

TUMANBAY

Episode 4.06 - "Secret Garden"

by

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We hear the tail-end of Manel's dream, an overlapping mosaic of voices from her past.

ALKIN

(from S2 episode 3)

Just imagine, real stones falling from the sky... Perhaps we will find them lying in the desert?

DANIEL

(from S1 episode 6)

... It seems to me that only someone who... has great depths within, who has known both hope and suffering, could have made this place.

ALKIN

You still have a long way to travel...

QULAN

(from S3 episode 6)

Terror can win the most of a battle, even before the fighting starts...

Another voice joins the chorus, only this one comes into focus more than the others. This voice is from waking life.

FATIMA and the PHYSICIAN observe MANEL's drowsy figure.

FATIMA

You gave her the second dose?

PHYSICIAN

Yes, Majesty. It should leave her quite confused, quite weak, quite-

FATIMA

Mad? That was the goal, after all.

PHYSICIAN

Oh yes, Mistress, without question. I made it once for the old sultan, al-Ghuri. He used it to drive his brother's chief wife insane...

FATIMA

And it worked?

PHYSICIAN

She killed herself.

Fatima LEANS over Manel.

FATIMA

Manel? Manel my darling?

(Manel stirs)

You know this hurts my heart, don't
you my beautiful child? But I'm
doing this for you.

6.2 INT. PALACE. TOWER ROOM - NIGHT

6.2

FOOTSTEPS climbing...

ANGEL quietly ENTERS the Tower Room.

ANGEL

(low)

Manel?

(seeing the a figure)

Ah... When you didn't come
yesterday I feared-

CADALI EMERGES from the shadows.

CADALI

Can I help you with anything?

ANGEL

Oh, Grand Vizier. I was looking
for... Her Majesty the Sultana?

CADALI

(casually)

Oh yes?

ANGEL

Yes.

(beat)

Is she...?

CADALI

"Her Majesty, the Sultana," is
indisposed.

ANGEL

Indisposed?

CADALI

(ice cold)

Indisposed.

ANGEL

I can promise you, Vizier, she
would want to see me.

CADALI

You are a guest in our city. And if I may offer you some advice, I think you would do better to concentrate your efforts on assisting your master with his great painting.

ANGEL

Well... he needs the sultana for that. He needs access to her... living visage. He has asked me to find out when she might be available.

CADALI

Then your master can put in a request with the Head Steward. Thank you for your visit.

(Angel hovers)

Oh, are you still here?

ANGEL

It's an impressive collection.

CADALI

What?

ANGEL

The viewing devices, I mean. Polished domes of glass, magnifying light. An extraordinary concept. Telescopes, yes? That's what they call them?

CADALI

Yes, the old sultan, al-Ghuri, was a great collector of such things. He had a particular interest in the skies, watching the stars, looking for the signs in the heavens. I'm more down to earth, for my part. I trust you can find your own way out?

ANGEL

(curtly)

Yes, thank you.

Angel starts to LEAVE.

CADALI

Oh and Signor? Don't come back into this part of the palace again. It's not for guests. Good day to you.

Angel PAUSES for a moment.. Then keeps WALKING.

6.3 INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR IN THE PALACE - NIGHT

6.3

Angel PADS down another corridor, TRYING DOORS as quietly as possible.

ANGEL
 (trying a door)
 Manel?
 (scampers down corridor,
 tries another)
 Manel, are you in there?

The physician and a NURSE approach.

Angel DUCKS away. We hear Angel's BREATH as they pass.

PHYSICIAN
 It worries me too, but Mistress
 Fatima's orders were very
 specific...

Their voices trail off down the hall.

Angel continues ALONG the corridor and OPENS a door.

6.4 INT. MANEL'S ROOM IN THE PALACE - NIGHT

6.4

Angel ENTERS a darkened room. He sees Manel lying on a bed.

ANGEL
 (low)
 ... Manel?

She STIRS.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
 Manel...

MANEL
 (weak)
 Are... are you speaking to me?

ANGEL
 It's Angel.

He APPROACHES.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
 Oh my... What's happened to you? My
 poor, darling-

MANEL
 What do you want?

ANGEL
 It's me, Manel, it's Angel-

MANEL

Nurse!

ANGEL

I'm Angel! Manel, what's wrong?

The Nurse ENTERS.

NURSE

Who are you?
(calling)
Guard! Guard!

ANGEL

I'm lost, I just got lost.

NURSE

You got "lost" in the sultana's
chamber, Sir?

ANGEL

I'm leaving, I'm leaving, I just
got lost.

NURSE

Go!
(calling)
Guard?

Angel RUNS out and flees down the corridor clearly
DISTRESSED.

ANGEL

What have they done to her?

6.4A **OPENING TITLES - MUSIC**

6.4A

ANNOUNCER

**Tumanbay, Season 4, Episode 6.
"Secret Garden", by Mac Rogers.**

6.5 EXT. LODGING HOUSE - DAWN

6.5

GREGOR HURRIES out of the Lodging House toward the Tower.
After a beat AQUILA comes out of the Lodging House and
HURRIES after him.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**It's barely dawn and I'm already at
work. If Heaven is right, if the
Hafiz has made his home in this
supposed "garden," I need to know.**

AQUILA

Gregor, wait!

GREGOR (V.O.)

**Does the man never sleep? Must I
take him everywhere?**

GREGOR

This isn't a good time, Aquila.

AQUILA

Look at you: rising before dawn,
that purposeful gait. Where are we
going?

GREGOR

What?

6.6

INT. TOWER OF THE ADULTERERS - EARLY MORNING

6.6

FROG and DUMPY LEAD Gregor and Aquila up the STONES STEPS
toward the top.

FROG

Just a bit higher.

AQUILA

Look at that view! That vista!

FROG

Mind your step, Effendi.

Over the following, Frog and Dumpy PREPARE their flying
equipment.

GREGOR (V.O.)

The Tower of the Adulterers...

AQUILA

Now *this* is the sort of thing I
wanted to see when I came to
Tumanbay!

GREGOR (V.O.)

**... So called because... Well, I
think you get my drift. It's high,
very, very high. And when you're a
Skylark, that's all that matters.**

FROG

Are you ready?

DUMPY

Wait, Frog! The strap, here.

(Dumpy fixes one of Frog's
straps)

For us, careless means dead. Have
you forgotten what happened to
Spider?

Gregor PRODUCES the parchment.

GREGOR
Are you two ready?

DUMPY
We're ready to *fly*, but...

FROG
... It would help to know what we're looking for.

GREGOR
Yes, look, I don't know much. I know it's a garden, I know it should be...
(unrolls parchment on the floor)
... roughly *here*, see?

FROG
I don't recognize half of this.

GREGOR
Well, it's a hurriedly-sketched copy from an ancient scroll; it's a wonder you recognize *any* of it.

GREGOR (V.O.)
And right now, sad to say, it's my best lead. *If Heaven can be trusted.*

GREGOR
But what you can still see are the five hills - here. They were there then, they are there now. Use them to fix your position. Fly out towards the golden spire *there*, and then turn left and follow the passage of the aqueduct. You're looking for any kind of disruption to the buildings: trees, grass, I don't know. It may be hidden behind walls, under arches - the main thing is it won't be visible from street level.

DUMPY
Got it. Ready Frog?

FROG
We'll land down there in the square.

Frog and Dumpy CLIMB out onto the parapet.

AQUILA

Careful - careful! Are you sure
this is-

Aquila breaks off with a SHRIEK as Frog and Dumpy LEAP from
the parapet.

GREGOR

Watch, watch this.

Aquila's gasp turns into a LAUGH.

AQUILA

They're - they're still...

GREGOR

Remarkable, isn't it?

AQUILA

I've never seen anything like it in
my life! They're flying through the
air like great birds!

GREGOR

There used to be dozens of Skyrats
here in the time of the old sultan.
Every morning as the sun rose, and
the winds came off the desert, you
would see them; flocks of them over
the city. No longer. Except for
these two.

Gregor SLIPS slightly. Aquila PUTS hands on him to steady
him.

AQUILA

Careful, Commander, you're slipping
there-

GREGOR

Get your hands off me.

AQUILA

Of course, of course - I just
thought you were going to...

GREGOR

Your concern is touching.

AQUILA

Look, Commander, I gave you my word
the other day. If I meant you any
ill, you would have been over the
edge by now.

After a beat, both men LAUGH.

GREGOR (V.O.)
Or maybe you thought I might take
you with me...

AQUILA
Do you think they'll find it, this
garden of yours?

GREGOR
I don't know. Maybe it's a myth,
maybe it was built-over centuries
ago...

An IMITATION ANIMAL-CALL sounds from far below.

GREGOR (CONT'D)
That's our signal.

6.7 EXT. PUBLIC SQUARE - EARLY MORNING

6.7

Gregor and Aquila APPROACH Frog and Dumpy.

GREGOR
Well?

FROG
Nothing. Just slums, houses...

DUMPY
Nothing like you said. No glass, no
water, no concealing trees...

GREGOR
Damn!

Gregor WALKS a little away from them. Frog and Dumpy pack up.

AQUILA
Well, at least I got to see the
famous Skyrats in flight. I
wonder... Could you show me how to
do it?

DUMPY
You're too heavy.

AQUILA
Ah, I wish I could dispute that,
but alas... I envy you, truly.

Gregor sees them PACKING and RETURNS abruptly.

GREGOR
Why are you packing up? We have to
go again, try a different
direction.

FROG

We have to go to work, Effendi.

GREGOR

I'm paying you, *this* is your work!

FROG

The other work isn't about money...

AQUILA

Forgive my curiosity, but what *is* your other work?

DUMPY

We build gallows.

AQUILA

Goodness.

DUMPY

We're carpenters. Helping prepare for the Festival of the Fires.

FROG

Come on, Dumpy.

DUMPY

(to Gregor)

Oh... by the way Commander, my mother told me to tell you she has a message for you.

GREGOR

I'm going back to the lodging now so I will-

DUMPY

The butcher, Hassan, he wants to see you.

GREGOR

All right... Same time tomorrow morning, then?

FROG

As many times as you can pay.

GREGOR

Of course.

AQUILA

May I walk with you, Dumpy? I would so love to hear more about the Skyrats.

DUMPY

Er... all right, I guess.

Dumpy and Aquila WALK ahead.

FROG

Why do you want to find this garden so much, anyway?

GREGOR

It doesn't matter.

FROG

Is something hidden there? Or... you want to *hide* something there? It's a safe place of some kind, isn't it?

GREGOR

We have to find it before I can answer that question.

Frog STOPS Gregor from following Aquila.

FROG

Listen, Gregor, my girl's in that prison. They're going to hang her at this stupid Festival of the Fires. If you can get her out I'll fly for you for nothing.

GREGOR

I'm sorry.

FROG

Please, Gregor.

GREGOR

I'm not what I was, Frog. I can't open doors like I used to. Especially not doors guarded by the Balarac. None of my old tricks work: they can't be bribed, they can't be cultivated.

FROG

I had to ask.

GREGOR

I understand.

FROG

Me and Dumpy are going to try something else to get her out, but then we'll need somewhere to go.

GREGOR

Yes, the hard part's not the theft, it's the getaway.

FROG

It's more than that. We'll need
refuge, a real refuge, from what's
going to happen that day.

GREGOR

What do you mean by that?

FROG

I... lied to you before.

GREGOR

(realizing)

You're still having the dreams. The
visions.

FROG

I saw the city. Only, there was no
city, just howling and ruins and
those unlucky few who were still
alive. Their hunger oppressed them
so much that they were eating
rocks, the corpses of the dead,
even each other's filth.

(beat)

And towering over their scavenging
bodies... the wheel.

GREGOR

What wheel?

FROG

The Wheel of Life and Death. The
wheel that heralds the end of all
things.

DUMPY

(from a ways ahead)

Come on, Frog! Uncle will beat us
if we're late!

FROG

I have to go.

(starts to follow Dumpy,
then turns back to
Gregor)

Oh - one more thing, Gregor.

GREGOR

Yes?

FROG

You remember the dream I had years
ago?

GREGOR

The one where I died? I'm not
likely to forget.

FROG

There was something I left out. The dream was in a great garden. Where all manner of beasts walked side-by-side with the insane.

Frog RUNS off. Aquila WALKS back to Gregor.

AQUILA

Fascinating fellow, that Dumpy. What an extraordinary life he leads!

GREGOR

(preoccupied)
Mmm...

AQUILA

So, off to the butcher, then?

6.8 INT. BUTCHER SHOP - DAY

6.8

Gregor and Aquila ENTER the shop where HASSAN the butcher is WORKING.

GREGOR

Hassan.

HASSAN

Gregor, you got my message! And who's this?

AQUILA

Just a friend, friend. Experiencing the delights of your fine city. Aquila...

HASSAN

Hassan.

GREGOR

You wanted to see me? What do you have?

HASSAN

There was an old man. I heard this from my cousin - he's the baker in Vasuva.

GREGOR

There are many old men in this city.

HASSAN

Yes, but this one, according to my cousin, seemed lost, unfamiliar with how to buy things.

(MORE)

HASSAN (CONT'D)

He offered my cousin a ring. He said the old man's hands were adorned with rings, all with precious stones.

GREGOR

And do you have this ring?

HASSAN

That's the thing, just as he was trying to take it off, a small fat fellow rushed in and grabbed him away. They left without paying! My cousin chased them down the street and the fat man stopped and apologized and gave him a coin, paid him double in fact, said he would appreciate it if they could keep it between themselves.

6.9 EXT. BUTCHER SHOP - DAY

6.9

Gregor and Aquila EMERGE from the Butcher's shop.

AQUILA

Well, well, this really is intriguing.

GREGOR

Aquila, this is where we must part company. My errand is urgent and you can't follow me everywhere.

AQUILA

This time it's for your benefit, not Fatima's.

GREGOR

What are you talking about?

AQUILA

Your elusive quarry... he suddenly makes a spectacle of himself in a public place in front of witnesses? Are you telling me there's no part of you that suspects a trap?

GREGOR

Who's trap? The Balarac? I'm working for them.

AQUILA

I'm thinking more of our friends with the lizard tattoos, who've no doubt heard you bellowing at them in the streets and chasing them into stores.

(MORE)

AQUILA (CONT'D)

They may well have concluded you're more trouble than you're worth. You need security. *Trained* security.

GREGOR

What's in it for you?

AQUILA

If I'm bound to follow you around, it might as well be interesting. I suggest we stop by the Lodging House, get whatever we need from our rooms, then set off together.

6.10 INT. PALACE, COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

6.10

Cadali RISES to address the council.

CADALI

Gentlemen, Leaders of the Council of Tumanbay, Heads of the Trade Guilds, and Provincial Governors...

The rest of Cadali's speech is heard under 6.11:

CADALI (CONT'D)

... Thank you for taking time out of your busy lives to assist Mistress Fatima, who has put our beloved city and - indeed the empire itself - back on the path of prosperity. I'm sorry to say that today's business is not pleasant... Indeed, it is with a heavy heart that I have to tell you that our sultana, Manel, daughter of the legendary General Qulan and a luminous example for us all, has been felled by a grievous illness of the mind. A great darkness has fallen over her, a weakness of the faculties, with no foreseeable hope for a recovery to full royal acuity. Therefore, according to the statutes of the city, this august body of distinguished city fathers is called upon to examine Her Majesty and pass judgement as to whether she is fit to carry out her duties... or whether those burdens should be compassionately shouldered by... another. In just a few moments, the patient will be brought forth for your examination.

6.11 INT. NEARBY ANTECHAMBER - DAY

6.11

Fatima SITS with Manel in an antechamber just outside. We can faintly hear Cadali orating through the walls.

FATIMA

Don't worry, my dear daughter. It won't take long.

The Physician ENTERS.

PHYSICIAN

Mistress.

FATIMA

Are they ready for us, Doctor?

PHYSICIAN

They are, Mistress.

FATIMA

Should she have another dose first?

PHYSICIAN

I think she's had enough.

FATIMA

Give her another.

(beat)

Doctor? I feel sure I just gave you an instruction.

PHYSICIAN

Mistress.

The Physician PREPARES a dose.

FATIMA

Give it to me.

(she takes the dose, then helps Manel drink it)

My darling, can you be a brave girl and drink it all up?

(Manel resists but is forced to drink, coughing a little)

Slaves!

SLAVES RUSH forward to help Manel STAND and WALK.

6.12 INT. PALACE, COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

6.12

Slaves LEAD the disoriented Manel to a chair as the members of the council look on.

CADALI

We have a chair for you, just over there, Sultana. How are you feeling, Majesty?

They help Manel TOWARDS the chair.

FATIMA

Don't press her, Cadali, she's very confused this morning.

CADALI

No, no, of course, of course...

Low, pitying MURMURS from the onlookers as Manel passes. Fatima and Cadali LOWER HER into the chair.

FATIMA

(low)

Now sit slowly, dear, don't want you hurting yourself.

(then to the crowd)

Councillors, merchants, and guild-heads of Tumanbay! I thank you for your patience, and ask your forgiveness that I was not here when you arrived. The only excuse I can offer you is that I did not wish to leave our suffering sultana's side.

MURMURS: some approving, some dubious. Clearly not everyone's convinced.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

Now, Cadali, I believe tradition and law dictate that the assembled dignitaries have full opportunity to assess the sultana's fitness before the eyes of all?

CADALI

Quite correct, Mistress. I was thinking we'd begin with Effendi Ergan, a council leader in the northwest quarter.

ERGAN RISES tentatively.

ERGAN

Me?

CADALI

Perhaps you'd like to examine the sultana first, Effendi?

ERGAN

Well... certainly I'm no physician,
but... I think I know when someone
is er... of sound mind.

FATIMA

Then we're all very lucky you're
here, Effendi.

Ergan APPROACHES Manel.

ERGAN

(to Manel)
Majesty? Sultana?

MANEL

(faintly)
Mmm?

CADALI

Please proceed, Effendi Ergan.

ERGAN

Perhaps, Majesty... perhaps you
could tell us something of your
symptoms?

Silence. Perturbed MURMURS around the room.

FATIMA

The poor, poor dear, so stricken
with this ailment that she cannot
even express her experience of it.
Who's next, Cadali?

CADALI

Yes, I was thinking we should move
on to one of the stone merchants-

ERGAN

I'm not *quite* done yet, thank you.

FATIMA

What do you mean you're not-

CADALI

Of course, of course, Effendi,
please continue.

ERGAN

(perturbed)
Majesty, can you really tell me
nothing? Can you not even describe
how you feel at this moment? Hot,
cold, oppressed by...

MANEL

I...

FATIMA
Oppressed by what?

ERGAN
Mistress?

FATIMA
You said, "oppressed by," and then you trailed off. I'm simply asking you to complete your sentence.

ERGAN
Oppressed by the heat, Mistress, it's an oppressively hot day, at least to my... to my mind.

BASALK STANDS.

BASALK
May I speak, Mistress?

CADALI
You will have your opportunity, Effendi Basalk, just like everyone else. But first Mistress Fatima would like to hear Effendi Ergan's conclusion.

ERGAN
It is my assessment that...

CADALI
Yes?

ERGAN
The Sultana suffers from a sickness of the mind, making her temporarily unfit to lead Tumanbay!

MURMURS throughout the crowd - more approving than disapproving, but there's a clear minority of the latter. Ergan FLEES back to his chair.

CADALI
A keen diagnosis, Effendi Ergan, you may sit down now. We thank you for your help. Let us now turn to the stone merchants...

BASALK
You said I could speak next!

FATIMA
Must we hear from many more, Cadali?

CADALI
Well... tradition and law-

FATIMA

Only I think we can all tell that Her Majesty is finding this whole ordeal quite distressing. May I suggest we get through these proceedings as quickly as we can? I don't want to cause her any further discomfort.

Some COUNCILLORS CALL from the back of the room.

COUNCILLOR 1

We hope you return to good health soon, Majesty!

COUNCILLOR 2

We have Ergan's diagnosis, why torment her all day?

Sounds of AGREEMENT with this throughout the room.

FATIMA

Very astute, my friend, I feel the same! And I'm sure the sultana would as well. And I'm even more certain that were she not so afflicted by diseases of the mind, the sultana would add that these are difficult times we face, and that we must all work together for the good of Tumanbay. That's what the sultana would say.

CHEERS throughout the crowd: "Yes! The Good of Tumanbay!"

FATIMA (CONT'D)

Now I'll tell you what *I* say: *I do not want this*. I do not want to be here, under these terrible circumstances. I am only in this room now offering to take on the *unwanted* burden of leadership because of my devotion to duty. Duty to the sultana, Manel, the daughter of my heart, *and my duty to Tumanbay*.

A number of VOICES - but by no means all - YELL out: "Long live Fatima!" "Make Tumanbay great again!" etc.

CADALI

Well, unless anyone has anything to add, perhaps we should move on to signing the Order of Regency?

FATIMA

Why, you don't mean to say you already have the document prepared, do you Cadali?

BASALK

I have something to add.

Dangerous silence.

FATIMA

Yes, you've been quite vocal tonight, haven't you, Effendi?

MURMURS: it's already shocking that someone's standing up to Fatima.

CADALI

Effendi Basalk, Mistress, Chairman of the Council of Leather-Curers.

FATIMA

"Leather-Curers"? Ah, well clearly he is *well* qualified to assess an illness of the spirit.

Nasty LAUGHTER and HECKLES around the room.

BASALK

I'm at least as qualified as a provincial wife.

Quiet GASPS around the room.

CADALI

My friend, I think the general consensus in the room-

FATIMA

Of course, Effendi Basalk. It's your right to make an assessment. Would you like to examine the sult-

BASALK

I don't need to examine her to know what I think: *we are acting too quickly*. We need more physicians to examine her, real qualified physicians from outside Tumanbay with no allegiances to anyone in this room.

Another lethal silence.

FATIMA

Thank you, Effendi Basalk, your thoughts will be recorded.

BASALK

I don't want them *recorded*, I want them *implemented*. We need another diagnosis. I saw Her Majesty not three days ago and she was perfectly well at that time.

FATIMA

Well, that is the nature of such illnesses. They come on quickly.

BASALK

Then perhaps they also *recede* just as quickly. But if we sign the Order of Regency and invest the sultana's power in the Mistress Fatima, *we will never know*.

FATIMA

(mask slips, low)
Cadali, remove that man.

CADALI

Of course.
(calls)
Guards!

Cadali CLAPS, and GUARDS come forward. One SEIZES Basalk. Other councillors GASP and MURMUR in astonishment and horror.

GUARD

Come with us.

BASALK

What are you doing? Get off me. You can't do this! I'm a member of the council! Get your hands off of me!

FATIMA

Look at him. I do believe he is part of a plot...

BASALK

No! What are you talking about?

FATIMA

Take him! Gag him. Take the traitor out!

BASALK

(loud, public)
Are all of you just going to stand there and watch? No, no... I am not going to... Help me, someone!

The Guard SHOVES a GAG in Basalk's mouth and drags him from the room. The door SLAMS shut. A long silence.

FATIMA

Does anyone else have anything to add?

(beat)

Remember, you're all well within your rights to speak, so please... feel free.

(beat)

Well... in that case... I think all that remains is that we proceed to the signing of the Order of Regency.

Enthusiastic SHOUTS all over the chamber: "Yeeeeees!" "Long live Regent Fatima." "Long live the Regent of Tumanbay!" etc.

6.13 INT. PALACE PASSAGEWAY - DAY

6.13

Fatima, Cadali, the Physician, and some slaves LEAD the STUMBLING Manel along a passageway.

FATIMA

I thought that went well.

CADALI

Wonderfully handled, Mistress Fatima. So... the sultana?

FATIMA

We need to get her out of the city. Certain seditious elements could use her as a figurehead.

Manel stumbles, GROANS. The helpers keep her moving.

CADALI

I doubt very much that the Grand Master would allow the sultana, of all people, to leave.

FATIMA

The Grand Master has nothing to do with this.

CADALI

Yes, but his men are at every gate. This city is a closed city, until the Balarac leave.

FATIMA

You know everything about this place, Cadali. Take her out through the secret passages... And take the doctor too.

PHYSICIAN

I cannot, Mistress I have my work here, so many patients-

FATIMA

Enough!

PHYSICIAN

Yes, Mistress.

FATIMA

(louder, public)

Manel, Manel, my dear, dear girl, I would love nothing more than to accompany you on this journey.

(she weeps)

Let me hold you one last time. I will miss you so much.

(she embraces Manel)

PHYSICIAN

Cadali, I don't understand. Where are we going?

CADALI

Relax, my friend, relax, it's just this way...

PHYSICIAN

Majesty...

Cadali and the helpers LEAD Manel and the physician away.

FATIMA

Right. I think I'll have a bath.

(calling)

Run my bath!

SLAVE

Yes, Mistress.

6.14 EXT. LODGING HOUSE ROOF TERRACE - MID-AFTERNOON

6.14

The LANDLADY brings a tray out to Aquila on the terrace.

LANDLADY

Your coffee and cakes, Effendi Aquila!

AQUILA

My goodness, prepared so quickly!

LANDLADY

The commander was adamant: a quick meal and then you're off to... somewhere, he wouldn't say.

AQUILA

He's joining me, isn't he? Not leaving me to eat alone?

Gregor ENTERS the terrace.

GREGOR

Indeed I am not.

AQUILA

Gregor, sit! I trust you got everything you needed from your room?

GREGOR

(sitting)

I think I'm sufficiently equipped.

LANDLADY

I'll leave you, gentlemen. Let me know if you need anything else.

AQUILA

I will...

(chuckles)

Landlady LEAVES.

AQUILA (CONT'D)

Commander, your coffee. Please, drink.

GREGOR

(taking the coffee)

Thank you.

AQUILA

Think of it: finding the lost Hafiz! It would put you in tremendous favor with the Grand Master.

GREGOR

We'll see.

AQUILA

Is he really so "grand," though? Someone once told me he just looks like some old soldier who mislaid his eyes. Just like this Hafiz you're after: supposedly a great spiritual leader, the direct descendant of the Teacher... and yet these days people say he's nothing but an old drunk. Do you know, a cousin of mine used to drink, and he was a barber. Of all things! Can you credit it?

(MORE)

AQUILA (CONT'D)

A man approaches you with a razor first thing in the morning, smelling of drink? And yet, he held that razor as steady as a rock. So I suppose one can become inured to anything. Are you all right, Commander? You seem a bit...

GREGOR

(not sounding it)
I'm fine.

AQUILA

Talking of barbers - do you know the riddle of the barber?

GREGOR

I'm not in the mood for - I feel...
I feel very-

AQUILA

(unperturbed)
It goes like this: a town has only one barber. The barber shaves all those - and *only* those - who do not shave themselves. So who shaves the barber? Are you sure you're all right, Commander?
(beat. Aquila chuckles)
It's too bad, you know. I would've enjoyed it.

GREGOR

(apparently gasping)
Enjoyed... what?

AQUILA

Helping you find the Hafiz. Guarding your back as you plunged into the mystery. Alas, now... I've grown to like you. It's a shame, but in my profession you have to be consistent if you want the next job and the one after that. You're not the first friend I've lost this way.

GREGOR

(seemingly weak)
What do you mean?

AQUILA

If it's any consolation, it won't be unpleasant. I'm very experienced. It will just feel like falling asleep, like a lovely afternoon snooze, in a *garden*, perhaps.

(MORE)

AQUILA (CONT'D)

With the wind in the trees, the leaves, the smell of flowers, perhaps a bee buzzing by and you will...

(Aquila takes a deep breath, then slowly releases it)

And then the world will begin to fade, and...

GREGOR

(gasping)

And... then...? And... then...?

Gregor SITS UP straight, and suddenly speaks with full strength.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

And then, Aquila? What's the next bit? The world fades, my childhood appears before my eyes, a lute plays, and then what? Talk me through it.

AQUILA

I...

GREGOR

It was poison, painted into my room somewhere, yes? The desk, perhaps?

AQUILA

(baffled)

The door knob. On the inside. The one thing you would've had to touch... but you *must* have! How else could you have left the room?

GREGOR

I didn't.

AQUILA

What?

GREGOR

I didn't leave it because *I never entered it.*

Aquila starts to WEAKEN.

AQUILA

But I saw, when we arrived, the landlady gave you-

GREGOR

You *assumed*, Aquila. It's like the trick with the coins.

(MORE)

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Because I opened the door, your mind told you that I entered. But I did not. And that's why I am alive and you, my friend...

AQUILA

No, no...

GREGOR

... Are otherwise.

AQUILA

How...?

GREGOR

... Is it possible? That I've killed you? A non-entity like me? Once again, the same principle as the coins and the door: you saw me bring the cup to my lips, so your brain filled in the rest. I drank no coffee. But you did.

AQUILA

(realizing)

The landlady...

GREGOR

Did it never give you pause for a moment that she still calls me "Commander"?

AQUILA

(chuckles fatalistically)

Stupid of me...

GREGOR

Yes, for someone like you... You must've trained for years to do what you do. And yet...

AQUILA

You haven't... answered my riddle, Gregor... Who shaves the barber?

GREGOR

Does he shave himself?

AQUILA

No, remember... he can only shave those who *do not* shave themselves.

GREGOR

Then there's no answer.

AQUILA

Exactly... the question is meaningless...

(MORE)

AQUILA (CONT'D)

the barber can't exist. It's all
just noise... and means nothing...

Aquila SLIDES off his chair and THUMPS onto the terrace
floor, dead.

GREGOR (V.O.)

That's the difference between you
and me, Aquila. I don't believe
that. I haven't fallen quite that
far - *yet*. But what *is* clear, from
your attempt on my life, is that
Fatima has no further use for me.
Which raises the question: who *else*
does she want out of the way?

The landlady RETURNS.

LANDLADY

Sorry, I just came up to see if you
wanted any more coff-
(she sees Aquila. Not
terribly surprised)
Oh, dear. Shall I call for a
physician or a mortician?

GREGOR

The latter.
(he gives her coins)
This should cover it. I'm off to
Vasuva. I can leave this with you?

LANDLADY

Always, Commander.

GREGOR

Thank you.

Gregor LEAVES.

6.15 INT. PAINTING ROOM - EVENING

6.15

PIERO is working on the painting when Angel COMES IN.

PIERO

Where have you been, Angel? I need
more umber, more *ishfahan* blue, and
more gold. Always more gold.

ANGEL

There's something going on in the
palace.

PIERO

That's not our concern Angel! The quicker you can get me my paints, the quicker we get this done, get our fee and get out of here!

ANGEL

Wait, I don't understand this... on the canvas...

PIERO

Oh, yes: I've been told to paint out the sultana. Move her to the corner down there. Mistress Fatima is to have the battlements to herself.

ANGEL

I told you something was going on! This is a coup!

Cadali ENTERS.

CADALI

Gentlemen! How does the work proceed? The mistress requires an upd- oh pardon me, I've mis-spoken. The *regent* requires an update on the great work!

ANGEL

"Regent"?

CADALI

Piero? What am I to tell her?

Piero scrambles to get on top of the situation.

PIERO

Well... well... once I've moved the, er, sultana... from here to here, we are almost done.

ANGEL

"Regent"... Does the sultana no longer command-

PIERO

Barring of course the finishing touches to be added at the Festival of the Fires. But we're still on schedule so... perhaps you can help us book our passage back for the morning after?

CADALI

The morning after? You don't wish to stay and enjoy the many pleasures Tumanbay has to offer? Especially after working so hard? I'm sure Regent Fatima would want to reward you.

PIERO

We will be happy to take our reward in the form of the agreed-upon payment from our contract and immediate passage back home.

CADALI

Oh, well, it's up to you. I must say it's a magnificent portrait. Doesn't Regent Fatima look wonderful?

ANGEL

Yes, it's interesting how this painting has changed, isn't it?

PIERO

Angel, we don't need to-

ANGEL

It started as a great panorama celebrating many, and now it mostly seems to be a portrait of one.

CADALI

And in the process has exceeded all expectations! Piero, you are indeed the greatest artist in the world.

6.16 EXT. STREET NEAR BAKERY - LATE MORNING

6.16

Gregor waits quietly, watching the bakery.

GREGOR (V.O.)

When you're Commander of the Palace Guard and the whole city is filled with your eyes and ears, you're not used to waiting. You deploy others to do that for you. When you lose all that... you have to do your own waiting... in an alley across from the bakery of Hassan's cousin. A man like Bello is not fool enough to use the main thoroughfares. He'll take the back-alleys, the side-streets...

6.17 INT. BAKERY - LATE MORNING

6.17

BELLO is buying bread from the BAKER.

BAKER

I see you there my friend - will I have to chase you for my money today?

BELLO

Oh, no...

(laughs)

My dear man, of course not... an unfortunate mistake... I'll take two loaves, and, er, perhaps two of those?

The Baker ASSEMBLES Bello's order over the following. Gregor quietly ENTERS and blocks the door going out.

BAKER

I hope your father's feeling better?

BELLO

Ah, my friend, there's no feeling better when you're that old, I'm afraid. His mind is going. I can't apologize enough for the other day. He used to be a brilliant man. A shrewd merchant of carpets, but now...

BAKER

Ah, life.

BELLO

Life, yes. Anyway...
(he pays)

BAKER

Thank you so much.

BELLO

I'll see you tomorrow, my fr-
(sees Gregor and gasps)
Commander! What are you... I mean... what are you...?

GREGOR

I've just come from killing someone, Bello. Someone who was trying to kill me. My patience for lies is pretty well *snapped*. So do you know what you're going to do?

BELLO

I have to... My father...

GREGOR

Look into my eyes, Bello, and tell me what you think will happen if you don't take me to the Hafiz *right now*.

6.18 EXT. ALLEY - LATE MORNING

6.18

Bello LEADS Gregor through an alley in the slums.

BELLO

Just down here... through this alley...

GREGOR

If you're leading me astray, Bello...

BELLO

No, you're going to love this, Gregor, you'll never believe where we're going...

GREGOR

Is it a *garden*, by any chance?

Bello STOPS, stares back at him.

BELLO

How did you know?

GREGOR

Just keep going.

Bello HURRIES ON, followed by Gregor.

BELLO

But not just any garden! It's all so old, so ancient. They say it was here even before the city! It sits right beneath a mighty cistern.

GREGOR

How did you find it?

BELLO

The Hafiz already knew about it when he and I came to Tumanbay. He showed me in the scrolls. He's forgotten now, of course, but I remembered. I'm very good at remembering things, Commander.

GREGOR

But not very good being honest - at least not with me.

BELLO

He made me promise not to tell you!
He said they'll try to make him
part of it, the Balarac, and he
can't be part of it!

GREGOR

Part of what?

BELLO

The Festival of the Fires. He keeps
saying, if he's part of the it,
terrible things will follow. If he
can't be found? Maybe it won't be
so bad.

6.19

EXT. SECRET GARDEN - EARLY AFTERNOON

6.19

Bello and Gregor ENTER the secret garden. Water trickles. The
sounds of birds and insects we haven't heard in any other
part of Tumanbay. The HAFIZ DRINKS from a fresh spring.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**I don't know if I truly believed in
it until this moment. An oasis in
the old heart of the city. And
there, near the center, is my
objective of so many days now - the
Hafiz himself, drinking from a
spring.**

BELLO

I bring him bread, a little meat,
but mostly... it's like he lives
off the water from that spring. He
desires nothing else.

GREGOR

And the arak?

BELLO

He never asks for it. Look, some
days he's rational, other days he's
confused, and you never know,
until...

GREGOR

I understand.

They carefully APPROACH the Hafiz, who is still DRINKING, a
steady slurping, gulping sound.

BELLO

Holiness?

The slurping/gulping abruptly STOPS. Water trickles through
the Hafiz's fingers.

BELLO (CONT'D)

You have a guest.

(to Gregor)

Sit at his feet. He'll like it,
he'll think you're a pilgrim!

Gregor SIGHS and SITS at the Hafiz's feet.

GREGOR

Holiness.

HAFIZ

Have you come for a blessing?

GREGOR (V.O.)

This man is fragile as blown-glass.

GREGOR

I... have come to learn.

HAFIZ

What have you come to learn?

GREGOR

I need your wisdom to explain a
marvel, Hafiz. I've seen a dead
woman, Alkin, walking the streets
of this city.

HAFIZ

Alkin?

GREGOR

I *know* it wasn't a dream.

HAFIZ

Did she speak to you?

GREGOR

She did, but I'm having trouble
remembering what she said. It had
something to do with things being
out of balance, balance needing to
be restored.

HAFIZ

I have seen her too.

GREGOR

You, Hafiz?

HAFIZ

There are people in the city who
are not *of* the city. They come,
they look, they leave. The
Watchers.

GREGOR

But how? The Balarac control the city gates, no one can enter or leave without their permission.

HAFIZ

They don't use the gates. These people are like the tail of the lizard that you only glimpse as it vanishes through a crack in the wall.

(beat)

But sometimes they don't just *watch*.

GREGOR

What does that mean?

HAFIZ

Sometimes they *interfere*.

GREGOR

How?

HAFIZ

They change things, and then the balance is lost.

GREGOR

This dead woman I've seen, Alkin, is she one of them? One of these Gods?

HAFIZ

There is only one God, above even them - and a covenant was made between this God and Man.

GREGOR (V.O.)

I don't know if I'm receiving ancient wisdom or listening to a deranged old man make it up as he goes along.

GREGOR

A covenant?

HAFIZ

Mmm... There was a camel and it was shown to these seven blind sages, men of great wisdom... and each of them felt a part of the camel...

GREGOR (V.O.)

I've lost him.

HAFIZ

... And one said, this is a rope...

GREGOR (V.O.)

I had him for a moment, I had
something.

HAFIZ

... This is a mole hill...

GREGOR (V.O.)

But now he's slipped away.

HAFIZ

... The other one said, "this is my
brother-in-law's face!"

GREGOR

Forgive me, Hafiz, does any of
this... [have a point?]

HAFIZ

My friend, the mind brings to every
object what the mind has means of
seeing. In reality, it's a mangy
old camel.

(the Hafiz laughs
maniacally and makes
exaggerated camel noises)

I will go to sleep now.

The Hafiz WANDERS away into the garden. Gregor tries to
PURSUE him.

GREGOR

No, Hafiz, please, there's more I
need to... [know]

BELLO

That's all you will get from him
today.

GREGOR

It's not enough, Bello! Is there a
calamity coming? This is my city!

BELLO

Are you going to betray him?

GREGOR

What?

BELLO

To the Balarac. I know they need
him for their ritual.

GREGOR

Why?

BELLO

This Hafiz is the direct descendent of the very *first* Hafiz who made that covenant he spoke of, with the one God. He was there at the *beginning*, so he must be there at the *end*. The wheel turns, the snake consumes its tale. That's what the Balarac want. So I ask you again: are you going to give him to them?

6.20 EXT. THE DESERT OUTSIDE THE PALACE OF THE BLIND - LATE AFTERNOON 6.20

SOLDIERS led by a CAPTAIN surround Manel and the Physician as they APPROACH the Palace of the Blind.

CAPTAIN

All right, stop here!

The caravan STOPS over the following.

MANEL

What's happening?

PHYSICIAN

Try to relax, Majesty..

CAPTAIN

Take a few men. Go down. Tell them we are here.

SOLDIER

Yes, Captain.

Soldier RIDES OFF.

MANEL

Where are we? Why have we stopped?

PHYSICIAN

We are to wait here for a little bit.

The physician DISMOUNTS, gets something out of his bag and starts to PREPARE something.

MANEL

What... what are you...?

PHYSICIAN

I need to give you another dose, Sultana.

MANEL

No, please...

PHYSICIAN
Mistress Fatima's orders.

He APPROACHES her.

MANEL
(panicking)
Please, no... I can't stand it.

He HOLDS her.

PHYSICIAN
(whispers)
Shhh... stay still. Just...
pretend.

MANEL
What?

PHYSICIAN
So the soldiers think... I'm not
going to do it. They need to see.

In the distance we hear YELLING, then the palace gates
OPENING.

The SOLDIER who rode ahead comes RIDING BACK with some others
at his back.

CAPTAIN
Well? What's happening?

SOLDIER
I had to yell at them to open the
gates. They said the gate soldiers
were preparing a wall at the back.
They weren't expecting visitors.

CAPTAIN
Are they ready for her?

SOLDIER
Yes, they are waiting.

CAPTAIN
Doctor?

PHYSICIAN
Yes, Captain?

CAPTAIN
Are you ready? Have you done what
you needed to?

PHYSICIAN
Yes, Captain. She's had her dose.
We can take her down.

CAPTAIN

Very well...
(to full caravan)
Forward!

The caravan PROCESSES forward.

6.21 INT. PALACE OF THE BLIND - LATE AFTERNOON

6.21

Manel SITS on a bench with the physician.

MANEL

I was here before.

PHYSICIAN

Is that so?

MANEL

I came to see someone... My memory,
I'm not clear who...

PHYSICIAN

It may be a little time before the
medicine leaves your system and
your memory returns properly.

MANEL

Then forget memory, tell me what's
happening *now*.

PHYSICIAN

They are handing you over to the
carers. Listen closely, we only
have a moment.

Footsteps APPROACHING. SARP is TALKING to the Captain.

SARP

(off)

Yes, yes, yes, I see. Well, don't
worry Captain we are here in the
service of Tumanbay and...

PHYSICIAN

(whispering)

Fatima wanted me to use something
stronger, something that would
leave you in this state forever,
but... I couldn't... She thinks
you'll be incapacitated forever,
and therefore no threat to her.
That will protect you... Until
those of us who serve you, can find
a way to-

Sarp ARRIVES.

SARP
Hello, Manel.
(silence)
Would you like to come with us?

MANEL
I... I recognise you...

SARP
(laughs)
I'm here to make your stay as comfortable as possible. Do you want to go with the orderlies...?

Manel slowly RISES. Sarp and the ORDERLIES lead Manel away.

SARP (CONT'D)
That's right... Your new home awaits.

The physician SIGHS, clearly troubled.

PHYSICIAN
Farewell, Majesty.

CAPTAIN
Doctor.

PHYSICIAN
Captain?

CAPTAIN
Time to go...

6.22 EXT. THE DESERT OUTSIDE THE PALACE OF THE BLIND - EARLY 6.22 EVENING

The physician APPROACHES his horse, with the captain close behind.

CAPTAIN
Want a hand getting onto your horse, Doctor?

PHYSICIAN
Very kind, yes.

CAPTAIN
Here you are...

PHYSICIAN
Thank you, I'll-

The captain STABS a knife into the physician. The physician GASPS and COLLAPSES to the ground.

CAPTAIN

You didn't really think Mistress
Fatima was going to let you come
back, did you?

(calling to his men)

Throw his body in the ditch and
let's go!

Soldiers RUN OVER to dispose of the physician.

6.23

INT. CORRIDOR, PALACE OF THE BLIND - EARLY EVENING

6.23

Echoey footfalls as Sarp LEADS Manel, who is being assisted
by orderlies.

SARP

So how was your journey, Manel?

MANEL

I can't... recall...

SARP

No, of course not. But you do
recognize me, don't you?

MANEL

Yes, but I don't know...?

SARP

From your last visit. When you came
to see... your uncle, was it?
Commander Gregor?

MANEL

Ah... I'm sorry, I don't-

SARP

Sarp. That's my name. We'll put you
in this room here.

An orderly USHERS Manel through a DOOR into her room.

MANEL

Sarp...

SARP

That's right. I'm the governor
here. The new one.

(to orderlies)

That's right, put her on the bed.
Good. You can go now.

The orderlies GO.

SARP (CONT'D)

Did I tell you, you remind me of
someone?

MANEL

What?

SARP

My sister, actually?

MANEL

Oh...

SARP

I'll leave you to rest.

MUSIC.

End of Episode 4.06.

*