

TUMANBAY

Episode 3.01 - "Tree of Sorrows"

by

John Dryden

Series created and written by
John Dryden & Mike Walker

Goldhawk Productions Ltd
info@goldhawk.eu

1.1 INT. CORRIDOR/MORGUE. PALACE. TUMANBAY - DAY

1.1

KNOCKING at a door. A hatch OPENS.

GUARD

Excellency. They're waiting for
you...

A heavy door is OPENED.

GREGOR'S FOOTSTEPS along a corridor. He DESCENDS some stone
steps.

Another door opens. The DIENER is waiting with his ASSISTANT.

DIENER

Thank you for coming so late. This
way, this way...

He LEADS along a dingy corridor and OPENS a door and STEPS
inside a small stone room.

DIENER (CONT'D)

Come into the cool room,
Excellency.

(to Assistant)

Baddool, more light.

Gregor ENTERS after him. It smells bad inside.

ASSISTANT

Of course.

DIENER

It may be nothing... but it may be -
I didn't want to be the one
responsible for...

(chuckles)

After a moment.

GREGOR

For what?

DIENER

For not doing my duty to Tumanbay,
Excellency. I thought you'd want to
see this.

GREGOR

Go on.

DIENER

A body.

GREGOR

Tumanbay has many bodies.

DIENER

Not like this one. It arrived this morning, packed in ice, in a caravan from al-Farzi. It's quite far gone but you can see what you have to see. This way, please.

They WALK over to a table. The Diener REMOVES a cloth. An intake of BREATH.

DIENER (CONT'D)

Two days ago, early in the morning, a soldier - we think he was a soldier from his uniform - though as you can see there's not much of it left - likely from one of the border garrisons. He stumbled into the town of al-Farzi apparently screaming his head off. We think he may have been the last survivor.

GREGOR

The last survivor of what?

DIENER

The border garrison. There had been skirmishes with the local tribes.

GREGOR

Or a deserter.

DIENER

Not likely, Excellency, not with these wounds.

Gregor EXAMINES the body.

GREGOR

He walked into al-Farzi in this state?

(beat)

Apart from his screaming... Did he say anything?

DIENER

No... He couldn't...

(showing Gregor)

No tongue, you see?

(beat)

Or hands or feet. He must have crawled through the desert.

Gregor EXAMINES the body thoughtfully.

DIENER (CONT'D)

What do you think, Sir?

GREGOR

It didn't happen in battle. Someone took their time to do this. They took care over it, to ensure he wouldn't die. You see, the wounds are cauterized.

DIENER

That's what I thought. That's why I sent for you, Excellency.

GREGOR

Mmm. Turn him over.

DIENER

Baddool...

The Assistant COMES OVER and they TURN the body.

GREGOR

Ah...

DIENER

Yes, I too wondered about that.

GREGOR

He's been branded...

GREGOR (V.O.)

People are comforted by a sense of order in this world, the things that surround us, the walls of the houses, the streets, the people, the empires. They give us certainty, a sense of purpose. Gradually strip them away and you realise you are completely on your own and everyone and everything... is different to what you thought.

GREGOR

Thank you. Report any other strange occurrences to me.

DIENER

Of course, Your Excellency.

Gregor WALKS away.

GREGOR (V.O.)

But for now, Tumanbay is a city trying to recover from the rule of Maya. Bakers still make bread, butchers still prepare meat and the young men of Tumanbay...

(MORE)

GREGOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
well they still fly in the skies
above the city...

CUT TO:

1.2 EXT. TUMANBAY. CITY WALLS - DAY

1.2

We hear all the sounds of the city beneath us. FROG (14), a street boy, is hanging off a kite which flaps above him.

An older street-boy, SPIDER (19), is on the ground and shouts up.

SPIDER
Hey, Frog, Frog... What can you see?

FROG
A party approaching. Across the desert. There's a banner, it looks official.... Whoa!

He gets caught in a GUST of wind.

FROG (CONT'D)
Whoa...

The kite swerves and the Frog TUMBLES down into the arms of MATILLA (13).

FROG (CONT'D)
Are you all right?

MATILLA
Yeah. That was... amazing!

FROG
My name's Frog.

MATILLA
Frog? What kind of a name is that?

FROG
It used to be a nickname but now it's my name.

MATILLA
What do you do, Frog? Do you croak?
Do you eat flies?

FROG
No, I fly.

They LAUGH.

MATILLA
But you must have a real name?

FROG

No... I haven't seen you here before.

MATILLA

I live in the Bulpass Quarter. My father's a merchant.

FROG

Merchant of what?

MATILLA

What do I care? All he's interested in is making money. There has to be more to life than that, don't you think?

FROG

Like what?

MATILLA

Well... what you do. Climbing the city walls. Jumping off them. Flying...

FROG

Well, it might look easy. But you need to know what you are doing.

MATILLA

Do you know what you are doing?

FROG

Of course, I've been doing it for years.

MATILLA

Then you can show me, can't you?

Spider COMES OVER.

SPIDER

Hey, who's this?

FROG

Er...

MATILLA

Matilla.

SPIDER

So what did you see?

MATILLA

What?

SPIDER

Not you. From the sky. What did you see?

FROG

Twenty horsemen at least. They had a flag. I think it's the new prince come to marry our Sultana.

1.3 EXT. DESERT OUTSIDE CITY WALLS - DAY

1.3

A horse TROTS across the sand. The RIDER pulls the reigns and turns the horse and stops next to HEROD (20s) who is on another horse looking up at the city.

RIDER

Prince Herod... Sir. Why have you stopped?

HEROD

I came here once as a child. I thought they had burnt it to the ground, but it's still so... so... I hope the Sultana is as beautiful. I hear she's a bit of a fighter.

RIDER

That's right, Sir. She's killed a few in her time. I wouldn't turn my back on her if I was you. Not till you know her.

Herod LAUGHS and KICKS his stirrups.

HEROD

Well, we'll see.
(moving forward)
Come on. I want to see what's behind those walls...

1.3A **OPENING TITLES - MUSIC**

1.3A

ANNOUNCER

**Tumanbay, Series 3, Episode 1.
"Tree of Sorrows", by John Scott
Dryden.**

1.4 EXT. TUMANBAY - DAY

1.4

A call to prayer.

GREGOR (V.O.)

Tumanbay has survived, as it always does. But it is a city weakened by Maya's brutal occupation.

We MOVE through the city.

We hear construction noises.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**Everyone is rebuilding. It is a
city of builders...**

1.5

INT. HEAVEN'S HOUSE. ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

1.5

Distant knocking. AKIBA moves through a corridor towards it.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**And in one part of the city - away
from the palace, at the house of my
poor old friend the slave trader,
Ibn Bai - his daughter, Heaven, a
young woman who will become part of
this mystery, is rebuilding her
life...**

Akiba OPENS the front door to reveal BAVAND (40s), a merchant.

AKIBA

Yes?

BAVAND

Is the lady of the house at home?

AKIBA

What is it concerning?

BAVAND

I am friend of her poor dear
father, Ibn Bai.

AKIBA

Oh...

BAVAND

I felt it my duty to come by and
see how my dear friend's daughter
is faring. Now that the dust has
settled, so to speak.

AKIBA

Please, please... come in.

They GO into the front hallway.

AKIBA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry for the mess.

BAVAND

Don't mention it, my dear man.
Don't mention it.

(MORE)

BAVAND (CONT'D)

We have all suffered, we are all
rebuilding our lives.

AKIBA

Come out into the courtyard. I'll
ask the maid to bring refreshments.

BAVAND

I really don't want to trouble-

AKIBA

Please, please...

1.6 EXT. HEAVEN'S HOUSE. COURTYARD - DAY

1.6

A few moments later. HEAVEN and Akiba sit with Bavand
DRINKING tea.

HEAVEN

So... you and my father were close?

BAVAND

Yes, the closest of friends. We
were business associates. I'm also
in the trade.

HEAVEN

I see.

BAVAND

And... well, poor fellow. I'm so
sorry for what happened.

HEAVEN

Thank you.

BAVAND

Your father may have... mentioned
me?

HEAVEN

Erm...

BAVAND

Oh, how rude of me. Bavand...
Malisifer Maqbool Shermasi Bavand.
But everyone knows me as just
Bavand.

HEAVEN

Well my father rarely talked to me
about his business.

BAVAND

Of course. And yet, even in business, he often talked about you, Mistress Heaven. Everything he did, was for you.

HEAVEN

Yes, well he loved his family very much.

BAVAND

He did, he did...

HEAVEN

Yes...
(grasping for something to say)

It's all a bit awkward. Then the sound of a child CRYING, off.

BAVAND

Ah...

HEAVEN

(getting up)
Yes... if you will excuse me, I must go and-

BAVAND

(abruptly)
There is something...

AKIBA

Yes?

BAVAND

Er - Mistress... before you go to attend your child.

HEAVEN

Oh... of course.

BAVAND

How can I, Bavand, bring this up at such a... No, Bavand, you must. Your father would have wanted me to, as a man of honour... Yet...

HEAVEN

What is it?

BAVAND

Mistress... Ibn Bai, your father, took a consignment of slaves from me and, well, when all this happened... well, he never managed to pay me for them.

HEAVEN

I see.
(calling out)
Miriam!

MAID APPROACHES.

MAID

Madam?

HEAVEN

If you could please see to Pahmina,
I will come shortly.

MAID

Yes, mistress.

The Maid GOES and after a while the child STOPS crying.

HEAVEN

How much did my father owe you?

BAVAND

Let me see...
(mumbles as if calculating
in his head)
Forty head of... With eight sent
to... Er... fifty six...
(with certainty)
Twelve hundred penari.

HEAVEN

Twelve hundred?

BAVAND

Yes.

HEAVEN

I will of course honour any debts
my father may have had. You have a
receipt, promissory note or
suchlike?

BAVAND

Oh, you can read?

HEAVEN

I can.

BAVAND

(surprised)
Ah... Well, er... of course, of
course. It was an agreement made
between friends - a man's word is
his... But, yes, yes, I'm sure I
have something I can bring to you
to show... Of course.

AKIBA

Good, good. Thank you for coming.

Bavand GETS UP.

BAVAND

So what are your plans now?

HEAVEN

We're going through my father's papers, learning all we can about his business. We plan to take it over, what's left of it, and try to build it up.

BAVAND

Good, good. There's a big demand for slaves at the moment. Everyone's rebuilding. You can capitalize on this.

AKIBA

That's what I keep telling her.

BAVAND

The problem of course these days, if you'll forgive me, is supply. Have you thought about that?

AKIBA

Well, we were lucky that one of Ibn Bai's ships was at a foreign port when the occupation happened.

BAVAND

Is that so?

HEAVEN

My father was a shrewd man.

BAVAND

He was indeed...

(beat)

Where is your father's ship?

HEAVEN

Where? Smirna. My family is from there.

AKIBA

We have sent word to suppliers there but...

BAVAND

Ah... Quality.

HEAVEN

I'm sorry?

BAVAND

Your associates haven't found the quality of slave you require. Am I right?

AKIBA

More or less.

BAVAND

The occupation has destroyed the supply chain. Now the Empire is weak, the routes aren't safe. And I'm sure any half-decent slaves you are able to acquire are expensive.

AKIBA

Yes, we are trying to raise funds.

BAVAND

Hmm... Bavand can see you are going to make a success of this.

AKIBA

Thank you, Sir. We think so too.

BAVAND

Look, I wouldn't normally do this but...

(sighs)

Bavand is going to hold off your father's debt.

HEAVEN

Really? That's-

BAVAND

Please. There's no need to thank me. In fact, I want to help you. I can see you need help. I can show you how the slave business works. Maybe Bavand can even invest in your endeavours.

1.7 INT. PALACE. THRONE ROOM - EVENING

1.7

MANEL sits on the throne, ALKIN by her side. QULAN and other OFFICIALS are in attendance. It's formal.

The grand doors of the Throne Room swing OPEN.

GREGOR (V.O.)

Tumanbay is on its knees. To survive, alliances are required...

A COURTIER ENTERS.

COURTIER

Your Majesty, His Excellency Prince
Herod, son of the governor of
Rasheem province...

We hear a CHAIN rolling along the ground. A MONKEY ENTERS
making lots of noise.

There is an amazed reaction from everyone present.

MANEL

What's going on?

After a moment, HEROD ENTERS behind it.

HEROD

The fabled white ape of the exotic
world... captured by my step-father
on one of his many hunting
expeditions to the lands of the
Kalaqara. A strange and wonderful
creature of great value... and a
fitting wedding gift to my
beautiful bride.

He PRESENTS her with the chain.

MANEL

I see. Very strange and wonderful.

HEROD

The Sultans of Tumanbay are famed
throughout the world for their
menagerie of exotic creatures. I
hope my gift will help return the
menagerie back to its former glory
after these times of trouble.

MANEL

Someone please...
(looking around for
someone to take the
monkey)

GREGOR (V.O.)

My niece, Manel, our new Sultana.

MANEL

Gregor?

GREGOR

Yes, Majesty.

GREGOR (V.O.)

Me, head of the Palace Guard...

MANEL

Can you please find someone to feed
and water our friend here...

GREGOR

Of course, Majesty.

He TAKES the chain.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**Am I now also to be her official
monkey handler?**

Gregor HANDS the chain to a Guard.

GREGOR

Take the ape to the menagerie. See
to it's well-being.

GUARD

Yes, Excellency.

The Guard GOES off with the ape.

MANEL

So... You call yourself a prince.
But your father is a provincial
governor. Is he now a king?

HEROD

Ah, no, no, no... It's merely what
my mother has always called me...

MANEL

Prince. Herod?

HEROD

Yes...

(laughing weakly)

To be honest, I am a little awe-
struck by the sight of such
perfection.

MANEL

(embarrassed)

I see... Well, I thank you for-

HEROD

I mean the city. I thought it had
been burnt to the ground by Maya
and yet... and yet it still stands
so... elegantly, so magnificently.

MANEL

Yes, we are rebuilding and doing
our best to repair what was
destroyed by the zealots.

HEROD

I have heard of you bravery,
Majesty, how you slew Maya's
regent.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**Sarah... In this very room, in
front of me. I had the chance to do
it myself, but I didn't,
couldn't... Was I beguiled by her?**

MANEL

(under Gregor)

I played but a small part in
returning Tumanbay to the people.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**They disappear into then walls...
That's what she told me before she
died.**

MANEL

Of course, we could not have
defeated Maya without Commander
Qulan who built and led an army of
slaves to storm the city.

HEROD

Commander... Father!
(hugs him)
It is an honour...

QULAN

No please, Sir, it's not necessary
to-

HEROD

You are the greatest commander
Tumanbay has ever know. I have read
of your deeds in the histories.

QULAN

I am merely a servant of Tumanbay.
And you will be too when you take
my daughter's hand in marriage.

Herod MOVES towards the throne and PROSTRATES himself.

HEROD

I offer myself up to you my Sultana
to use as you will.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**You will never know who the
believers are until it's time for
them to come out again.**

HEROD

With you at my side, we will make
Tumanbay great again.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**They might be your neighbour, they
might be your friend...**

Alkin STEPS forward and whispers in Manel's ear.

ALKIN

Majesty, if I may advise...

GREGOR (V.O.)

They might even be your advisor...

ALKIN

I would suggest at this point it
would be a good idea to ask Prince
Herod to step outside...

(continues in a whisper)

GREGOR (V.O.)

**Alkin, the traveller, now vizier to
the Sultana - replacing that slimy
worm Cadali, a man I hated and who
hated me. In Tumanbay, the art of
living is the art of surviving.**

QULAN

Gregor, the meeting is over.

Gregor looks around. Everyone has left.

GREGOR

Oh... I...

QULAN

It went well.

GREGOR

Yes, yes, they seem a good match.

QULAN

Where are you, Gregor?

GREGOR

I'm right here, brother. Watching,
waiting, looking for anything out
of the ordinary, keeping the
Sultana safe. That's my job.

QULAN

And have you seen anything out of
the ordinary?

GREGOR

Apart from a white ape?

(beat)

There are things, small things
perhaps... signs that may point to-

QULAN

(sarcastic)

Maya?

GREGOR

I wouldn't be doing my job if I
didn't look into everything that
seems out of place.

Qulan takes a long hard look at Gregor. He's worried for him.

QULAN

Maya is defeated.

GREGOR

I found the door to my apartment
unlocked.

QULAN

When?

GREGOR

This morning. I always lock it.

Qulan LAUGHS.

QULAN

Maybe you need to take some time
off, Gregor.

GREGOR

There's too much to do.

QULAN

You've been through a lot. The
Palace Guard will see to-

GREGOR

Rooting out the spies? *They* could
be spies. There are spies
everywhere. They come out of the
walls.

Qulan takes a deep BREATH.

QULAN

You're stuck in the swamp, Gregor.
We've drained the swamp. There are
other dangers now. Tumanbay is
weak. We need to rebuild. We need
alliances.

GREGOR

Then you do your job and let me do mine...

Gregor LEAVES.

1.8 INT. HAREEM - DAY

1.8

Manel is being WASHED in the baths by slaves while Alkin looks on.

MANEL

He's a fool.

ALKIN

At least he's a handsome fool.

MANEL

(mocking)

"I am a little awe-struck by the sight of such perfection" - on our first meeting? And he wasn't even talking about me?

ALKIN

He will look good sitting beside you on the throne.

MANEL

So would that monkey. His mother seriously calls him "Prince"? I'm not going to marry a man whose mother calls him-

ALKIN

Manel, you keep taking one step forward and two steps back. Your father is right-

MANEL

But why do I need a husband? I already have a lover.

ALKIN

(kissing her)

Marriage is for legitimacy, lovers are for pleasure - they are two separate things. Your father-

MANEL

I am not my father, but I have proved myself. If you are so keen on him why don't you go to him? I know you do.

ALKIN

Well, you are more beautiful and lovely.

MANEL

(pulling away)

If you have taught me anything, it is to mistrust honeyed words.

Manel STANDS. A Slave begins to DRY her.

ALKIN

All right, try these words: you. Have. No. Choice.

(beat)

It has to be done. You have to play this part. As I have to play the part of your vizier. It's all story-telling. We are part of the great story of Tumanbay. Maybe you will understand that one day.

Manel looks at Alkin genuinely perplexed.

MANEL

Who are you, really?

ALKIN

Really, we are who we are, here and now. That's all that concerns us. And you need to do marry this-

MANEL

Spoilt, mollycoddled, mama's boy.

ALKIN

Yes. You need to do it.

MANEL

(sighs)

Slave, take this.

She passes the slave a towel.

1.9 INT. PALACE. CORRIDOR - DAY

1.9

FOOTSTEPS.

GREGOR (V.O.)

Day after day, hour after hour, I pace the palace corridors looking for signs. How is it possible she conquered an empire and then simply disappeared... like water soaking away.

Gregor DESCENDS some stone steps. The Guard greets him.

GREGOR (V.O.)

There are so many collaborators out there still, hiding... It's my job to-

GUARD

Excellency.

GREGOR

Any progress?

GUARD

Nothing yet, Excellency.

Gregor SIGHS.

GREGOR

All right. Let's get to work...

1.10 INT. DUNGEONS - DAY

1.10

A PRISONER is being held in some sort of metal contraption. A TORTURER stands close by.

GREGOR

So you say... you were just employed in the scriptorium...

PRISONER

Yes, Excellency. That's all. I-

GREGOR

But wasn't it your name on the arrest warrants? Didn't you counter sign them?

PRISONER

You know, your name was on that order too. You told me to sign it!
(howling)
You were the worst collaborator of them all and yet you, Gregor, you walk free. Do you feel no shame?

GREGOR (V.O.)

I look within myself for that shame... for even the tiniest speck, but... no...

GREGOR

Are you still in touch with her?

PRISONER

What do you mean?

GREGOR

Maya. How do you contact her? How does she reach you?

PRISONER

I've never even set eyes on her. All I did was do my job - just like you...

Gregor SIGHS.

GREGOR

(to Torturer)

Continue...

TORTURER

Yes, Your Excellency.

Gregor WALKS AWAY...

PRISONER

No... No... Nooo!

1.11 INT. PALACE. GREGOR'S ROOMS - DAY

1.11

Gregor looks out over the city.

GREGOR (V.O.)

The others are too busy rebuilding. They think it's all over. Good luck to them. They don't see what I see...

A CRASH outside. Gregor goes to the door and OPENS it.

GREGOR

What are you doing?

SELIM is there with two WORKMEN.

SELIM

Oh, I'm sorry, Excellency, I didn't realize you were here. We are repairing the damage to the walls. We will come back later.

GREGOR

You are the supervisor?

SELIM

Yes, Excellency. Selim, Pasha of the middle division. Is there anything you require?

GREGOR

No.

SELIM

Slowly we are bringing the palace
back to its former glory.

GREGOR

Yes. Good... Carry on.

Gregor CLOSES the door and GOES back to looking out of the window.

GREGOR (V.O.)

She's out there somewhere.

A KNOCK on the door.

GREGOR

Yes, what is it?

There's no answer.

Gregor GOES to the door and OPENS it. Outside the corridor is empty.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Hello?

He TURNS to go back into his room, then notices something on the floor. It's a letter. He PICKS it up and OPENS it.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

(reading)

"That which is dead will live
again..."

GREGOR (V.O.)

Is this a note from Maya for me?

1.12 INT. PALACE CORRIDOR - DAY

1.12

Gregor walks quickly towards the sound of HAMMERING. He goes round a corner. We hear Selim giving ORDERS to the Workmen.

SELIM

Not that one. Pull it out or it
will make it worse-

GREGOR

You - Selim!

SELIM

Excellency?

GREGOR

You were outside my rooms just now.
Did you see anyone pass by?

SELIM

Yes.

GREGOR

Yes?

SELIM

A woman.

GREGOR

What did she look like?

SELIM

I don't know. We were working and she just passed by... A lady's slave I thought. She wore a hood.

GREGOR

Which way did she go?

SELIM

That way?

Gregor RUNS.

SELIM (CONT'D)

Is everything all right,
Excellency?

Gregor RACES down the corridor. He OPENS a door. Nothing. He sees a slave.

GREGOR

You! Has anyone passed by here?

SLAVE

No one, Excellency.

Gregor RUNS the other way. He STOPS outside his room, out of breath. He PICKS up the note again...

GREGOR

"That which is dead will live
again..."

(beat)

Damn!

1.13 EXT. SLAVE MARKET - DAY

1.13

Bavand is showing Heaven and Akiba around the slave market.

BAVAND

New traders are arriving daily - be careful of them. Some will try to make their merchandise look fresher than they actually are.

(MORE)

BAVAND (CONT'D)

Then you get them home and discover they can't even stand up without assistance. And some are a danger - especially if you have children in the house.

He STOPS at a slave cage.

BAVAND (CONT'D)

Ah, see this one, for example...
(to Slave)
You, step forward.

We hear chains clink as the SLAVE steps forward.

BAVAND (CONT'D)

(to Slave)
Come, come, slave. Don't be scared... That's right, that's right. Pah!

He WHACKS the Slave in the belly.

HEAVEN

What are you doing?!

He HITS him again.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

Akiba, stop him.

AKIBA

Effendi, Effendi-

BAVAND

Did you see?

AKIBA

What are you doing?

BAVAND

He didn't react. Didn't even flinch.

He looks around for the Slave Trader.

BAVAND (CONT'D)

You!

SLAVE TRADER

Sir?

BAVAND

What do you drug your slaves with?

SLAVE TRADER

No Effendi, we would never drug our-

BAVAND

Trickster, crook, thief! You drug
your slaves with opiates!

They continue to ARGUE over one another until Bavand's
satisfied he's made his point.

BAVAND (CONT'D)

(to Heaven and Akiba)

Come, my friends. That's it...

He USHERS them away and along another line of slave traders.

BAVAND (CONT'D)

We must try to deal with the
traders who have the Sultan's
seal... if you can find them. Most,
unfortunately, are either dead or
have left the city. I am one of the
very few of the old guard left.

They pass a stall. SLAVE TRADER 2 recognizes Heaven and calls
out.

SLAVE TRADER 2

Heaven? It is Heaven, isn't it? Ibn
Bai's own flesh and blood.

HEAVEN

Yes.

SLAVE TRADER 2

I'm so sorry about your father. He
was a good man.

HEAVEN

Thank you.

SLAVE TRADER 2

Life, eh? He had some bad luck,
your father.

HEAVEN

He did.

(beat)

How is business now?

SLAVE TRADER 2

Not good, not good. For a while the
ships stopped delivering slaves
altogether. Now they are trickling
in, but really not the quality
customers expect - you know, thin
boys from the swamps, often with
disease. But, perhaps things will
improve in time-

BAVAND

Er, Heaven... Come...

He GUIDES her away.

BAVAND (CONT'D)

It's not a good idea to get too familiar with... Come, we will get tea.

1.14 EXT. CAFE - DAY

1.14

Heaven, Akiba and Bavand sit at a table SIPPING tea.

BAVAND

(producing papers)

So I took the liberty of preparing an agreement...

HEAVEN

An agreement for what?

BAVAND

Our business arrangements of course, Mistress. I'll read it for you and then... er... your husband can sign.

HEAVEN

No, I will read it and I will sign it.

BAVAND

Of course, of course. Please...

As she READS Bavand talks to Akiba.

AKIBA

My wife has a shrewder eye for the detail than me.

BAVAND

Of course. She gets it from her father... Wonderful, wonderful... You know this place used to be buzzing. You could barely get a seat without...
(chuckles...)

HEAVEN

I'm not quite clear what this means?

BAVAND

Ah, yes Mistress. That's a standard clause - it just authorizes me, Bavand, as your agent to act in your name... I need to have your authority to... I've got five hundred slaves at Smirna. Paid for, just waiting to be collected.

HEAVEN

Hmmm. I don't feel comfortable just-

BAVAND

I want you to be comfortable, my dear girl. I do want you-

AKIBA

If Bavand is to supply the slaves it makes sense he should have the authority to-

BAVAND

Look, I can see you need to think about this. I'll step outside so you can discuss. Please, discuss away. Bavand wants you to be happy.

He GOES.

AKIBA

What's wrong?

HEAVEN

I don't know. I don't trust him.

AKIBA

This is a good deal. Everyone is desperate for slaves.

HEAVEN

Supposing he sails off with my father's ship and we never hear from him again?

AKIBA

Why would he? He wants to make money from the slaves. Where better to sell them than in Tumanbay?

HEAVEN

I can't sign over my authority to him. I just can't.

AKIBA

Then you will be a slave merchant without any slaves to sell.

Heaven thinks about this for a moment.

HEAVEN

Listen Akiba, I need to go with him.

AKIBA

What are you talking about?

HEAVEN

To Smirna. He needs to be watched. We can't let him just-

AKIBA

What? I don't understand.

HEAVEN

You can come too...

AKIBA

And our child?

They sit silently for a moment SIPPING their tea, thinking it through.

AKIBA (CONT'D)

Look... I'll go.

HEAVEN

No. You would be too trusting. You don't know anything about this business.

AKIBA

Nor do you!

HEAVEN

I watched my father. I may not have done it, but I watched him and he was good at it. And the one thing I know is you need to be there to know what's going on. Bavand says he's got five hundred slaves at Smirna. We don't know that.

AKIBA

He seems like a good man to me.

HEAVEN

Yeah. My point exactly.

Bavand RETURNS.

BAVAND

Everything all right?

Hold the awkward silence.

1.15 INT. PALACE LIBRARY - DAY

1.15

Gregor MOVES along a corridor towards the Library, where LIBRARIAN and ASSISTANT are working. As he ENTERS everyone STANDS UP out of respect.

GREGOR

Sit, please sit.

GREGOR (V.O.)**The palace scriptorium...**

LIBRARIAN

Excellency, what an honour it is that you should grace our library with your-

GREGOR

Yes, yes...

(holding up the note)

This line - where does it come from?

LIBRARIAN

"That which is dead... will live again..." Ah yes... It's familiar... It's erm... it's wrong.

GREGOR

What?

LIBRARIAN

Whoever wrote it has got it wrong. It should be, "will rise again". It's from an old poem by the... erm... Let me see...

He RUMMAGES through some shelves.

LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)

It's amazing we managed to save so much of this material. That so much of it survived is... well, a miracle-

GREGOR

Yes, get on with it.

LIBRARIAN

It's somewhere up there with the commentaries. You boy! Bring me... er... Volume fifty six of-

ASSISTANT

The histories?

LIBRARIAN

That's the one.

The ASSISTANT CLIMBS the ladder.

LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)

So much of the good stuff was - well, it's not commonly known, of course... Maya's people weren't destroying it, they were selling it. They needed the money to pay for their armies.

The Assistant HANDS him a volume.

LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)

Ah, thank you... Look at the binding on this, the decoration, the beautiful scroll work...

GREGOR

Yes, please... the quote.

LIBRARIAN

Well, it's a short poem by the Feyaan mountain poet, Abbinnal. Err...

(turning pages)

Yes. That's your poem, Excellency.

He HANDS it to Gregor.

GREGOR

I don't understand it.

LIBRARIAN

Oh, of course. I will translate it for you.

(reading)

"That which is dead will rise again. The riverbed will flow once more, the Tree of Sorrows from the dust emerge. With the eye of the bird, the Sword of Light appears, the golden domes but specks on a tapestry of time..." Wonderful, just wonderful...

GREGOR

Yes, but what does it mean? What is the "Sword of Light", "the Tree of Sorrows"?

LIBRARIAN

It's poetry. He is taking us from the depth of despair to the soaring heights - like a bird looking down from the sky. It's said that Abbinnal was one of the very first kite flyers in the city. When he was a boy.

(MORE)

LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)

And that's how he crippled himself. People look up at them today and think that's just what the youth are doing - but there are drawings from many centuries ago: the kite flyers are nothing new. I can show you...

(bustling over to another shelf)

This volume here...

(turns back for Gregor)

But Gregor has GONE.

LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)

My Lord? My Lord?

(to Assistant)

Where did he go?

1.16 EXT. STREET - DAY

1.16

Gregor GOES through the street.

GREGOR (V.O.)

The kite flyers, the gangs of youths who tempt chance with their lives daily for what... a moment of sheer unadulterated excitement, a moment of truth? I can understand that.

He APPROACHES a group of STREET KIDS, including Frog and Spider.

GREGOR

You there... Hey... Don't run. I mean you no harm. I want to talk to you.

SPIDER

You want to join us, grandfather?

The other Kids LAUGH.

GREGOR

I wouldn't presume to do be able to do what you do. I can see that it takes great skill.

SPIDER

That is does, Excellency.

GREGOR

You know who I am?

SPIDER

Have you come to arrest us?

GREGOR

No, I need your help.

SPIDER

Our help?

GREGOR

You have seen the city from the sky. Tell me... What is the Sword of Light?

SPIDER

The Sword of Light? I've never heard of it.

GREGOR

Are you sure?

SPIDER

You'll have to ask your informers and spies. We're the Skyrats, we don't talk to no one...

He RUNS off. Frog STEPS forward.

FROG

It's where the Grand Road comes into the city and joins the Street of the Swords.

GREGOR

What?

FROG

From above it looks like a sword. You can see it from the highest towers, but otherwise you wouldn't know it was there, unless you were flying, like us.

GREGOR

And the Tree of Sorrows?

FROG

I have never heard of the Tree of Sorrows.

Gregor recognizes Frog.

GREGOR

You, Boy... I recognise you from somewhere.

FROG

I don't think so, Effendi.

GREGOR

You're the child who had visions.
You came to the palace once to meet
the Sultan.

FROG

No, not me.

GREGOR

Toad or.... Frog. Yes, that's your
name.

FROG

You are mistaken, Sir.

SPIDER

Hey Frog, Frog...

FROG

I have to go.

He RUNS off.

GREGOR

(to himself)

Frog... That's right.

1.17 EXT. BACK ALLY - EVENING

1.17

Frog CATCHES UP with Spider and Matilla who are sitting on a
wall.

SPIDER

Don't talk to him. He's a spy from
the palace.

MATILLA

What did he want?

Spider sees something and JUMPS off the wall.

SPIDER

(shouting)

Hey you! This is Skyrats street.
Don't come here unless you wanna
get killed...

He RUNS after the newcomer.

MATILLA

He's very aggressive.

FROG

Has to be. Have to protect our
patch. No one else is going to do
it for us.

MATILLA

This is where you live?

FROG

We are the rats who live in the city. All the money we beg and steal, we use to build kites... And that's what we do.

MATILLA

He knew you.

FROG

Who?

MATILLA

That man from the palace.

FROG

He said he did.

MATILLA

What did he mean about the visions?

FROG

What?

MATILLA

I was standing right there.

FROG

I have no idea. He thought I was someone else.

MATILLA

Then how did he know your name?

Frog SIGHS.

FROG

My parents thought I had the powers of prophecy. When I was young I used to... have dreams. My father worked at the palace and once I was brought in front of the Sultan. I predicted a great victory but I was wrong... dreams can mean whatever you want them to... I don't have them anymore and I'm glad because they were horrible dreams. Won't your father be wondering where you are?

Matilla GETS UP.

MATILLA

My father is too busy to care where I am. But I have to go back. To see my little brother.

FROG

Why?

MATILLA

He likes to see me before he goes to sleep.

FROG

Must be nice, having a family.

MATILLA

I will come back later. I'll bring food.

FROG

Thank you. But we don't need your charity.

MATILLA

I want to stay on the streets with you. I want to see how the Skyrats live.

FROG

Suit yourself.

MATILLA

Fine.

She GOES.

1.18 EXT. PALACE GARDENS - EVENING

1.18

Manel and Herod WALK through the palace gardens. They pass Workmen ERECTING scaffolding.

MANEL

As you can see there's a lot to be done. We are still rebuilding the city.

HEROD

Well I hope I'll be able to be some help.

MANEL

(stops)

Why, are you good at building?

HEROD

What do you mean?

MANEL

Putting up scaffolds, knocking down walls, lifting rocks?

HEROD

Er... well, I'm not sure.

MANEL

There is a shortage of workers now.

HEROD

Well... I mean, I have seen the slaves building an extension to my mother's summer lodge... But...

MANEL

I'm joking.
(she laugh)
You looked so worried.

HEROD

Oh... Ha, ha... Yes...

MANEL

Maya's people took everything. See? That's the grand dome - it used to be covered in gold. Now we have to replace it with copper. In time, we will make Tumanbay what it was...

HEROD

It's a great task. And, sincerely... I really do want to help in any way I can.

MANEL

I know you do. And I appreciate what you and your family have done to help us in our time of need.

They WALK in silence for a moment. Then Herod STOPS and TURNS to her.

HEROD

Look, I know as well as you do... we've been pushed into this - it's politics. But we don't need to be the victims of it. We can ride this horse and see where it takes us... I know you have someone...

MANEL

What are you talking about?

HEROD

I've heard... And you're loyal to her and that's all right by me. I understand that. I admire it.

(MORE)

HEROD (CONT'D)

I'm not some great hulking barbarian who's going to throw myself on you. I mean do I look like a barbarian?

MANEL

(smiling at the thought)
Not exactly.

HEROD

Look you and I will do what we have to do. And who knows? We may even enjoy it.

She LAUGHS.

HEROD (CONT'D)

You have such a nice open face when you laugh. Why don't we just agree. We'll sleep together when the prophets demand. But we'll live each to our own. We'll come together to sit in council, to make decisions, rule the Empire-

MANEL

Decisions?

HEROD

Well, we need to make Tumanbay great again.

MANEL

Look, I don't think you understand.

HEROD

What?

MANEL

You will not be Sultan. You will be consort to the Sultana. But you will have no power to rule.

HEROD

Oh...
(beat)

MANEL

I'm sorry, but-

HEROD

No. I'm so glad you said that because... what I said before about the council... That was my mother speaking, not me. I never wanted to be a ruler or a king or anything. I just want to get on with my life. To enjoy myself.

MANEL

Well...

(surprised)

... that's settled then.

HEROD

So let's agree. It can be our secret secret. In public we are Prince and Sultana - and I'll do everything required of me to put on a good show. But in private we live the lives we want to live... without fear or shame... Do you agree?

MANEL

But what exactly are we agreeing to?

HEROD

No don't say anything. Just smile like you did just a few moments ago... and I'll know.

Hold for a few seconds.

1.19 INT. PALACE - EVENING

1.19

Gregor WALKS along a corridor. He is JOINED by Qulan, who falls into step.

QULAN

Are you going somewhere?

GREGOR

What is it to you?

QULAN

Where is your guard?

GREGOR

Relax, Brother.

QULAN

You've been seen in the city alone.

GREGOR

I'm not at liberty to discuss it. Why are you having me watched?

QULAN

Only for your protection. I'm worried about you Gregor.

GREGOR

Good to know.

QULAN

There are people with scores to settle...

GREGOR

Ah... Well, that's my job, Qulan. To know what's going on. Maybe you should concern yourself with your job - how well could Tumanbay defend itself from attack, I wonder?

QULAN

There are people in the city who think you collaborated with Maya's regime.

They get to the door. The Guard at the door JUMPS to attention.

GUARD

Commander, Excellency.

GREGOR

Open.

The Guard OPENS the door. Gregor GOES through.

QULAN

Be careful, Gregor.

GREGOR

I'm always careful, Brother.

QULAN

No, you used to be careful...

Gregor DISAPPEARS into the night.

1.20 EXT. STREET OF SWORDS - NIGHT

1.20

A lively nighttime market. Gregor APPROACHES a stall. The TRADER greets him.

TRADER

Looking for something special?

GREGOR

Perhaps.

The trader PULLS out a sword from a rack.

TRADER

Tempered steel made by our very own craftsmen. Take it. Feel the weight.

Gregor TAKES it.

GREGOR

Not bad.

TRADER

Feel the edge... You see? Hold it out. I'll-

Gregor HOLDS out the sword.

TRADER (CONT'D)

Watch this. I drop the silk cloth onto it... and...

(the cloth is cut in two)

You see? You won't find this quality anywhere else in the street. You'd have to go to... oh, I don't know... Marshar or...

Gregor PUTS the sword down.

GREGOR

I'm looking for... the "Tree of Sorrows". I was told it was in this area.

TRADER

(calling out)

Father!

An ELDERLY MAN APPEARS.

TRADER (CONT'D)

He's looking for the Tree of Sorrows.

ELDERLY MAN

Oh yes? Why?

GREGOR

I'm from the library. We are rebuilding, re-cataloging, finding out what has been lost and what we have saved. There's a poem by Abbinnal that talks of the Tree of Sorrows...

ELDERLY MAN

It's not a tree at all. It's a well. They used to throw unfaithful wives down it.

GREGOR

Where is it?

ELDERLY MAN

They built over it years ago. Just there, at the end of the street, where the café is.

Gregor is about to GO, when the Trader GRABS him.

TRADER

I recognize you.

GREGOR

I don't think so.

TRADER

You say you are from the palace library.

GREGOR

That's right.

TRADER

No. You were with the rebels, weren't you?

GREGOR

Yes, perhaps.

TRADER

No, wait. You are the man who betrayed my brothers, you informed... Gregor!

GREGOR

No, you are mistaken.

TRADER

(shouting)

A traitor! A collaborator! A collaborator!

The Trader REACHES for the sword, but Gregor is too fast and HOLDS it at his neck.

GREGOR

How sharp did you say this sword was? I wouldn't shout if I were you.

The Trader GASPS.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Children?

TRADER

Huh?

GREGOR

Do you have children?

TRADER

Yes.

GREGOR

Good. Now, I'm going to give you the chance to live. I'm going to walk away into the crowd... but if you - or your father here - shouts again, I'm going to come back for you. Maybe not today, but sometime soon, with the Palace Guard, do you understand? And you will be very, very apologetic to your father here, your wife... and your children... for destroying their futures. Is that clear?

TRADER

Yes?

GREGOR

How much?

TRADER

Very.

GREGOR

No, how much for the sword?

The Trader MUMBLES something incoherent.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

(taking out some coins)

Never mind. Keep the change.

He PUSHES the Trader away, then turns and DISAPPEARS into the crowd.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**I thought I knew every corner of
this city - but it turns out I
don't know much at all...**

1.21 EXT. CITY OF THE DEAD - NIGHT

1.21

The Skyrats sleep amongst the tombstones and catacombs of the vast graveyard.

Frog CRIES out.

MATILLA

(shaking him)

Frog, Frog... Wake up.

He GROANS.

MATILLA (CONT'D)

Were you having one of your dreams?

FROG

No... I don't have them any more.

MATILLA

I know that isn't true. What did you dream?

FROG

(groggy)

It doesn't make any sense...

MATILLA

Maybe I can help you understand it.

FROG

I saw a fat man... tied to a post. He was talking, talking so much, but I couldn't hear anything he said. Soldiers were standing all around him. A woman... the Sultana perhaps, but not our Sultana, she was older... I think our Sultana was there also, watching from behind. The older Sultana looked at the fat man with fire in her eyes. She was going to do something terrible to him... but then... his tongue came out of his mouth, like a lizard, it just kept coming, on and on, and then she cut it off. And it fell to the ground and turned into a snake and slithered away through the sand...

SPIDER

(from nearby)

What's that? Had another one of your dreams?

FROG

No. We were just-

Spider ROLLS towards him.

SPIDER

Frog can see the future you know?

MATILLA

Yes.

SPIDER

Why don't you read my future?

FROG

I can't just-

SPIDER

He never wants to help his friends.

FROG

It's not that. I have no real powers-

SPIDER

You gave her a reading.

FROG

No, I-

SPIDER

Don't lie. I heard you just now tell her about your dream. Now tell me mine or I'll have to...

He GRABS Frog.

MATILLA

No, leave him!

He PUSHES him against a wall.

SPIDER

Well?

Silence.

SPIDER (CONT'D)

What is it?

FROG

Nothing.

SPIDER

No, I saw it in your face. Just now. You saw something. What was it?

FROG

You're... you're going to be a sea captain - no, a famous pirate. And you'll take on all of Tumanbay's navy...

SPIDER

And will I beat them?

FROG

Oh yes, for sure. You will be feared by all. And you'll have nine children.

SPIDER

Nine children eh? Not bad...

1.22 INT. CAFE OF THE TREE OF SORROW - NIGHT

1.22

Gregor sits at a table DRINKING coffee. He is one of the last customers left. CAFE OWNER approaches.

CAFE OWNER

Can I get you anything else,
Effendi?

GREGOR

There used to be a well here,
didn't there?

CAFE OWNER

Actually, it's still here. Around
the back. Dried up years ago.

GREGOR

The Tree of Sorrow, I understand it
was called.

The Cafe Owner LEANS in.

CAFE OWNER

(whispers)

Are you from the palace?

GREGOR

Why?

CAFE OWNER

I've been expecting you,
Excellency.

GREGOR

Why is that?

CAFE OWNER

(handing him a key)

Take this key and go down the
passageway, there. You will see a
small courtyard and there is a door
just beyond it...

GREGOR

Yes. But who gave you this-

CAFE OWNER

I know nothing. I'm just a
messenger. He is waiting for you
there.

GREGOR

He? Who is waiting for me?

CAFE OWNER

I just deliver the instructions.
Please...

Gregor TAKES the key and GETS UP.

CAFE OWNER (CONT'D)
Just along there. That's right...

Gregor GOES along the passage.

1.23 EXT. COURTYARD OF THE TREE OF SORROW - DAY

1.23

Gregor EMERGES into a courtyard. He STOPS at a door. He puts the key in the lock and TURNS it. As he PUSHES the door open... he hears a slow CLAP. CADALI is there.

GREGOR
(astonished)
Cadali! But that's impossible -
you're... dead.

CADALI
Do I look dead, my dear fellow?

MUSIC.

End of Episode 3.01.