

# **H2O: NARIN, ZALEEKHAH, ARTHUR: By the River Tigris, 2018**

In the year 2018, an imminent flooding is about to commence by the River Tigris as the dam's floodgates are opened. The once barren landscape, likened to a fallen creature, is slowly being transformed as the reservoir will eventually rise. Zaleekhah, filled with sorrow, reflects on the impending submersion of Castrum Kefa, an ancient walled city that will soon be lost beneath the water.

As Zaleekhah and her companion, Nen, contemplate their surroundings, Zaleekhah shares her thoughts on soft-shelled turtles displaced by habitat destruction. The conversation shifts to her family, revealing her deep-seated concerns. Estranged from her uncle and aunt after making a tough choice about organ donation for her friend Helen, Zaleekhah grapples with guilt. Despite their estrangement, she is determined to support Helen in finding another donor, underscoring her sense of responsibility and commitment to her friend.

They make their way to an old cemetery where a girl named Narin sits alone, mourning her ancestors. Purchased from a dealer tied to ISIS for \$3,200, Narin embodies the plight of Yazidi captives. As Zaleekhah and Nen watch her from a distance, they ponder the emotional scars she bears and the distant hope of recovery.

Narin, absorbed in her own thoughts, places flowers on her family's graves. She feels the absence of her beloved Grandma Besma and remains uncertain about her father's fate. Anticipating a reunion with her relatives in Germany, she also senses the possibility of moving to London with Zaleekhah and Nen, albeit unknowingly of the complications that lie ahead.

The women finally approach her, opening up a faint glimmer of trust within Narin when she notices Zaleekhah's wrist tattoo, reminiscent of her grandma's. The trio heads back to their hotel, where they come across a peculiar tombstone inscription that sparks a moment of intrigue.

The narrative reflects on the transient nature of time and cultural identity, as tomorrow will witness the drowning of historic Mesopotamia, leaving only memories. The cycle of water resonates through its transformation, insinuating the possibility of rebirth amidst loss, as a snowflake ultimately falls upon an innocent child in London, symbolizing an eternal connection to the rivers that endlessly flow.