

TUMANBAY

Episode 3.08 - "The Coming"

by

Mac Rogers

Series created and written by
John Dryden & Mike Walker

Goldhawk Productions Ltd
info@goldhawk.eu

8.1 EXT. THE DESERT - DAY 8.1

The Balarac cavalry thunder across the sand toward Tumanbay.

8.2 EXT. PRISON CART - DAY 8.2

The Balarac cavalry is riding to Tumanbay. CADALI is in a cage, being carried by cart. GREGOR RIDES beside him. Balarac SERGEANT RIDES up ahead.

GREGOR (V.O.)

I'm riding alongside Cadali in the Balarac prison cart - across the sands to my vulnerable Tumanbay. Am I'm racing towards his execution or my own?

BALARAC SERGEANT

(from outside)

Halt!

Outside the slowing cart, we can hear the whole Balarac cavalry slowing and STOPPING as the order is ECHOED.

CADALI

What's happening, Gregor? Why have we stopped?

Gregor RIDES closer to the prison cart.

GREGOR

We're in sight of the city.

CADALI

Show me, Gregor. Please.

GREGOR

I'm not letting you out, Cadali.

CADALI

Just ask the man to turn the cart, Gregor, I implore you.

GREGOR

(to the cart-driver)

Do it.

The driver ROTATES the cart so Cadali can see the city.

CADALI

Ahh... this is her most beautiful moment of the day, don't you think, Gregor? Tumanbay at dusk. It looks alive, somehow, like a rose.

GREGOR

A rose with thorns.

CADALI
Well, naturally.

GREGOR
Welcome home, Cadali.

CADALI
(laughing sadly)
All these years, Gregor, and you
still don't understand.

GREGOR
Enlighten me.

CADALI
Tumanbay is home to no one. It's
somewhere we all came to, somewhere
we arrived at, leaving some
forsaken point of origin far behind
us. And once we arrived... it
remade us. Into what we are now.

GREGOR
We made ourselves what we are.

CADALI
You know, Gregor...

GREGOR
Don't even start.

CADALI
You could let me out of this cage
right now.

GREGOR
In front of the eyes of the entire
Balarac cavalry?

CADALI
They don't care about us. A pair of
hapless advisors, scurrying
impotently across the sand. You
know what they actually want. And
you know we can stop them.

GREGOR
Do I?

CADALI
You and me, Gregor. Just unlatch
this door. Set me free. Before it's
too late.

GREGOR
Cast your mind back, Cadali. See if
you can recall trying to execute me
in front of my own people.

CADALI

Gregor-

GREGOR

It's been "too late" for you for a long time.

Gregor WALKS away...

CADALI

Listen, listen, Gregor, that was just - I never would have - Gregor!

8.3 INT. FATIMA'S ROOMS. PALACE. TUMANBAY - DAY

8.3

FATIMA, QULAN, and MANEL look out toward the desert. SLAVES and COURTIERS are with them.

MANEL

It looks like the desert is on fire.

QULAN

That's the Balarac. The sun reflecting off their armour. It's a tactic: your sentries come running in from the desert screaming, "It's as if the fire itself is coming to destroy us!" Terror can win most battles even before the fighting starts.

An OFFICER ENTERS as Fatima speaks.

FATIMA

Relax, the both of you! "Fire" indeed. What you need is to eat - look, there are dates right in front of you, there's mint tea. Everything is going to plan!

OFFICER

Commander. My Lady. Your Majesty.

QULAN

Officer, what news from your scouts?

OFFICER

The traitor Cadali is in Gregor's custody. The Balarac will wait in the desert until we let them in.

QULAN

Thank you, Officer. Then you can still change your mind, Majesty.

FATIMA

And why should she want to do that?

QULAN

Only if further reflection led the Sultana to concluding that she made a foolish decision in haste.

FATIMA

What, there will be fifty of them? Seventy at most?

QULAN

Seventy of the greatest fighting men the world has ever seen.

FATIMA

Oh Qulan, you're moaning as if we don't already have our own army in place!

QULAN

Meaning your troops.

FATIMA

Who else?

QULAN

You think they're a match for the Balarac?

FATIMA

I know mine outnumber theirs ten to one. But you are the great military tactician, perhaps I am missing a nuance?

QULAN

As you well know, I haven't had time to properly train-

FATIMA

Here's my problem, Qulan: you arrived at my door, whining for help. Yet from the moment I began providing that help, you've done nothing but complain. This is the great general of legend?

MANEL

Enough!

FATIMA

Other than leaving the Balarac loitering angrily outside our city walls, General, do you have any sort of plan?

QULAN

Do you?

FATIMA

My plan is simple: invite them all to a banquet and then poison them.

QULAN

Are you out of your mind?

FATIMA

I think it's rather neat. Elegant, even.

QULAN

You seriously believe these men - with decades of war and diplomacy at their backs - will just sit down and drink poison wine?

FATIMA

Well I can name at least one celebrated military figure who recently did just that.

QULAN

Who?

FATIMA

You. Just now.

QULAN

You... I haven't touched the wine...

Suddenly Qulan CHOKES.

FATIMA

No, but you did generously avail yourself of the mint tea.

MANEL

Father?

QULAN

My throat, my throat, it's...

MANEL

Father!

(to Slave)

Go, get help!

Manel DROPS to her knees beside Qulan, HOLDS him.

SLAVE

(to Fatima)

My Lady?

MANEL

Don't look to her, I'm your
sultana, get help!

QULAN

Clever... woman.

Qulan COLLAPSES, then DIES.

MANEL

Father? Wake up!
(to the assembly)
Someone get help. Why is... Why is
no one getting help?
(to Qulan)
Father?

FATIMA

(to slave)
Take him away.

SLAVE

At once, My Lady.
(to Manel)
Your Majesty, come-

MANEL

(holding Qulan's body)
Don't touch him! Father, Father
wake up!

SLAVE

She won't let him go, I don't know
what to My Lady.

FATIMA

I'll handle this.
(kneels by Manel)
I know it's hard now, my dear, but
you will thank me for it in time.

MANEL

You...

FATIMA

You can make your own decisions
now, without... Those earrings,
where did you get them?

MANEL

What? What are you-

FATIMA

Are they *padarrakki*? I think they
must be. Such fine craftsman they
have there.

MANEL

You murdered my father...

FATIMA

I told my first husband I would only marry him if he bought me a *padarrakki*.

MANEL

(her anger rising, boiling over)

You murdered my further. *You murdered my father!*

COURTIER

Your Majesty, please...

Manel LAUNCHES herself at Fatima. Slaves and courtiers HOLD her back.

FATIMA

I can see you're upset.
(to slaves)
Go ahead and take the body.

SLAVE 2

Yes, My Lady.

SLAVE

Your Majesty, please, you must come.

Some of the slaves REMOVE Qulan over the following.

MANEL

Father!

FATIMA

It's natural that you would need rest at a time like this.

MANEL

(shouting)

You murdered him you whore!

FATIMA

Why don't I have a slave take you to your bath? Give you a few moments to collect yourself? After all, we have an enemy we must defeat together. And they'll be here any minute.

8.3A **OPENING TITLES - MUSIC**

8.3A

ANNOUNCER**Tumanbay, Series 3, Episode 8. "The Coming", by Mac Rogers.**

8.4 OMITTED

8.4

8.5 EXT. OUTSIDE THE CITY GATES - DAY

8.5

The Balarac wait for the gates to open. Gregor EATS next to Cadali's cage.

CADALI

If you don't mind my saying,
Gregor...

GREGOR

(through a full mouth)
Yes, Cadali?

GREGOR (V.O.)**When will they open the gates?**

CADALI

It looks a very appetizing meal.

Gregor THROWS Cadali a scrap.

GREGOR

There. Eat.

Cadali eagerly DEVOURS it.

CADALI

(now his mouth's full)
Have you considered, Gregor...
these Balarac "advisors"... Don't
they seem awfully well-armed for
advisors?

GREGOR (V.O.)**I've seen many condemned men about
to face death. Some cry and beg,
some go very quiet. But Cadali...
He just doesn't stop talking...**

CADALI

Because I'm just thinking here,
Gregor... just making the best
speculative use of my
confinement... I think Tumanbay may
need us more than ever. You and me.

GREGOR

Eat. Don't talk.

CADALI

I've got something important to tell you. Come closer.

GREGOR

I don't think I will, Cadali.

CADALI

I promise you don't want me to say this loud enough for the Balarac to hear.

Sighing, Gregor APPROACHES the cage.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**He's leading me somewhere.
Somewhere I almost certainly don't
want to go.**

GREGOR

Make it fast.

CADALI

(murmuring urgently)
I know where there's more gold.

GREGOR

And I remember what happened the last time you led me to gold.

CADALI

More than gold - I can draw in credit! I've got credit lines throughout this region!
(beat)
Manel, our sultana, she needs us!
We have the experience she needs!
We've served five sultans, you and I! The Sultana needs us to deal with this outrageous upstart governor's wife - Fatima, yes?

GREGOR (V.O.)

**He's fishing. Throwing out one lure
after another, watching to see if
I'll bite.**

CADALI

And speaking of "governor's wife" - where is her husband? "Off on a hunting trip," does anyone believe that? Has anyone seen him in months?

(beat)

Then, of course, there's the Balarac. They're going to take all our skill, both of us together.

(MORE)

CADALI (CONT'D)

The team, remember? The old team.
What do you say, Gregor?

A distant bell CHIMES.

GREGOR

Hear that bell? That'll be the
watch opening the Eastern Gates.

CADALI

Gregor, Gregor, the old team...

GREGOR

Cadali, you and I can no more
forget your unpardonable crimes
than we could un-ring that bell.

The CREAKING of vast gates opening. AMALRIC LEADS the cavalry
forwards.

AMALRIC

(in the distance)
Forward riiiiide!

The order is ECHOED down the line. Cadali's cart starts to
TRUNDLE forward.

CADALI

Then my god. My god. My Tumanbay.
This is it, isn't it? This is my
end.

8.5A EXT. STREET. TUMANBAY - DAY

8.5A

MATILLA LEADS FROG through an alleyway towards her home.

FROG

Why are we here?

MATILLA

He's my father.

FROG

But he sold you to that man! And I
killed him.

She keeps going.

FROG (CONT'D)

His family will be coming for
revenge. We need to get as far away
from Tumanbay as possible.

MATILLA

But don't you see, Frog? That's why I have to back - to get Imma and Nurse. It's not their fault. It's mine. I have to save them.

FROG

Matilla...

MATILLA

You go if you like. You have my blessing, it's not your family. But it's not an option for me. Whatever the price... he's my brother.

She SCRAMBLES up a rooftop. Frog FOLLOWS.

8.6

INT. BAVAND'S HOUSE - DAY

8.6

Frog and Matilla OPEN the door quietly. The house is silent.

MATILLA

(calling out)
Hello? Is anyone-

FROG

(sotto)
Don't! We don't know who might be here.

They CREEP forward. BAVAND can be heard, off, drunk.

BAVAND

(from another room)
Maryam? Maryam?

MATILLA

That's Father.

BAVAND

(off)
Maryam?

FROG

Who's?

MATILLA

Maryam was my mother. He always calls out to her like that when he's drunk. Wait here.

FROG

I'm coming with you.

MATILLA

No. You need to keep watch.

Matilla GOES into Bavand's room.

8.7 INT. BAVAND'S ROOM - DAY

8.7

Bavand is sitting alone, drunk, when Matilla ENTERS.

MATILLA

Father?

BAVAND

Oh, good. I was wondering where you'd got to. Is everything ready for the guests?

MATILLA

There will be no guests, Father, we need to leave right now. Sisco's people are coming.

BAVAND

What we need are dates, Maryam, go buy some-

MATILLA

It's me, Father! It's Matilla. And we have to go now!

Frog RUNS in.

FROG

There are men approaching the house. They're carrying swords.

MATILLA

Father, do you understand that they are coming for you?

BAVAND

(rising)

There's something I need to show you.

MATILLA

No. They will kill you! We need to go!

BAVAND

Just over here. Do you recognize this?

Matilla FOLLOWS the stumbling Bavand to an alcove.

MATILLA

Mother's shrine.

FROG

Matilla, we need to go!

MATILLA

Give me a moment. Go and see what's happening.

Frog GOES.

BAVAND

We were both slaves when we married. Your mother and I.

MATILLA

I didn't know that.

BAVAND

Our owner was never going to give us our freedom, so we ran away. And ever since... I have spent my entire life pretending to be what I am not.

MATILLA

Father...

BAVAND

Then you came along. And then Imma - and he was not right, no, not from the day he was born. I wanted to, take him out into the harbour and... But your mother wouldn't let me. And so he stayed. For what sort of life, I can't imagine but... Your mother-

MATILLA

Father, we don't have time. We need to take Imma and-

BAVAND

Imma's not here.

MATILLA

What?

She YANKS back the rattling curtain that normally conceals Imma.

MATILLA (CONT'D)

Imma! Where is he, Father?

BAVAND

You knew you could trust me, yes? To take care of little Imma? To keep him safe?

MATILLA

Father...

BAVAND

And soon you will be safe too.

MATILLA

Father, *what have you done?*

BAVAND

What I had to.

(awful silence)

I sent him away with Nurse to Smirna.

There's KNOCKING at the door. VOICES off.

FROG

(from the next room)

They're here! Matilla, they're here, hurry!

BAVAND

Look, there's some traders I know in Smirna... they'll take care of him... until you arrive.

MATILLA

What about you?

BAVAND

(oddly sober)

I've run out of second-chances, Daughter. Anywhere I go they'll hunt me down. My beloved Tumanbay, she has a long reach.

MATILLA

But-

BAVAND

But if I stay here? Let them find me? Then they will leave you and little Imma alone. You can live your lives.

Bavand is cut off by the sound of the front door being KICKED.

Frog RUNS in.

FROG

That's them, they're smashing the door down!

MATILLA

Father, you need to come-

BAVAND

No. This is the debt I have to pay.
You know it, I know it. Now go -
go!

VOICES off.

FROG

Come on!

BAVAND

Go!

Matilla and Frog RUN up the stairs.

8.8 INT. UPSTAIRS. BAVAND'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

8.8

Matilla and Frog RUN up the stairs.

FROG

Where's your brother?

MATILLA

Far away, safe!

FROG

Are you all right?

MATILLA

Yes. Yes I am. Now let's go!

They CLIMB out of the window.

8.9 EXT. GRAND COURTYARD. PALACE. TUMANBAY - DAY

8.9

Balarac horses CLOMP into the courtyard as Fatima greets
Amalric. HEAVEN is by his side. Gregor hangs back, near
Cadali.

FATIMA

The Grand Master, welcome.

AMALRIC

Who are you?

FATIMA

I am Fatima al-Masri, wife of the
Governor of Rasheem province,
mother of the martyr... Prince
Herod. You are very welcome here.
(to the other knights)
I welcome you all.

AMALRIC

Didn't the Sultana see fit to
welcome the Balarac personally?

FATIMA

She sends her deepest apologies,
but alas she is unwell.

AMALRIC

That is unfortunate. I hope nothing
serious.

FATIMA

General Qulan, her father, he is no
longer of this world.

GREGOR (V.O.)

What did she say? Qulan dead?

FATIMA

He was taken ill yesterday evening.
The physicians did what they could,
of course.

(beat)

Ah, Gregor, you're there. My
condolences.

GREGOR (V.O.)

Her sadism is almost exquisite.

FATIMA

Now, Grand Master, we have arranged
a banquet to honour your arrival.
But there's just the matter of the
small gift.

AMALRIC

What?

FATIMA

The gift... The traitor, Cadali?

AMALRIC

Gregor, you may bring the prisoner
forward.

FATIMA

(impatient)

Bring the prisoner forward!

Some men ROLL Cadali's prison cart up to Fatima.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

(peer in)

Ah... So you are the man.

CADALI

My Lady, Highness, Excellency...

FATIMA

Hmmm... I've been looking forward
to meeting you.

CADALI

Oh, Mistress, just one thing I need you to know... I wasn't responsible for the death of Prince Herod. It was my son, Selim, expressly against my orders-

FATIMA

Do you know how the martyr al-Kiradi died?

CADALI

Uh... al-Kiradi?

FATIMA

You see, they set up a post in the ground - are you with me so far?

CADALI

Ahh...?

FATIMA

And they cut open his stomach, pulled out his intestines, and nailed one end to the post.

CADALI

Majesty, please understand-

FATIMA

Then they whipped him, forcing him to walk round and round the post as his intestines slowly unravelled. You'd be amazed how many trips around the post it took.

CADALI

Please...

FATIMA

Of course, his faith may have given him the strength to go on longer.

Well, we shall see...

(to her guards)

Take him to the cells.

Cadali is LED away - whimpering, his feet and hands chained - by Fatima's soldiers.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

Grand Master, our servants will show you and your advisors to your quarters and provide you-

AMALRIC

No.

FATIMA

No?

AMALRIC

No. We will be occupying the
Hafiz's Palace gardens to set up
our tents.

FATIMA

Oh, but we have prepared-

AMALRIC

The Hafiz's Palace.

FATIMA

Of... course, then...

(to Gregor)

Gregor, have the Palace Guard
escort our honoured guests.

Still in shock Gregor gives ORDERS to one of his officers.

Amalric and the Balarac cavalry clatter OFF. Fatima turns to
Gregor.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

I assume I can rely on you now,
Gregor?

GREGOR

You killed my brother.

FATIMA

Yes. So can I rely on you?

GREGOR

For what?

(beat)

Yes, you can.

FATIMA

Good, then get dressed for the
banquet. And wash - you look like
you've been turned upside down and
dipped in sand.

Fatima LEAVES.

GREGOR (V.O.)

To survive, first you have to be
alive. I never thought I would care
so much about Qulan... I took him
for granted: always the elder
brother, always right, always
there. But I need to hide that away
in a cell in the deepest part of my
mind. I need to think, to plan, to
survive...

8.10 OMITTED 8.10

8.11 INT. GRAND MASTER'S TENT - LATER 8.11

Heaven is SETTING UP the interior of the tent, putting things away. Amalric waits.

AMALRIC
Prepare my robes...

HEAVEN
Sorry... your robes, Grand Master?

AMALRIC
For this evening, for the banquet.
What's wrong with you, Girl? You're
distracted.

HEAVEN
No, it's nothing.

GOES to get the robes.

AMALRIC
Tell me.

A beat while Heaven GATHERS her courage.

HEAVEN
I have a husband, and a daughter
here.

AMALRIC
And?

HEAVEN
And I was wondering... if I might
be permitted... I would like to see
them.

AMALRIC
You will.

HEAVEN
I will?

AMALRIC
In the next world.

HEAVEN
The next...?

AMALRIC
You are my servant, Heaven. Forget
your husband and child. This is
your world now. For which you
should rejoice.

HEAVEN

But... my child-

AMALRIC

You were a merchant of slaves. Did you never stop to consider the children you caused to be separated from their parents?

(beat)

Your duty is to me now. Get my robes ready.

HEAVEN

And you? What is your duty?

A rare CHUCKLE from Amalric.

AMALRIC

You are a persistent girl. Not even my generals would dare question me like that.

(beat)

You need not fear anything, Heaven. Everything in this world is temporary until the final coming. The insect who finds his wings and flies in the sunshine for a few hours before falling exhausted to the ground - that creature lives as full a life as any man who walks the earth for ten thousand days. We are all born to die. And if we kill, we kill to cleanse, because it is necessary to obtain a greater end. Duty is all.

HEAVEN

Then what is yours?

AMALRIC

My duty - our duty, all of us - is to take this empire apart. Efficiently, without spite, simply because it must be done.

HEAVEN

And the people who live here?

AMALRIC

Well... that remains to be seen.

8.11A INT. BATHS. PALACE. TUMANBAY - DAY

8.11A

Fatima and Manel BATHE. A Slave waits in the corner.

FATIMA

Is the water to your liking, dear?
I can have the slave bring more
hot?

MANEL

(trying)
No.

FATIMA

I saved him for you, you know?

MANEL

Saved... who?

FATIMA

The traitor, Cadali. I wanted him
for myself, of course, but I saved
him for you. After all, I lost a
son, but you - you lost a *husband*.

A beat as Fatima SHIFTS, sloshing water, to watch for Manel's
reaction.

MANEL

And my grief... for that loss... is
of course boundless.

FATIMA

As, I'm sure, is your desire for
revenge.

MANEL

Yes.

FATIMA

Perhaps Cadali's execution could be
part of this evening's
entertainment? Although... then
we'd be so disappointed when it
ended. Don't you think?

(beat)

No, I'd prefer something rather
more extended, that we can enjoy
over days or even weeks in private,
together. Why don't we focus on the
Balarac first, and come to Cadali
later?

Fatima observes her for a moment.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

You need to learn from me, little
Manel. My years of experience.
Watch me closely at this banquet
tonight. Watch and learn.

(to the slave)

(MORE)

FATIMA (CONT'D)

Towels. I think we've soaked enough.

Splashes as Fatima and Manel GET OUT of the water.

SLAVE

Towels, Madam.

They WRAP themselves in towels.

FATIMA

Look, I understand why you shunned my son. He was unreliable, easily distracted, soft. That's not you. How could you, despite all the duty in the world, be drawn to such softness? But here we have an opportunity. A mother without a daughter. A daughter without a mother. A gaping wound, but one whose remedy is in plain sight.

(beat)

Would you like to be my daughter?
Would you like to be my poor, poor, orphan girl?

MANEL

(this takes everything)

Yes. Yes, I would like that.

8.12 INT. BANQUETING TENT. PALACE GARDENS - NIGHT

8.12

The banquet. Many attendees. Manel, Fatima, Amalric, Heaven, and Gregor are present.

FATIMA

... What a pleasure it is to see you all present tonight under one roof: the officers of Tumanbay's great institutions and our honoured friends and guests, the Balarac...

GREGOR (V.O.)

The lay of the land is clear: I have two enemies. With any luck, after this banquet - assuming I survive it - I'll only have one. But which one?

FATIMA

... But it is not for me to praise this alliance. It is not for me to pay tribute to the joy of seeing the storied warriors of the Balarac in our palace gardens. For that eloquence...

(MORE)

FATIMA (CONT'D)

the Sultana herself, a remarkable young woman who I've come to call "daughter", Her Majesty Manel al-Qulan!

Manel RISES.

MANEL

I thank you... Mother-In-Law... No, let me say, Mother...

GREGOR (V.O.)

"Mother"?

MANEL

... for your kindness, manifested both in your words, and also your sacrifice... for Tumanbay.

MUTTERINGS of agreement about the room.

MANEL (CONT'D)

This alliance represents a new, great, era for Tumanbay. An era of co-operation and stability. Thank you, Grand Master Amalric, for coming to our aid both with... with such a plentiful number of... advisors to patrol our city walls. My late father, General Qulan, was an admirer of the Balarac. He always applauded your successes and would have been delighted to-

(beat)

I welcome you to Tumanbay. We have made a place for so many within our city walls, and now we make a place of honour for you.

FATIMA

And with those words in our hearts, let us drink to the Balarac and our new friendship!

The Tumanbay people DRINK. The Balarac do not.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

Grand Master... Is there something wrong?

AMALRIC

I have something to say first.

FATIMA

Of course, Grand Master.

AMALRIC

You speak of alliance. Any alliance worth the name is based on trust. The Sultana has shown this trust. She has admitted us, admitted our advisors. And we look forward to repaying her by introducing Balarac practices into every governing body in Tumanbay.

FATIMA

Which will begin directly after we eat and drink-

AMALRIC

Not. Yet.

(no plate is touched)

Despite this warm welcome, despite all this... trust, the Balarac are a cautious people. We see the whole world as a battlefield. And banquets are no exception.

Tense silence as people become aware of the patrolling Balarac soldiers.

FATIMA

Let us all drink to the Grand Master and the Balarac.

AMALRIC

Of course. After my taster tries it first.

FATIMA

Your... taster?

AMALRIC

Heaven...?

Beat as Heaven realizes what's happening.

AMALRIC (CONT'D)

You will taste the wine first, Heaven.

HEAVEN

Grand Master.

Heaven WALKS to Amalric's table. PICKS up his cup.

AMALRIC

Why do you hesitate? Drink.

Heaven PUTS down the cup.

HEAVEN

No.

A horrible silence. Then Amalric CHUCKLES.

AMALRIC

You see? I was taught as a boy: if you want to avoid snakes, watch where the rats won't go.

(to Fatima)

So perhaps, Mistress, in the spirit of trust upon which all alliances are built, you would care to drink from my cup?

GREGOR (V.O.)

This is the moment. It doesn't matter which one of them loses as long as one of them does.

FATIMA

Why, Grand Master, this is no way to begin our new relationship.

AMALRIC

(to Heaven)

Nevertheless... Take the cup to the mistress, Heaven.

HEAVEN

Grand Master.

Heaven CARRIES the cup to Fatima's end of the table and SETS it in front of her.

AMALRIC

Drink.

FATIMA

Of course.

Fatima brings the cup to her lips and DRINKS.

Silence.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

See? Only the finest of wine from the grapes of the hillsides of *Felugia*.

(beat)

Really, Grand Master, Tumanbay welcomes you with open arms! We are grateful for your protection, and in return, we give you our trust. Indeed, I hope that trust will be the cornerstone of all that is to come.

AMALRIC

(growls)

Yes.

FATIMA

Then may we at long last eat?

AMALRIC

Yes. Eat.

FATIMA

(to the guests)

Eat. *Eat.* Eat!

The guests CHUCKLE and begin to EAT, along with the Balarac soldiers.

GREGOR (V.O.)

What happened here? Did Fatima lose her nerve? Or... is this something else entirely? An alliance between Fatima and the Balarac? Who could have brokered that?

Across the banquet hall, Amalric calls Heaven over.

AMALRIC

Heaven? Attend me.

HEAVEN

Grand Master.

AMALRIC

You have good instincts, Heaven.

HEAVEN

Thank you, Grand Master.

AMALRIC

But if you ever disobey me again I will kill you. Do you understand?

HEAVEN

Yes, Grand Master.

AMALRIC

You may go. Prepare my bed and tell the night guard to double the watch over the Hafiz's Palace until we return.

HEAVEN

Yes, Grand Master.

Heaven LEAVES the banquet.

GREGOR (V.O.)

So, it seems, I still have two enemies, rather than one...

8.13 EXT. PALACE GARDENS - CONTINUOUS

8.13

Gregor CATCHES UP with Heaven.

GREGOR

(low)
Heaven - a moment!

HEAVEN

Gregor?

GREGOR

I want to show you something.

HEAVEN

I can't, my master will-

GREGOR

Not even for a glimpse of your
husband and child?

She STOPS.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Don't stop. Keep walking. Through
these gates here. Hurry.

Heaven FOLLOWS Gregor...

8.14 EXT. OPEN COURTYARD. PALACE - CONTINUOUS

8.14

Heaven FOLLOWS Gregor into the courtyard.

HEAVEN

It's wide-open, anyone can see us
here!

GREGOR

We won't stay long. You see that
far window there? With the torch
burning?

HEAVEN

Is that...?
(overcome)
They're here?

GREGOR

I made arrangements.

HEAVEN

I have to go to them!

GREGOR

That would be ill-advised.

HEAVEN

Why are they guarded? Why are there soldiers?

GREGOR

Those men are mine. Your family won't be harmed. And you'll see them the moment I can make that possible...

HEAVEN

Thank you, thank you...

GREGOR

But...

HEAVEN

But?

GREGOR

There is something you can do for me.

HEAVEN

Ah... Of course.

GREGOR

It's not a condition. But I hope you'll do it anyway.

HEAVEN

Then let's just call it a condition and be done with it.

GREGOR

I need you to stay close to the Grand Master. Get even closer if possible.

HEAVEN

You want me to...

GREGOR

Of course not. If he wanted whores I'd have a full harem, loyal to me, all over him by now. But that doesn't work with the Balarac. You have to win their admiration instead. Next to impossible, but you've done it.

HEAVEN

He just called me a rat in front of most of Tumanbay.

GREGOR

A rat he then sent unaccompanied to prepare the place he'll be sleeping tonight.

(Beat.)

I want to know everything. Their plans, their organization, their chain of command, every pot they piss in. Do you understand?

HEAVEN

I do.

GREGOR

Now go. We'll speak again.

Heaven HURRIES off.

8.15 INT. BANQUETING TENT. PALACE GARDENS - NIGHT

8.15

The banquet is over. Guests linger, CHATTING.

AMALRIC

Thank you for your hospitality, Sultana.

MANEL

It is our pleasure.

AMALRIC

I look forward to returning the favour with advice and counsel in the coming days.

FATIMA

I have no doubt that ours will be a formidable partnership. Really, Grand Master.

AMALRIC

Good, good... Well good night, then.

FATIMA

I wish you a pleasant evening, Grand Master.

AMALRIC

Guards!

Amalric and the other Balarac LEAVE.

FATIMA

You understand, don't you, dear?

MANEL

Understand?

FATIMA

Strategy is an ever-evolving art.
Yes, my original intentions for
this banquet were in a... different
direction, but the simple truth is:
Tumanbay needs strength. The
Balarac's our strength.

8.16 EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE GARDENS. PALACE - NIGHT

8.16

Gregor watches as Amalric and his men PASS.

AMALRIC

Is that you skulking by that
column, Gregor?

GREGOR

I wanted to make sure you get back
safely to you quarters, Grand
Master.

AMALRIC

Thank you.

GREGOR

Forgive me, Grand Master, if it's
not impertinent to ask...

AMALRIC

How did I know it was you?

GREGOR

I can't deny my curiosity.

AMALRIC

In the old stories it is always the
blind man who has the clearest
sight.

GREGOR

But they're myths, surely?

AMALRIC

Surely a rumour-monger like you
would know that most myths contain
a truth or two. I have discovered
much in the years I've lived with
my blindness. I can hear the truth
screaming through the gaps in a
man's lies. And not just the lies
he tells the world in pursuit of
diplomacy or advantage, but even
the lies he tells himself. I can
even hear you getting bored.

GREGOR

Not at all, Grand Master.

AMALRIC

And yet if you would cast off your contempt and listen to the lessons of this myth, you might be more prepared for what is to come.

GREGOR

What *is* to come?

AMALRIC

What do you think, Gregor? The Queen. The Queen is coming.

GREGOR

What did you say?

AMALRIC

Ah, I have your interest.

GREGOR (V.O.)

And just like that, it's like my whole body catches fire.

AMALRIC

And when she comes? She'll wake up inside your head. How can you possibly guard against that?

GREGOR (V.O.)

The same words as last time - the words that heralded Maya.

AMALRIC

And now you sniff like a dog that has scented it's prey.

GREGOR

I have often heard...

AMALRIC

Just ask, Gregor.

GREGOR

I have often heard of scrolls...

AMALRIC

Scrolls?

GREGOR

... that contain... certain information? History?

AMALRIC

(mischievous)

Now who's talking about myths?

GREGOR

I know they're real. I once held
them in my hands.

AMALRIC

Not history. The opposite.

Pause.

GREGOR

Why are you here, Grand Master?
Really?

AMALRIC

Guards!
(his men stand to)
We'll speak again, Gregor.

The Grand Master LEAVES with his men.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**I can glimpse something. It's there
on the horizon. It's huge, too vast
to see clearly. Like not being able
to see a mountain because you're
standing on it.**

(beat)

Maya? Is that you?

8.17 INT. PALACE CORRIDORS - NIGHT

8.17

Gregor RACES down one corridor, then the next, then the next.
A collage of voices from Seasons 1 and 2 of Tumanbay.

[MAID]

She will wake inside your head.

[AL-GHURI]

(flashback)

Does Maya even exist?

[MAID]

*The queen. You might have seen her
in your dreams.*

[ENVOY]

(flashback)

*If Maya has chosen you to serve
her, then you will serve her.*

[SARAH]

(flashback)

*You thought you were free,
Gregor... maybe you weren't.*

[HAFIZ]

(flashback)

*But now Maya is showing the people
of Tumanbay the true path and...
burn!*

[RED]

(flashback)

Life and death... they are one.

[GREGOR]

(flashback)

Where is Maya?

[SARAH]

(flashback)

*They just disappear back into the
walls...*

GREGOR (V.O.)

**If I'm going to expel this
occupation, I'll need gold. Gold
buys armies, allies. And I can't
believe I'm thinking this, but...
who always knows where to find
gold?**

8.18 EXT. CITY GATES - NIGHT

8.18

Guards are CHECKING papers. Matilla HANDS hers over. Frog is with her.

GATE GUARD

Where are you going?

MATILLA

Cyrene.

GATE GUARD

What is the purpose?

MATILLA

Family. I have family there.

GATE GUARD

Hmmm...

FROG

What's going on?

GATE GUARD

What do you mean?

FROG

All the security?

GATE GUARD

Troubled times, troubled times. The
Balarac are here.

FROG

The Balarac... have returned?
They're inside the city?

GUARD

Where have you been, my friend? The
Blind Man led them in yesterday,
half the city turned out to see it.

FROG

The blind man... is alive?

GUARD

Any reason he shouldn't be?
(to Matilla)
You - do you have your husband's
permission to leave the city?

MATILLA

Yes.

GATE GUARD

Where is it?

MATILLA

What?

GATE GUARD

The permissory note.

MATILLA

(pretending to search)
I... er... have it somewhere...

FROG

I am her husband, Sir. We need to
get out. We need to leave quickly.

The Guard EXAMINES Matilla's papers.

GATE GUARD

(to Matilla)
It says your husband is Sisco
Pilaar?

MATILLA

Yes.

FROG

That's me.

GATE GUARD

Papers?

FROG

Er... We really need to get out of the city... Please, can you help me?

The Guard looks at Frog for a moment.

GATE GUARD

Wait here. One moment.

He GOES off.

MATILLA

He said the blind man. But you said...

(beat)

What shall we do?

FROG

Go back. Don't worry, we'll find another way. Just go back.

They PUSH their way back through the line of people. The Guard SPOTS them and gives CHASE.

FROG (CONT'D)

Excuse me... Sorry...

GUARD

Hey! Come back - stop!

FROG

Run!

They RUN...

8.19 INT. AMALRIC'S TENT - NIGHT

8.19

Heaven waits inside the tent. A soldier SHOWS Amalric in, then LEAVES.

HEAVEN

Your evening drink, Grand Master.

AMALRIC

Put it on the side. I want you to read for me.

Heaven GOES to a cabinet and TAKES out a scroll.

HEAVEN

(reading)

The tree was barren. It had not produced flowers for-

AMALRIC

Not that one.

HEAVEN
Grand Master?

AMALRIC
Get one of the special scrolls.

In turning to go back to the cabinet, Heaven SPILLS the drink.

HEAVEN
I'm sorry, Grand Master.

AMALRIC
Is the scroll damaged?

HEAVEN
No, but... I've spilled your drink.

AMALRIC
The drink can wait. Get me one of the special scrolls.

Heaven REPLACES the first scroll. Then TAKES out a special scroll.

HEAVEN
I feel almost... blasphemous.

AMALRIC
Read.

HEAVEN
(reading)
"But the world was not as you believe. The Teacher says this world is like a flickering candle flame. It is there, and it isn't there, and it can be snuffed out. And then there will only be darkness."

(beat)
What does it mean?

AMALRIC
You assume I know?

HEAVEN
Do you?

AMALRIC
When you spilled that drink, Heaven, was it an accident, or were you trying to poison me and thought better of it?

HEAVEN
Grand Master, I-

AMALRIC

Don't answer. I don't want the answer. Any more than you want mine. Knowledge is a burden, Heaven. I have mine. You have yours. Now keep reading.

8.20 INT. THE CELLS. PALACE. TUMANBAY - NIGHT

8.20

The awful grimy cells beneath the palace. A SENTRY jumps to his feet as Gregor ENTERS.

SENTRY

Sir?

GREGOR

Cadali. I'm to see him immediately. Mistress Fatima's orders.

SENTRY

Tell me when you're done.

The Sentry OPENS the cell then LEAVES. Gregor ENTERS.

CADALI

Gregor? Is that you? Is it time? Are they going to...?

GREGOR

Not yet. But soon.

CADALI

Gregor, listen, you have to-

GREGOR

Do you really know where there's more gold beneath Tumanbay? The truth. Now.

CADALI

Of course, this is me, finding gold is my - wait. What are you up to, Gregor?

GREGOR

At the moment, I'm talking to the one man in Tumanbay that I'm certain isn't working for Maya.

CADALI

Maya?

GREGOR

Because you've only ever worked for yourself.

CADALI

I told you, Gregor, you and I are alike...

GREGOR

We are not alike!

CADALI

We're shadow-men, string-pullers, what difference could there possibly be?

GREGOR

The difference is whatever its flaws, whatever its madness, I love Tumanbay.

(collecting himself)

How could Fatima and the Grand Master be working together already - even before they met in Tumanbay? Who could broker such an alliance right under Tumanbay's nose?

CADALI

Maya. Only Maya. You know that.

GREGOR

They are her instruments. They want the city, the whole empire.

CADALI

And we can defeat them, Gregor - together! You let me out, I'll lead you to-

GREGOR

The gold, yes, and with the gold we buy an army, and then-

CADALI

An army? No.

GREGOR

What?

CADALI

That's not what she said at all. No - not an army.

GREGOR

What who said?

CADALI

Alkin.

Beat.

GREGOR

Alkin's dead, Cadali, what are you talking about? You had her executed yourself.

Cadali starts to LAUGH. There's a scary, manic edge to it.

CADALI

Oh, you can't kill her, Gregor.

GREGOR

Cadali, you're no good to me if you're falling apart.

CADALI

(beat)

She came to see me. Here in the cell. She had a message for you.

GREGOR

What are you talking about?

CADALI

They chose you, Gregor.

GREGOR

Who is "they"?

CADALI

I couldn't identify them if I wanted to. They're never the same.

GREGOR

You're lying, Cadali, this is nothing but-

CADALI

What does a lizard snake do that a man never does?

GREGOR

Riddles now?

CADALI

Do you know the answer or not?

GREGOR

Sheds its skin, but Cadali-

CADALI

Sheds its skin. Correct answer. The lie is in the question. Some men do shed their skin. And some women.

GREGOR

(darkening)

What women?

CADALI

What do they always say about Maya?
Where does she go when she doesn't
want to be found?

GREGOR

She disappears inside the walls.

CADALI

And when she emerges?

GREGOR

She wakes up inside your head.

CADALI

Let it happen, Gregor. Let her wake
up there. Then you'll see.

GREGOR

(to the Sentry)
I'm done here.

Sentry OPENS the cell door. Gregor GOES out.

CADALI

(shouting after)
When you come back we'll get the
gold, Gregor. And then we'll begin.
But first... you need to see.

GREGOR

I said I'm done here!

The sentry OPENS the door. Gregor LEAVES. He walks along a
stone corridor. STOPS.

A door OPENS.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Hello?

He WALKS in.

8.21 INT. ALKIN'S CHAMBER

8.21

For the first time in the whole TUMANBAY series, there are no
beggars, crowds, insets, wind, lapping water, nothing from
the familiar desert city or its world. Just sterile silence.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**Mad or sane. Is there any
difference any more?**

Gregor WALKS in further.

GREGOR

Hello?

(beat)

Alkin?!

ALKIN

Don't be alarmed, Gregor.

GREGOR

Alkin? But you're...

ALKIN

Come.

He FOLLOWS her further inside.

GREGOR

Where are we?

ALKIN

You said you love Tumanbay, Gregor.

Is it true?

GREGOR

Hundreds of people saw you die.

ALKIN

Is it true or not?

GREGOR

Yes. It's true.

ALKIN

And you would save it if you could?

GREGOR

Yes. I would.

ALKIN

That's what we were hoping you would say.

GREGOR

Who?

ALKIN

Because you see, before you can save Tumanbay, Gregor, I need to tell you what Tumanbay is. I need to tell you something about the nature of the world you live in.

MUSIC.

End of Episode 3.08.