

TUMANBAY

Episode 4.05 - "The Watchers"

by

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5.1 EXT. ARMY QUARTER. - DAY 5.1
A coach and escort PASSING.

5.2 INT. COACH. - DAY 5.2
Bumpy, noisy. FATIMA is journeying with PIERO.

FATIMA
Is this really necessary, Signor
Piero?

PIERO
This Grand Master is an important
part of the construction of the
picture... I seek the balance...

FATIMA
Well not too much balance. He is to
be at the bottom, below the
walls...

PIERO
Even so, Madam, think of the...
(he's thinking too - then)
... the way it will increase *your*
glory. Those fabled empty eyes
looking up, unable to see the
mother of empire atop the walls...
that ancient visage, like a
statue...

FATIMA
Of the past! Yes, yes I like that.

Off, BALARAC OFFICERS wave the carriage through.

FATIMA (CONT'D)
Oh, here we go...

5.3 OMITTED 5.3

5.4 INT. MARBLE TENT. 5.4
Fatima, flanked by BARBAROSSA and Piero, announces their
arrival to the GRAND MASTER. HEAVEN is attending him, nearby.

FATIMA
I present the great artist...
Signor Piero.

No answer.

FATIMA (CONT'D)
Grand Master?

HEAVEN

The Grand Master doesn't speak much anymore. He spends most of his time praying.

FATIMA

Well I spend most of my time running Tumanbay.

(raises her voice and emphasizes his name)

We have come to see you, Grand Master Amalric. The night of the falling fires, this event so important to you, will be recorded for all time by Master Piero here. You agreed to see him so he could make sketches for his great canvas.

Silence.

GRAND MASTER

Yes, very well.

PIERO

It's dark in here. May we open the blinds?

GRAND MASTER

As you will. Heaven.

Heaven OPENS the blinds.

PIERO

Ahhh, so the stories are true. You have a fine face, Grand Master, an heroic face, your empty eye sockets with the flames in the sky will be...

(kisses his fingers)

GRAND MASTER

I won't see your painting.

PIERO

But the world will, and you will be immortalized.

GRAND MASTER

Make your pictures, artist, I do not have time to waste.

PIERO

Yes...

Piero FETCHES drawing block etc. and SETS TO WORK under:

PIERO (CONT'D)

This may take a while, My Lady,
perhaps you would care to... amuse
yourself otherwise?

GRAND MASTER

Yes, you may leave us. If you wish,
they will show you the army
quarter. We have nothing to hide.
My General will-

FATIMA

(miffed)

I have my own general...

(calls)

Barbarossa!

BARBAROSSA

Mistress.

She sweeps OUT.

5.5 EXT. ARMY QUARTER.

5.5

Fatima and Barbarossa stand looking at the largely empty
parade ground.

FATIMA

So, what do you see, General? As a
soldier: are they preparing for
war, for this celebration, what do
you see?

BARBAROSSA

No signs of mobilisation. No
engines of war, no battle training,
no stock piling of arrows, lances.
No getting men up to the mark.
However you try and conceal it, you
can't hide that.

FATIMA

No urgency?

BARBAROSSA

Not for war.

FATIMA

And my forces?

BARBAROSSA

What?

FATIMA

Ready for war?

BARBAROSSA

As you saw at the exercises,
Mistress, a few days ago, they are
ready to fight.

FATIMA

So if we had to make a move, could
we do it?

BARBAROSSA

Well, yes, but... we would have to
act soon.

FATIMA

Explain?

BARBAROSSA

The men know gold has been secured -
for the city, for your army... They
have been promised their back-
pay...

FATIMA

Any deserters are to be hanged.

BARBAROSSA

These are men who fight for money,
not promises.

FATIMA

And you will have gold a plenty if
you serve me well, General...

BARBAROSSA

Thank you, Mistress.

FATIMA

I wonder...?

BARBAROSSA

Yes?

FATIMA

Are they really as strong as they
say they are? Have we been led on a
merry chase? They arrive at our
gates - not more than a few hundred
- and we, like frightened children,
we believe all the tales of their
greatness... What is the position
in the city now, this day?

BARBAROSSA

They have taken over the city
gates. They have the centre, most
of the port area, two of the five
hills. They control who goes in,
who goes out.

Silence.

FATIMA

I'm sick of this. Go back to your troops now and prepare... to attack.

BARBAROSSA

What?

FATIMA

I'm not used to repeating myself, General. They are unprepared. We'll surprise them.

BARBAROSSA

Even so, Mistress...

FATIMA

What's wrong, General?

BARBAROSSA

They are the Balarac.

FATIMA

And they are mortal and they can die. I'm going back in there. If you hear nothing by the fourth glass of the afternoon, then surround the army quarter and wipe them out.

BARBAROSSA

Yes, Mistress.

He RIDES off.

5.5A **OPENING TITLES - MUSIC**

5.5A

ANNOUNCER

Tumanbay, Season 4, Episode 5. "The Watchers", by Mike Walker.

5.6 INT. MARBLE TENT.

5.6

Piero is SKETCHING the Grand Master. Heaven is with them.

PIERO

But your men, surely they need some... relief? Do they find it with each other?

GRAND MASTER

The flesh is evil.

PIERO

The flesh is insistent. Your knights are young, fit...

GRAND MASTER

If we fail, we have the discipline.

PIERO

Is that not a temptation in itself?

GRAND MASTER

All matter is a temptation. That is why it is best to leave it behind. We are a disciplined order.

PIERO

I'm a man, you're a man, we both know that no one is that disciplined.

Fatima has ENTERED without them noticing.

FATIMA

I am not a man and yet I see very little of your discipline, Grand Master Amalric. I wonder if you are like all men and promise much - and deliver very little? I think the moment has come for us to speak clearly to one another.

PIERO

Just hold that position for a... uh, very well...

FATIMA

What have you done? Very little apart from take our gold, controlled the law courts... You're going to hang a thousand people, on the night of the falling stars... All very well and good, but it seems to me you take and you do not give. You were invited into our city as guests, after the terrible deprivations of the occupation of Maya. We thank you for your help where it has been given, you have been paid well, and we now think we can manage on our own.

GRAND MASTER

How?

FATIMA

How what?

GRAND MASTER

How will you manage without our advisors or administrators.

FATIMA

I can advise. And I have secured loans for the city. Trade will flourish. My army is...

(beat)

... at full strength. It is time, respectfully, for you and your brothers to pack up and go back to your castles on the coast.

GRAND MASTER

And do you speak for the sultana Manel?

FATIMA

We speak as one.

GRAND MASTER

Are you throwing down a challenge, Madam?

Pause.

GRAND MASTER (CONT'D)

Very well. We shall be gone after the night of the fires.

FATIMA

(wind knocked out of her sails)

What?

GRAND MASTER

After the Festival of Fires, which is of great importance to us, as you said, we shall be gone. We shall leave behind us a great gift: the aqueduct, which our engineers are working on tirelessly.

FATIMA

And... you will place your seal on this promise?

GRAND MASTER

(calling)

Heaven, send for the scribes.

HEAVEN

Very well, Grand Master.

Heaven LEAVES.

GRAND MASTER

You will have the document this afternoon with my seal attached. Is there anything further you wish to discuss?

FATIMA

No. If you will excuse me, I have to speak to-

GRAND MASTER

To your general?

FATIMA

Indeed. You are very shrewd, Amalric.

GRAND MASTER

As are you, Madam.

FATIMA

We are all here to serve.

GRAND MASTER

But which cause?

Fatima LEAVES.

5.7

INT. LODGING HOUSE. - DAY

5.7

GREGOR coming DOWNSTAIRS. AQUILA is DRINKING coffee.

AQUILA

Good morning, Commander.

GREGOR

Did I tell you I was a commander?

AQUILA

You told me you were not.

GREGOR

Then?

AQUILA

But it seems that's how everyone else addresses you in this lodgings.

LANDLADY APPROACHES.

LANDLADY

Good day, Commander. May I fetch you coffee? Breakfast?

GREGOR

I am no longer a Commander. Coffee,
yes, bread and olives.

LANDLADY

(she calls)

Dumpy.

DUMPY comes in with tray and PUTS it on the table.

DUMPY

Breakfast, Commander.

GREGOR

I'm not...

Gregor SIGHS.

DUMPY

(calling)

Ma, I'm off now.

LANDLADY

What - where?

DUMPY

My job, Ma, with Uncle? Building
gallows for the big show. All the
folk they didn't execute during the
month of fasting get done on the
night. Got to go...

He's OFF.

LANDLADY

Festival, eh? We could use a bit of
cheer... Will you gentlemen be
going? They say it'll be quite
something. Fires in the sky.

AQUILA

No executions for me, I don't want
to see that, not at all. But the
rest, that could be interesting.
Fires in the sky? I say: how do
they know?

LANDLADY

Astrologers, Effendi, they know
everything, that's why they's
astrologers, see?

AQUILA

Seems I came to the city at a good
time. Oh, and how was your banquet
at the palace, Commander?

5.8 EXT. STREET - DAY

5.8

Gregor and Aquila WALK together.

AQUILA

It always impresses me, a great city where the streets must be cobbled and paved, just the upkeep...

GREGOR

Mind your step. All the drain covers have been stolen. Under the occupation. Maya's people sold them and they haven't been replaced yet. In the days of Sultan al-Ghuri no one would have dared - everyone was being watched all the time... you never knew who was spying on you.

AQUILA

Ah, now was that your job, when you were a commander? Keeping watch? Was it? It was, yes?

GREGOR

Yes, something like that. You'd be surprised what goes on behind what you see.

AQUILA

I can imagine... A city is like a beautiful garden, every flower, every blade of grass kept perfectly in place. And you were the gardener, and a tribe of warthogs came trampling over everything-

Aquila FALLS a little. Gregor GRABS Aquila's arm.

GREGOR

Mind your step.
(beat)
Another missing drain cover.

AQUILA

(looking down, slight echo
- distant water flowing)
It's a long way down.

GREGOR

The sewers and drains, something of a wonder... and beneath them there's a whole other world. People living down there. The city under the city.

AQUILA

(impressed)

That's what I mean! I don't want to see what the tourists see. How do people get down or up?

GREGOR

This city is full of tunnels and there are secret entrances everywhere. The Eastern Market, the old Temple of Solitude...

(a thought suddenly hits Gregor)

Oh!

AQUILA

What?

GREGOR

The Hafiz's palace! Why didn't I think of that?

Gregor SETS OFF. Aquila FOLLOWS.

AQUILA

Wait - where are you going?

5.9

INT. HAFIZ'S PALACE

5.9

The door creaks OPEN, revealing BELLO.

BELLO

Commander! Are we going out again today?

Gregor GRABS Bello and MARCHES him inside. Aquila FOLLOWS.

GREGOR

You slimy worm, Bello. You were playing me. Once I would have killed you for that! Once I would have seen through it... It's time you told me the truth.

Gregor MARCHES him across the room and SLAMS him into a chair.

BELLO

No, please...

GREGOR

There's another way out of here, isn't there? A passage. That's how he went. The Hafiz.

BELLO

No, he just vanished. I swear!

Aquila CLOSES the door and APPROACHES.

AQUILA
He's lying.

BELLO
Who are you?!

AQUILA
I always know when someone is lying. Infallibly. In my business it pays to know such things.

GREGOR
What exactly is your business?

AQUILA
Oh, buying and selling. I have to know if a man will honor his debts.
(little chuckle)
Now, is there water...? Ah...

He PICKS UP a bottle.

AQUILA (CONT'D)
A bowl?
(takes bowl)
And... a needle.
(retrieves needle from his collar)
Here, in my tunic collar. Always carry one as a traveller. Indulge me, Commander. I can help... I'm here to help.

GREGOR (V.O.)
Help who? What's he up to?

Aquila POURS water into the bowl.

GREGOR
Very well...

AQUILA
So, needle in the water. And, my friend... uh, Bello, is it?

BELLO
Yes.

AQUILA
The same who wrote the *Chronicles of Sultan al-Ghuri*?

BELLO
(chuffed)
Yes, you've read them?

AQUILA

Read them? Almost know them by heart! Now, were you telling the truth just now?

BELLO

I was, yes I...

AQUILA

Ah, there it is, the needle moves and the point points... at you, my friend. Never fails. The needle knows. You are a fine writer, Effendi, but a bad liar.

Gregor DRAWS A SWORD and gets CLOSE to Bello:

GREGOR

I will cut your throat this moment if you don't tell me everything.

AQUILA

That would be a loss to literature but I fear the commander is telling the truth... You see, if not, the needle would've moved.

5.10 INT. HAFIZ'S PALACE. PASSAGE

5.10

A Heavy Door OPENS - a slight echo. Bello LEADS Gregor and Aquila IN.

BELLO

Before he "disappeared", the Hafiz told me to stay away from his chamber. That was when I saw the woman. Three days passed and when I finally entered, he was gone.

GREGOR

Much as you told me before, Bello. It doesn't impress me.

BELLO

I... left something out.
(he taps the wall)
Somewhere behind this wall there's a passage. I don't know how to open it.

AQUILA

Let me try...

He TAPS the wall, MOVES along it, then runs his fingers along a seam and CLICK - it slides OPEN.

GREGOR
You have many skills, my friend.

GREGOR (V.O.)
Far too many.

AQUILA
You see? I said I could be of help.

Gregor LEANS IN.

GREGOR
We need a lamp. Bello... You go in first...

BELLO
I can't, I hate tunnels.

AQUILA
I would do as you are asked, my friend. He does not look pleased with you.

5.11 INT. TUNNEL.

5.11

Water DRIPS - dead sound. Gregor, Bello, and Aquila are WALKING.

GREGOR
Yes. Keep going. Bello, hold the lamp higher.

GREGOR (V.O.)
Are we heading for the palace? Has Fatima had him all the time?

GREGOR
(to Bello)
Bello, why would he lie, the Hafiz?

A pause as they WALK, then:

BELLO
He believes the Balarac are the servants of evil. He thinks they need him for their ceremony to work.

GREGOR
What ceremony, what evil?

BELLO
He said, in the days before he left, he talked about the balance of our world... It was confused. There are people here who should not be here.

GREGOR

"People?"... The Watchers, you mean?

BELLO

Yes! Yes... And he said something about tattoos... Lizards and snakes... always on the left, behind the ear... their sign...

GREGOR

Why did you lie?

BELLO

Something is going to happen... I wanted to keep him out of it. If I lied, it would give him time to hide.

GREGOR

And the woman, was that a lie too?

BELLO

Oh no, she was there. I saw her with my own eyes.

(beat)

And I saw her before...

GREGOR

What? When?

BELLO

When they hanged her and then when they cremated the body and sent the ashes out to sea...

GREGOR

Alkin.

BELLO

The same.

GREGOR (V.O.)

(it all comes together)

It was always her, from the beginning...

5.12 INT. PALACE. THRONE ROOM - DAY

5.12

MANEL ENTERS, joining CADALI and Fatima who have been talking.

FATIMA

Manel! Where have you been? I was looking for you.

MANEL

I was... It doesn't matter, I was busy.

FATIMA

Hmm... Sit down. We have some news. I have secured an agreement with the Balarac. They will depart Tumanbay the morning after the Festival of the Fires. Now, am I truly the savior of the city or am I not? Come, come and hug your mother! This is how we do things in the provinces: we pull up our sleeves and get things done! Cadali, show her...

CADALI

Here, Majesty, the seal of the Grand Master Amalric.

Manel EXAMINES the document for a moment.

MANEL

And you believe him?

FATIMA

My darling, if there is one thing we know about the Balarac, it is that they do not lie. I was there, I heard his voice.

(beat - then also directed at Manel)

I can tell when someone is lying.

MANEL

And yet we know the Balarac are controlling the city gates. No one goes in or out without a pass. I believe that you are their prisoner just as much as you think I am your prisoner.

FATIMA

Stop, Manel. Why...?

MANEL

It's the truth, Fatima. Isn't it time for that now? The truth?

Manel SWEEPS OUT. Hold the silence.

CADALI

(clears his throat)

I'll, um, leave you, Mistress.

FATIMA

Wait!

(beat)

When this is all over, when the Balarac have left, when trade resumes, then this city will need strong, decisive leadership.

CADALI

Indeed, indeed.

FATIMA

And do you think the sultana can provide such leadership?

CADALI

Well, uh...

FATIMA

Well?

CADALI

No, I don't believe she would.

FATIMA

She has been erratic, confused, not herself recently.

CADALI

True, true but if I may speak, Mistress? Fear is not enough. Whoever rules needs the support, the love of the people. The sultana has that love. She's a hero of the fight to overthrow Maya. The daughter of the great General Qulan, also beloved of the people...

FATIMA

I came to Tumanbay in its hour of need with my own army to defend it against the Balarac.

CADALI

Yes, Mistress, but... but, if I may be so bold, the Balarac are... Well, they are still here.

FATIMA

They are going, I arranged it.

CADALI

Yes, yes... and the people will, undoubtedly, I'm sure of it... feel great affection for you, of course they will... But... Hmm... Perhaps, yes, perhaps a regency...?

FATIMA

A regency? Yes, yes I like that. Go on.

CADALI

It might help solve the... er... problem. I have looked into the histories and there is precedent. Some years ago, a hundred or more, the Mad Sultan was replaced by a regent.

FATIMA

How did that work?

CADALI

He was brought before a council of prominent citizens of Tumanbay and examined. The records show that he was clearly seen to be incompetent, unable to rule effectively and... and a regent was appointed...

FATIMA

And the sultan?

CADALI

Was retired. Actually he was bricked up in a tower, the one along the coast. It's still called the Mad Sultan. Forty years he was there until, well... he wasn't.

FATIMA

(she thinks about it for a moment)

The Mad Sultan... the Mad Sultan.

(beat)

I believe the sultana has been overworked. She's becoming... hysterical, irrational... Why should she turn on her beloved Fatima otherwise?

CADALI

Absolutely. You have put your finger on it. She cannot see what is obvious: that you have saved the city. In years to come, this will be recorded in the annals as one of the great victories of Tumanbay, won without the cost of blood!

FATIMA

Why wait?

CADALI

Mistress?

FATIMA

Why not write it now? Cadali, you are a man of many talents.

CADALI

(still not getting it)
Mistress?

Cadali "emotes enthusiasm" under her story:

FATIMA

You may write the chronicle of my life. Did you know I came from a tiny village where my parents and brothers and sisters died of the plague when I was no more than six years old? I followed their bodies to the communal burial pit. And then, when I turned away, broken hearted, lost, alone, a shaft of sunlight broke through the dark storm clouds and fell upon a gold coin half buried in the mud. I picked it up and held it in my mouth to keep it safe. I knew that with this one tiny coin I could build a future!

CADALI

(weeping with emotion)
So... beautiful, so true, so heroic. It must be told for the ages...

FATIMA

So - go then and have your scribes write it down. Oh, and Cadali?

CADALI

Yes, Mistress?

FATIMA

Send me the physician.

CADALI

Yes, Mistress.

He GOES.

5.13 OMITTED 5.13

5.14 EXT. MARKET - DAY 5.14

It's BUSY, crowded with people. Animals: dogs barking, chickens and pigeon in cages. Hawkers selling water: "Water, fresh water, beautiful clear clean water," etc.

Bello, Gregor, and Aquila EMERGE from a rickety door into the sunlight.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**So not the palace, not the
undercity but an escape passage to
the western market and to who knows
what else.**

BELLO

Look for the tattoos. Behind the
left ear. If you see that you'll
know they're here. They've taken
the Hafiz so only they can show us
the-

(he sees someone - shouts)

There, there... That man, tattoo...
Stop him, stop him!

GREGOR

Stop, Citizen!

The citizen RUNS - SCATTERING people and stalls.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Bello, don't move. Aquila, with
me...

Crowd DISRUPTION as Gregor and Aquila DART FORWARD.

They RUN through the already disordered market.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Out of the way, make way... Stop
that man... etc

They come to a STOP, GASPING for breath.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Did you see where he...?

AQUILA

No... Wait, yes, in there, he went
in there... In the carpet seller's!

They GO IN. The OWNER greets them.

OWNER

Effendi, how may I-

GREGOR

Man came in just now -
(urgently)
- where is he?

OWNER

There, Effendi, he went through there, I think...

A RUSTLE of carpet fabric.

AQUILA

Nothing... Look, there! Carpet moved...

Gregor DRAWS his sword.

GREGOR

Citizen, come out, come out now!

Pause.

AQUILA

Shall I pull it down?

GREGOR

Yes.

Carpet FALLS. Pause.

5.15 INT. CAFE - DAY

5.15

Fairly busy. Gregor and Aquila sit.

AQUILA

(drinks)

Well, I wanted adventures and it seems I've got them. Is it some sort of group here, street magicians? I've heard of such things.

GREGOR

You think it was all trickery?

AQUILA

Well, I don't trust that Bello for a start. Maybe he did away with this Hafiz person and wants to lead you off in a different direction?

GREGOR

But that man vanished in plain sight.

AQUILA

That is what conjurers make you believe, Commander. I've done a little of it myself, just for amusement. Look, I'll show you.

(opens a hand)

Gold coin in one hand.

(MORE)

AQUILA (CONT'D)
(opens other and)
Gold coin in the other hand.
(claps)
Ah - no gold coins.

He's having fun, even Gregor CHUCKLES.

AQUILA (CONT'D)
So where can they - ah, I know, the
skilful Commander Gregor has them
in his pocket. Please, look?

Gregor FISHES two gold coins out of his pocket and DROPS them
on the table. Aquila PICKS THEM OUT.

AQUILA (CONT'D)
Stealing my money? I'd better hold
them more carefully, otherwise you
Tumanbay tricksters will...
(taps knuckles on table)
Oh! Steal them again.

Gregor LAUGHS.

GREGOR
Very good, well done. But...

AQUILA
What's the matter?

GREGOR
I'm puzzled.

AQUILA
Well, it's magic.
(taps the table)
Here they are again. Coffee on me,
I think.

GREGOR
No, not about the coins, I know how
you did that. About something you
asked me over breakfast this
morning.

AQUILA
Yes?

GREGOR
You asked me how the banquet had
gone. At the palace. I'm surprised.

AQUILA
It was a perfectly normal question,
surely?

GREGOR

But you were there. Not looking like you do now, more like a slave offering food.

(beat)

Who do you work for?

He LAUGHS.

AQUILA

This is all...

GREGOR

Conjecture? No...

(here is where Gregor makes it clear)

AQUILA

I love these tiny coffee cups, so delicate...

GREGOR

I am at this moment holding a spike - can you feel the touch of the point on your leg? If it breaks the skin, you will die. I suspect you know enough about poisons to believe me?

Aquila picks up his coffee and DRINKS.

AQUILA

This is some of the best coffee I have ever drunk.

GREGOR

Who do you work for?

AQUILA

I must buy some beans to take home.

GREGOR

Answer the question.

AQUILA

Whoever pays me.

GREGOR

Who pays at the moment?

AQUILA

Mistress Fatima.

GREGOR

What has she asked you to do?

AQUILA

I was summoned to Tumanbay for a job and it is done. I am no threat to you, Commander.

GREGOR

What are you?

AQUILA

There is... a castle in the mountains. Oh, not anywhere near here, it's far away. And in that castle is a garden, a beautiful garden, like paradise, some say. And young men and young women too, go there and in "paradise" they are trained in certain arts and sciences and some achieve... a mastery of their subject. Messengers come and messengers go, money is offered, tasks...

(laughs)

... are performed. You understand, Commander.

A silence between them. The cafe sounds go on around them.

AQUILA (CONT'D)

I have done some jobs previously for her. Her husband...

GREGOR

You worked for her husband?

AQUILA

I helped her with the... problem of her husband. A hunting accident.

GREGOR

And inconvenient bankers?

Aquila LAUGHS again.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

So tell me why I shouldn't kill you now?

AQUILA

Look, we are both the same kind of man, my friend. You know if I give you my word, I will stick by it. Look at me, you will know if I'm lying. It's what you do. Am I?

Pause.

AQUILA (CONT'D)

All she has asked me to do is help you.

GREGOR

And report back to her.

AQUILA

Obviously. I give you my word that if those orders ever change, I will tell you. Otherwise, use your spike and finish it now.

5.16 INT. PALACE PHYSICIAN'S LAB

5.16

Retorts bubble. The squeak of a syringe... Laid in a tray - a flame and a crackling. The PHYSICIAN is at work.

PHYSICIAN

(sotto as he works)

Ah, my friend, my comforter, my lover, my sole delight... What would I do without you?

He INHALES the fumes.

TAPPING at the door.

PHYSICIAN (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Go awaaaaay.

TAPPING again.

ASSISTANT

(off)

Effendi?

Door OPENS. ASSISTANT ENTERS.

PHYSICIAN

I have told you, do not disturb me while I am working!

ASSISTANT

I am sorry, Effendi, Mistress Fatima is calling for you.

PHYSICIAN

Oh heavens, what now? Very well.

(beat, as Physician quivers with the intoxication)

Go away. Go away, I am coming!

ASSISTANT

Yes, Sir.

Assistant LEAVES.

5.17 INT. PALACE CORRIDOR AND THRONE ROOM.

5.17

The Physician HURRIES along the corridor. The Throne Room doors OPEN as he approaches. Fatima awaits.

PHYSICIAN
(out of breath, still
high)
Mistress, you summoned me, I'm
here. Are you unwell?

FATIMA
No, I am in fine health.

PHYSICIAN
Of course, of course. Then how may
I serve you?

FATIMA
It's someone else. A friend. I need
some help.

PHYSICIAN
Yes?

FATIMA
This person is not herself of late.
She has been through a lot and her
mind is showing signs of being
overthrown. Do you see, Doctor?

PHYSICIAN
She needs something to help her
be... calm?

FATIMA
Not "calm," so much as... Her
feelings are full of...

PHYSICIAN
Anxiety?

FATIMA
Anger. The desire to do herself
some deadly harm. Others too,
perhaps. Fury pent up inside.
Directed at... someone who loves
her very much.

PHYSICIAN
So sad.

FATIMA
(a tear or two)
So very sad.

PHYSICIAN

I do have medicines that can help with such ailments.

FATIMA

Her father's death, perhaps she is still mourning... Her mother, too...

PHYSICIAN

Mistress, I have been here in the palace since the time of Sultan al-Ghuri and I have dealt with many such problems. Both of the body and the mind. Perhaps I could examine your uh... friend?

FATIMA

Impossible. Such is her disorder that she will not see you. What we are dealing with, Doctor, is a kind of madness.

PHYSICIAN

And you are close?

FATIMA

I am like her mother.

(beat)

I only want to help. Of course, she does not know I am seeing you, she would be...

PHYSICIAN

Upset.

FATIMA

It would tip her over the edge. But I have to help her.

PHYSICIAN

Of course, of course, Mistress.

FATIMA

Something... effective. Something very... effective.

PHYSICIAN

Yes, Mistress.

5.18 INT. TOWER ROOM.

5.18

Door OPENS and Cadali ENTERS. He sees Manel.

CADALI

You summoned me, Majesty?

MANEL

I did, I did. I know you come up here sometimes...

CADALI

I am, I admit, fascinated by the glasses. For all her "mysteries", Doctor Alkin was a fascinating woman.

MANEL

Do you never, Cadali, feel... embarrassed at...

CADALI

The vizier who feels embarrassment, Majesty, is himself an embarrassment to those who wish to use his skills. Regrets, sometimes.

MANEL

Well, I thought it better to meet where no one might suspect...

CADALI

Yes, yes.

CLICK of telescope.

CADALI (CONT'D)

I see the work goes well with the aqueduct - it will be done by the festival, they tell us, and then we shall be done with *them*.

MANEL

Do you believe them?

CADALI

"Belief," Majesty, is a luxury viziers cannot afford.

MANEL

Nor sultanas. So let us deal with the here and now.

CADALI

The Balarac...

MANEL

That is not what I wish to talk to you about.

CADALI

I am your grand vizier, Majesty. I am here to help - to listen and advise.

MANEL

I don't trust you, Cadali but... I need you. I *think* you care about Tumanbay... and I *know* you care about saving your own skin. And I'm trusting that you also know that you can't trust Fatima.

CADALI

Hmmm.

MANEL

You are the vizier. Tell me: what is her legal position in this city? Could we simply arrest her?

CADALI

She has no "position", Majesty. She is like any other ordinary citizen of Tumanbay. She's powerful because she has an army.

MANEL

An army of mercenaries. They'll be loyal to whoever pays them. And if I know Fatima, even though she has the loan, she'll be reluctant to part with any gold.

CADALI

True.

MANEL

Could she simply take power, have me murdered?

CADALI

The people would not stand for it. If she wanted to take power, she would have to do it according to custom. Summon a council of leading citizens and prelates. They would have to consent without dissension. It wouldn't happen-

MANEL

If we move fast, put her in a cell, take control of the money, then her army would come round.

CADALI

Uhhh...

MANEL

What?

CADALI

Imprisonment would be unwise. Her personal guard remain loyal.

MANEL

Cadali, you are lucky to be here. These are extraordinary times. When things settle, if she is still around, you will receive punishment for what you did to her, whatever she has promised.

CADALI

Yes, Majesty.

MANEL

As for what you did to me, well, I will act like a sultana and, if you serve me well, there may be a way back for you.

CADALI

Thank you, Sultana. I have learnt many things through painful experience. I am a bad master but a good servant.

MANEL

So do I have your complete loyalty, Cadali?

CADALI

A thousand times yes. Yes.

MANEL

So we agree.

CADALI

Agree?

MANEL

Fatima has to die.

5.19 INT. LODGING HOUSE

5.19

Gregor is greeted by the LANDLADY.

LANDLADY

Oh, Commander?

GREGOR

I'll have tea - mint - and some food, whatever there is.

LANDLADY

I've got it right here.

She SERVES him.

LANDLADY (CONT'D)

There was a beggar here earlier...
I sent him away.

GREGOR

So?

LANDLADY

He gave *me* a coin, not the other
way around...

GREGOR

Hmm...

5.20 EXT. STREET.

5.20

Afternoon crowds not so large. Gregor seeks out the BEGGAR.

BEGGAR

Alms for the poor, for the good of
your soul, kind people, give alms
for-

Gregor SQUATS down beside him.

GREGOR

Gabreel, my friend, you were at my
lodgings, yes?

BEGGAR

Yes, I was.

GREGOR

Tell.

BEGGAR

(chuckling)

This is like old times, Commander.
I remember-

GREGOR

Get on with it.

BEGGAR

A woman came... asking for you.

GREGOR

By name?

BEGGAR

By name.

GREGOR

What did she look like?

BEGGAR

She was covered, head to toe... Hid her eyes from me...

GREGOR

Come on!

BEGGAR

She couldn't stay, couldn't wait, had to go.

GREGOR

Did she say anything?

BEGGAR

She said that she'd be inside the Midan al-Suliman at sunset and the old man... the Hafiz?

GREGOR

Yes?

BEGGAR

She knows where he is.

5.21 EXT. INT. MIDAN AL-SULIMAN.

5.21

Gregor RUSHES along the street - past the crowds. Under the V.O. he ENTERS the midan. It is almost empty.

GREGOR (V.O.)

It's Alkin, it has to be her. Hiding her eyes, shrouded, like a ghost... of the living. A spirit in the Sun. What does she want? More to the point, what will she tell me at last?

He comes to a HALT.

GREGOR (V.O.)

Do I wait, do I search, or what? There!

He HURRIES across the echoey court, pigeons take off.

GREGOR

Alkin! You, you left me a message...

Heaven TURNS AROUND.

HEAVEN

Hello, Gregor.

GREGOR

Heaven!

HEAVEN

I don't have long. This way...

She LEADS him to the back of the temple, a quiet corner.

GREGOR

The Hafiz, do you know where-

HEAVEN

The Hafiz? I don't know. I said that because I knew you would come. I needed to see you.

GREGOR

Why are you here? You're with the Balarac, you believe in their doctrine. You have renounced your family. Did the Grand Master send you?

HEAVEN

No, he does trust me - he sends me on errands into the city. I want, so badly, I want to see my child and Akiba but I can't, they watch the house. The Grand Master is testing me, to see if I'm true. I have to live, *for* my family. You should understand that: lying to survive.

GREGOR

This is nothing to do with me.

HEAVEN

Be quiet and listen. The Hafiz is a part of this too. I don't know how but he's important. When he went missing, I got you back to Tumanbay. I helped you. And now I need your help.

GREGOR

What help?

HEAVEN

I need you to save my family.

GREGOR

From what?

HEAVEN

Whatever is going to happen... The night of the fires is the end of it. I'm the Grand Master's eyes, I read the scrolls to him.

(a breath)

(MORE)

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

There is a garden somewhere in the city. It says:

(quotes)

"Before the city, the garden grew and was fruitful and the garden abides though men have forgotten it long since."

(beat)

I believe the garden is real.

GREGOR

How will I find this so-called garden?

She HANDS him a map.

HEAVEN

Here, I copied a map from the scrolls. It's crude but it will help you. Use your knowledge, Gregor, no one knows the city as you do.

GREGOR

I'm not playing games, Heaven. Why should I risk doing this for you? I am a busy man-

HEAVEN

(urgent)

Don't you see what a gift I am giving you? Who knows the history of the city, who knows the scrolls? The Hafiz! I believe that if you find the garden, you will find him. *He's the key to everything!* I have to go. I trust you. Save my family.

She's GONE.

5.22 INT. FATIMA'S ROOM

5.22

Fatima and Aquila are DISCUSSING Gregor. There's a KNOCK at the door.

FATIMA

Enter.

Cadali ENTERS.

CADALI

Oh, excuse me, Mistress, I didn't realize you had...

AQUILA

Aquila, Effendi.

CADALI
"Aquila". I will leave you,
Mistress...

FATIMA
Do.

Cadali LEAVES.

AQUILA
Pleasant fellow.

FATIMA
Yes, he murdered my son. Now this
business with the Hafiz, should it
concern me?

AQUILA
A mere distraction. There is some
wild talk out there about things...

FATIMA
Things?

AQUILA
Street magic. It reminds me of the
time I was visiting-

FATIMA
Get to the point.

AQUILA
It really need not concern you,
Madam, unless you enjoy magic
shows?

FATIMA
I do not enjoy being made to wait.
Gregor, what of him?

AQUILA
I think he's a spent force,
obsessed with some dead woman
walking...

FATIMA
The dead always seem to be walking
in Tumanbay.

AQUILA
And Gregor? Shall I stay with him?

FATIMA
If he's neither threat nor use then
you might as well kill him.

AQUILA
Then I shall.

He GOES.

5.23 OMITTED 5.23

5.24 INT. MANEL'S BEDROOM. 5.24

Fatima CREEPS into Manel's room. Manel STIRS in her sleep. Fatima is STROKING her hair.

FATIMA

(quietly)

Manel, Manel... How are you feeling, my dear? You were crying in your sleep. I was worried.

MANEL

(confused - annoyed)

W... what are you doing here?

FATIMA

I couldn't sleep. I was thinking about today. I hate it when we argue like this. We should support each other. I miss having you close. I'm so sorry I upset you today. I was excited by what had happened but... I was just thinking of myself, not of you.

Manel SITS UP.

MANEL

It's late. Can we talk in the morning, Fatima?

FATIMA

Mother, I am your mother. I've been neglecting you, I can see that but I'm going to make it up to you. I want you to be better.

MANEL

There's nothing wrong with me, Fatima.

FATIMA

Of course not. But... this will make you feel better. Doctor?

The Physician ENTERS, with Cadali and some ASSISTANTS.

PHYSICIAN

(off)

Your Majesty...

MANEL

What is this, what's going on?

FATIMA

It's for your own good, Manel.
Drink - it will soothe you, let you
sleep without weeping.

They force her to DRINK.

MANEL

(shouts, spluttering)
I don't want it...

A STRUGGLE as the Physician, Cadali, and assistants, hold Manel.

PHYSICIAN

Just a little more...

MANEL

Stop! Let me go!

FATIMA

For your own good.

MANEL

(cries out)
Stop, help me, someone help me...
Stop...
(the cries get slurred
then fade)

She begins to breathe deeply under:

FATIMA

Is it done?

PHYSICIAN

It is done, Mistress.

FATIMA

Good girl, sleep now... sleep.
Cadali?

CADALI

(stepping closer)
Majesty?

FATIMA

Watch her, make sure she sleeps
well.

CADALI

Of course, Mistress.

Fatima, the Physician and his assistants GO. Cadali stands watching Manel.

CADALI (CONT'D)

Look at you now, Manel, daughter of General Qulan. You know, I always rather admired him but Qulan, well, he never really acknowledged my existence. I was the dust beneath his sandal. And yet here you are, and he is in the ground, and his brother Gregor is looking for invisible people, and I, Cadali, I survive, I flourish!

MUSIC.

End of Episode 4.05.