

CAST OF CHARACTERS

DR. ACADIA NOBLE TRẦN (8-Pilot, 15) is a brilliant Vietnamese American biochemist born and raised in Maine. Her life's defined by the loss of her mother at sea in a horseshoe crab incident. This led to her desire to harvest their blue blood for medicine. She's a reliable prodigy, yet headstrong and easily frustrated. She learns to realize that pure science and tech cannot always grant safety. She must blend her scientific knowledge with the mystical traditions of her heritage. She goes by Cady Noble.

CÁT LÝ TRẦN (32) is Acadia's missing mother and physician with a spiritual connection to Fossil Island. Cát often navigated the spaces between the worlds of Vietnam and Maine, science and magic, and duty and love. Her lesson about remembering one's source of water forever guides Acadia.

MORGAN NOBLE (39) is Acadia's father and a US Coast Guard serviceman, haunted by his life as an orphan found in a tsunami with only a Nautilus shell. Having once been cursed as a hermit crab, he knows island magic more than anyone. He is a solitary man operating under the *Giga Blue* mission, unknowingly fighting the institution Acadia works in. His story involves finding his lost Indonesian family, mirroring Acadia's search.

KOOKY (8/teen) is a sassy, witty, and well-read Indo-Pacific horseshoe crab from Fossil Island. More open than most of her kind, she seeks companionship. Impulsive yet good-hearted, her talkative personality charms and drives Acadia crazy. She is the key to unlocking the island's secrets.

CAPTAIN PALO DINO (40s) is the Hispaniolan captain of a cargo ship carrying living fossil animals. He operates over international water to research human evolution, believing humanity to be complicit in slowing it down. He became a child prodigy in the study of evolutionary science due to losing his sister, Nelli, from solenodon toxin during a hurricane.

NOTES

/ - interruptions or interjections

Logline

A young biochemist must face her wild past and challenge her scientific future when she teams up with a Vietnamese horseshoe crab to find her mother, who was lost at sea near Fossil Island.

To find her mother who was lost at sea, a cynical teen biochemist must team up with a wisecracking talking horseshoe crab to reach a mystical island before a visionary madman harvests its ancient secrets.

SYNOPSIS

The Living Fossils is an animated musical fantasy series about a teen biochemist on an epic high-seas adventure. Led by a sassy horseshoe crab, Dr. Acadia Tran must race a shadowy evolutionary scientist to the spiritual Fossil Island, where the secrets of her mother's disappearance and ancient creatures lie buried in the deep blue sea. The story explores grief, forgiveness, and the tension between tradition and change through a bond between a moody teen and her unphased spirit animal, a living fossil.

On her 8th birthday, Acadia's mom, Cát, takes her on a fateful sailboat trip to Fossil Island near Haiphong, Vietnam. Fossil Island, where horseshoe crabs live, is a spiritual place where people can reconnect with deceased family members. Cát falls ill after a tragic accident involving an anchor and a baby horseshoe crab and is lost at sea during a typhoon. Acadia develops an obsession with the creatures she blames. She moves to Maine to live with her father, Morgan, a U.S. Coast Guard serviceman on a secret mission, and becomes a world-renowned biochemist by 15.

Months before she turns 16, Kooky, a talking horseshoe crab from Vietnam, is sent to Acadia's lab. Kooky promises to lead her to Fossil Island if spared. They sneak onto a cargo ship run by Captain Dino, an evolutionary scientist, who lets them stay. He mentors Acadia in his worldview that humanity needs evolution even through technological means as she helps in his lab. Kooky tries to be her conscience. Things erupt when Kooky confesses she "killed" Cát. Acadia pushes her overboard but regrets it and goes in after her. They are saved separately, and Acadia, inspired by her mom's proverb, finds Kooky and they reconcile.

Meanwhile, Morgan's "Giga Blue" mission reveals a paper trail to Dino. Using intel from Morgan, Acadia and Kooky sabotage Dino's experiments, and abandon the ship near Vietnam.

Their lifeboat sinks in the whirlpool that took Cát, and they awaken on Fossil Island. Using remnants of Cát's blood, Kooky transforms into Cát. The reunion is interrupted by Dino and his spiritual tech army. In the battle, the island's ancestors rise, and Cát saves her daughter one last time. Morgan's team arrives to shut down Dino's operation. Acadia leaves knowing that while her mom is physically gone, the spiritual connection is forever.

Plot Summary

The Living Fossils is an animated musical fantasy series about a teenage biochemist, Dr. Acadia Tran, whose life changes when she befriends a talking horseshoe crab named Kooky. She guides her on a quest to Fossil Island, a spiritual place tied to her mom's disappearance at sea. The story explores grief, forgiveness, and the tension between tradition and change through a bond between a moody teen and her unphased spirit animal, a living fossil.

On her 8th birthday, Acadia's mom, Cát, takes her on a fateful sailboat trip to Fossil Island near Haiphong, Vietnam. Fossil Island, where horseshoe crabs live, is a spiritual place where people can reconnect with deceased family members and ancestors. Cát gets injured by a baby horseshoe crab after an anchor sadly kills the crab's mother. Cát falls ill, a storm hits, and their boat sinks in a spiritual whirlpool. Acadia is rescued, but Cát is lost to the sea. Driven by grief and scientific curiosity, Acadia develops an ironic obsession with the creatures she blames for her loss. She moves to Maine to live with her father, Morgan, a US Coast Guard serviceman on a secret mission titled "Giga Blue." Acadia becomes a world-renowned biochemist by 15.

Months before her 16th birthday, a talking horseshoe crab from Vietnam (whom Acadia names Kooky) is sent to her lab. Kooky promises to guide her to Fossil Island if she spares her life. They steal an ATV and sneak onto a Vietnam-bound cargo ship. They are caught by Captain Palo Dino, who agrees to let them stay. The ship sets their personal drama in motion.

Dino mentors Acadia, bonding over shared trauma and pushing his philosophy that technology must master nature. Acadia works in the ship's lab, helping catalog rare animals and his operation of creating biomimetic technology for humanity at the cost of freedom for living fossils and their spiritual bond. The tension builds as Kooky acts as Acadia's conscience. Things explode when Kooky confesses she was the one who cut Cát's hand. Acadia is devastated and pushes Kooky overboard. Regretting her decision, Acadia jumps in after her. Acadia is saved by Morgan's saltwater crocodiles while Kooky is secretly saved by Coelacanths.

Acadia washes up on a shore, heartbroken and ready to abandon everything. A local reminds her of her mother's proverb, "When drinking water, remember the source." This makes her realize that rage keeps her from her mother's love and wisdom and the path to forgiveness. She finds Kooky nearby, and they reconcile.

Meanwhile, Morgan's "Blue Gigas" investigation reveals a paper trail to Dino. Morgan's personal search for his birth family in Indonesia provides crucial context; his mission and his family's history are deeply connected with Dino's targets. He finds out Acadia is involved from her use of his credential. He feeds Acadia crucial intelligence as she works from within the ship.

Acadia and Kooky put aside their differences and reject Dino's worldview, realizing the true strength lies in forgiveness and protecting nature. Using intel from Morgan, they sabotage a critical experiment that releases deadly animals, forcing them to abandon ship near Vietnam.

Acadia and Kooky's lifeboat sinks in the whirlpool that took Cát. They awaken on Fossil Island. Kooky magically transforms into Cát using her stored blood from the injury years ago. The reunion is interrupted by the arrival of Dino and his biomimetic living fossil army. In the final battle, the island's ancestors rise. Cát saves her daughter one last time before passing on. Morgan's team arrives, using his mission authority to shut down Dino's operation. Acadia leaves knowing that while her mom is physically gone, their spiritual connection is eternal, and Fossil Island is a sacred space to understand eternity.

Emotional Journey

Acadia, eight years old, experiences a tragedy on a sailboat trip near Haiphong that defines her life. Her mom, Cát, takes her to a spiritual place, Fossil Island, where the local belief is that one can reconnect with the deceased, especially through sacred horseshoe crabs. Everything changes when their anchor kills a mother horseshoe crab. As her mom pulls up the anchor, a baby horseshoe crab cuts Cát's hand, making her severely ill. A storm hits, the boat sinks, and the sea takes Cát away forever. Acadia is rescued, left with the crushing weight that these ancient creatures are responsible for her loss.

Living with her dad, Morgan, in Maine, Acadia funnels her grief into an obsession, becoming a renowned biochemist by 15. She joins the Bang-Levin Biological Station, driven by the ironically scientific quest to understand the very creatures she blames for her mother's disappearance, though her search for Fossil Island is fruitless.

Months later, an eccentric, talking horseshoe crab from Vietnam named Kooky arrives at her lab, offering a deal: Kooky will guide her to Fossil Island if Acadia spares its life. Driven by the desperate hope of seeing her mom again, Acadia agrees. They journey via modified ATV to Port Newark, stowing away on Captain Dino's cargo ship, a modern-day Noah's Ark for unevolved animals. Dino, who shares her pain of losing a loved one to a spiritual island's animal, encourages her scientific path to "save humanity" by harvesting horseshoe crab blood.

But doubt surfaces near southern Africa via an injured goblin shark, making Acadia realize Kooky is the actual creature who cut her mother's hand. In a fit of anger, Acadia pushes Kooky overboard, a decision she instantly regrets, plunging into the sea after her. Rescued by coelacanths and resurfacing alone, Acadia is heartbroken and decides to abandon her quest. Kooky, however, silently latches onto the ship's bow and follows her.

On the eve of her sixteenth birthday in Haiphong, Acadia saves Kooky from crocodiles. They reconcile, their shared journey pushing them toward the Cát Bà Archipelago. Renting a boat, the anchor triggers Kooky's distrust, leading them into a whirlpool. As they face death together, Acadia apologizes for her past actions, shedding her scientific detachment to face the same fate as her mom.

They awake on Fossil Island on her sixteenth birthday. At the family shrine, Kooky reveals she has preserved Cát's blood for eight years. Swimming with it, Kooky magically transforms into Cát. Their reunion is powerful, their bond unbroken by time or separation.

This spiritual moment is threatened by the arrival of Captain Dino and his crew, representing the cold, scientific exploitation Acadia had once embodied. In the final battle, the island's ancestors rise from the horseshoe crabs. Cát saves Acadia one last time, teaching her the ultimate truth: Fossil Island isn't a place to find the dead. It is a sacred space to understand that while a physical presence can be lost, a spiritual connection and love are eternal.

The Living Fossils

A Fantasy Play

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In Loving Memory of

Carly Christine Glynn

CAST OF CHARACTERS

CÁT LÝ TRẦN (32) is a Vietnamese native living in Haiphong. A physician by trade and storyteller by nature. Protective and deeply connected to ancestral memory. She is a living fossil herself, bridging her studies in Maine and life in Vietnam.

KOOKY is a wise horseshoe crab (Cát may double or voice her).

ACADIA NOBLE TRẦN (8/15) is Cát's daughter. A genius 7th grader. She is skeptical and prefers her phone to folklore. She views the world through a scientific lens but possesses a curiosity about her heritage. Born in Maine, she grew up in Haiphong with her mom. She grows up to be the world's youngest biochemist.

*Vendors, ancestors, horseshoe crabs, and other ensembles may be brought to life through puppetry

SETTINGS

Year: 2034 (Act I), 2042 (Act II)

Haiphong, Vietnam: Home, Pho Restaurant; Hanoi, Vietnam

Cát Bà Archipelago: The Sea, Fossil Island, Monkey Island

Maine: Laboratory

NOTES

/ - interruptions or interjections

Vietnamese is spoken. Long dialogue in *italics* is spoken in Viet with English translations projected as subtitles on a scrim. These subtitles are not always literal. They can be subtext.

Puppetry: Horseshoe crabs (16-inch adult and 4-inch juvenile).

Lighting: When horseshoe crabs get hurt or bite, the lighting effects should emphasize the bioluminescence of the crab's blue blood, signaling a shift from natural to supernatural.

Scrim: Shadow puppetry, sea imagery, ancestry, projections, etc.

SYNOPSIS

A young biochemist must face her wild past and challenge her scientific future when she teams up with a Vietnamese horseshoe crab to find her mother, who was lost at sea near Fossil Island.