.com for a transcript of this episode as well as information on the cast and crew.

The pun for today... is not punny. Thanks, I'll be here all week.