

TUMANBAY

Episode 4.07 - "Menagerie of All Life"

by

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Work is going on: hoists, hammers, clatter of stones as BALARAC KNIGHTS work. The GRAND MASTER and HEAVEN ARRIVE on horses.

HEAVEN

We're here, Grand Master.

GRAND MASTER

My ears tell me that, Heaven. How does it look to you?

HEAVEN

As if most of the work has been finished. There's no break in the stones of the aquaduct itself and the last arch is near completion. I can see the capstone being raised.

GRAND MASTER

Yes, the structure will need to bear a good deal of weight. You know about these things?

HEAVEN

In my father's library there were many books on architecture. I used to amuse myself by taking the moments of all the bridges in Cyrene.

GRAND MASTER

You surprise me, Heaven. There is much about you that I don't know.

HEAVEN

A different life, Grand Master.

GRAND MASTER

(reflecting)

Sometimes I wonder if what we lost is worth it...

(he grunts the thought away - then to General)

Brother General...

The BALARAC GENERAL APPROACHES.

GENERAL

Grand Master, we are ready for your tour of inspection.

GRAND MASTER

Everything is...

GENERAL

Is going to plan, Grand Master, as you foresaw. If you will accompany me?

HEAVEN

Shall I-

GRAND MASTER

Not you, Heaven.

HEAVEN

But surely you need my eyes to-

GRAND MASTER

You will oblige me by inspecting the *outer* works. Make notes.

HEAVEN

Of course, Grand Master...

GRAND MASTER

Brother General, an escort for my assistant. I will accompany you.

GENERAL

Come, Grand Master.

(to Knight 1)

You, Brother, stay with her.

KNIGHT 1

Yes, General.

7.2

INT. AQUADUCT/PUMP ROOM - CONTINUOUS

7.2

Echoes. The General is showing the Grand Master the Wheel of Life. Knights are working on site.

GENERAL

(as they walk)

The main flow of water is held back at the foothills while we inspect the lining of the channel. We'll bring it to the lip on the morning of the fires, then release on your signal, Grand Master. Do you wish me to... demonstrate?

GRAND MASTER

God favors the well prepared, Brother.

The General RELEASES the brake with a squeak and rattle.

GENERAL

The wheel can be turned by man-
power as well as water, if
necessary.

(shouts)

Brothers, turn the windlass.

KNIGHT 3

Yes, General.

Gears CREAK and clatter and the wheel turns - a thrumming as
it GATHERS SPEED.

GENERAL

Here, Grand Master, place your hand
against the piling, feel the
movement...

Feature THRUMMING.

GRAND MASTER

It is the very movement of life: as
below, so above, all things shall
rise and in ascending, praise God.

Thrumming UP.

7.3

EXT. AQUADUCT - CONTINUOUS

7.3

Heaven is helping the Grand Master to MOUNT his horse.

HEAVEN

Here's the stirrup, Grand Master.

He's up. She MOUNTS her horse. They RIDE ON.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

I was wondering...

GRAND MASTER

Yes?

HEAVEN

I saw something in the pump
house... a big wheel?

GRAND MASTER

It is indeed a wonder of
engineering.

HEAVEN

It looks very much like the one in
the scrolls. But what is the use of
it, if I may ask?

GRAND MASTER

To raise the water level. The Ancients could not have known we would need it and yet, even so, they wrote of it. This is why we must follow their lead, why the Hafiz is important, no matter that he is...

HEAVEN

An old drunk who has forgotten who or what he is most of the time?

GRAND MASTER

As it is written, so must it be. We obey God's will as shown in the scrolls, we do not question. The outer works... you saw them?

HEAVEN

They are in order. The brothers know their business. They work well.

GRAND MASTER

To work with God in your heart is to pray. I...

(beat)

... thank you, Heaven, for your work too. I do not always...

He RIDES in silence for a while - the noise of the aquaduct falling behind.

GRAND MASTER (CONT'D)

(emotion there)

I have come to rely on you... in many ways.

HEAVEN

I serve as best I can...

GRAND MASTER

Yes... yes. We all serve a greater cause - it is what redeems our sin.

7.3A **OPENING TITLES - MUSIC**

7.3A

ANNOUNCER

**Tumanbay, Season 4, Episode 7.
"Menagerie of All Life", by Mike Walker.**

7.4 **OMITTED**

7.4

7.5 INT. PALACE. FATIMA'S PRIVATE ROOMS - DAY

7.5

The Grand Master, escorted by his knights, has come to update FATIMA. CADALI is already with Fatima, working on her chronicles.

GRAND MASTER

The work on the aqueduct is virtually complete. The last stones are being placed, the entire length is under inspection, the water will soon flow, from the mountains, to every corner of the city. As I promised. Your people will be able to drink, bathe, swim - it will be a truly great festival, not just of light but of life-giving water. Our gift to the city of Tumanbay.

FATIMA

And the morning after?

GRAND MASTER

We shall be gone.

FATIMA

(still suspicious)

Hmmm, good.

(a pause)

And everything is ready for the night of the fires?

GRAND MASTER

It is.

FATIMA

So you've found the Hafiz? I believe he is essential to whatever ceremony you intend to hold?

GRAND MASTER

I have every confidence that he will be found. I have given the work to a man I trust to complete it.

FATIMA

Commander Gregor?

GRAND MASTER

Indeed.

FATIMA

(she believes he is dead,
assassinated by Aquila)

Indeed.

GRAND MASTER

Yes?

FATIMA

I hope he will perform as you wish.

GRAND MASTER

Hmm... Well, I am rarely disappointed. I shall leave you now. We will not see each other again before the festival.

(to his knights)

Brothers!

The Grand Master and his knights LEAVE - door OPENS and SHUTS.

CADALI

Mistress...?

FATIMA

Yes?

CADALI

Is there something you didn't tell him?

FATIMA

Is there?

CADALI

About Gregor, Mistress? I felt you were holding something back.

FATIMA

Hmm, sometimes I forget just how astute you are, Cadali. As for Gregor, he is no longer of any concern to anyone in this world.

Pause.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

Like his niece, he had become irritating. I had my man Aquila deal with him.

CADALI

Aquila, Mistress?

FATIMA

You met him. You probably didn't notice. Keep it that way.

(beat)

You look surprised.

CADALI

Yes, I suppose I am. I had always thought Gregor would live.

FATIMA

Nobody lives forever, Cadali, not even you. Anyway, we need to think about my regency once the Balarac have left.

CADALI

(pulling himself together)
It will be glorious.

FATIMA

And the people *will* love me.

CADALI

Of course, of course they will.

FATIMA

Like a sultana?

CADALI

Mother of the Waters, Mother of the Empire. Everything they see and hear will fill their souls with adoration.

FATIMA

Only I don't know if regents are ever beloved? It feels wrong somehow. And I have done so much to bring peace and prosperity back to Tumanbay.

CADALI

No one more so.

FATIMA

Perhaps...

CADALI

Yes?

FATIMA

Well perhaps *I* should be the... sultana...

CADALI

But the sultana, Manel?

FATIMA

Hmmm... I fear she may never return. After all, it's what that place is for.

7.6 INT. PALACE OF THE BLIND. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE - DAY 7.6
MANEL is BROUGHT IN by an ORDERLY (Grachus). SARP is waiting.

ORDERLY
Majesty...

SARP
(to Manel)
Please, sit.
(to orderly)
Wait outside.

ORDERLY
Mmm.

Orderly GOES.

SARP
How are you feeling?

MANEL
I... I think all right, thank you.

SARP
You seemed a little anxious and
confused when you arrived yesterday
evening. I hope the rest has helped
you. How are you now?

MANEL
I need to get word to someone.
Commander Gregor, in the city. I
shouldn't be here.

SARP
Yes, of course... Gregor is my good
friend. I helped him when he was...
uh... in residence with us, oh yes,
I did. Here to help, that's me.

He CHUCKLES. There's always something just a little off about
Sarp as governor, as if he's reading from someone else's
script.

MANEL
Good, Effendi Governor, then you
can understand that everyone is in
danger in Tumanbay. There is a
coup...

SARP
A coup, you say?

MANEL
I was drugged and sent here by my
enemies. I am not mad!

SARP

Of course you aren't. They think we're all mad out here but there's no saner place in the empire than this.

The MAD SULTAN ENTERS.

MAD SULTAN

Are they in here?

SARP

(sharply)

Can't you see I'm in a meeting?

MAD SULTAN

But the flies, the flies, I need to stop the buzzy-buzzy flies, don't you see?

We hear the BUZZING of flies.

MAD SULTAN (CONT'D)

Where are they? They have no right to be here!

A SNAP and a little crunch and the fly is gone.

SARP

(anger)

Now go!

MAD SULTAN

My work is never done.

He GOES.

SARP

I'm sorry. He was a brilliant man once. Please, go on.

MANEL

If you want to help me, Effendi, then help me get back to Tumanbay.

SARP

Of course I want to help you. Anything, Majesty.

MANEL

(still recovering)

I am the sultana, and there has been a coup.

SARP

Ye-es, you said.

MANEL

So what can we do?

SARP

Wait for a while, Majesty and I'll think on it. It may take some time, we're going to need soldiers. There are guards here, I'm sure they'll be loyal to you. But we'll need more. More men, more time.

MANEL

How much time?

SARP

A day, two...

MANEL

We have to move now.

SARP

It's not so easy. We are in peril here. Dark forces, hmm? I need to make alliances, arrangements. But rest assured, I will do everything in my power to put you in your proper place - on the throne!

(calls)

Grachus, will you be so kind as to escort the sultana back to her room?

Orderly OPENS the door and GRUNTS.

SARP (CONT'D)

And you, Your Majesty, you will need to think of your plans for the task ahead. Who you can trust, who can be bribed, who set aside. Make lists! Be assured, together we shall prevail!

7.7

EXT. ARMY QUARTER - DAY

7.7

GREGOR is DRIVING a cart with the HAFIZ and BELLO on board.

GREGOR (V.O.)

Fatima wanted me dead. She set her hired killer on me. He had a big opinion of himself. Too big. He got careless. No one can afford to get careless in this world.

KNIGHT 2 blocks their way.

KNIGHT 2

Halt.

GREGOR

Gregor, for the Grand Master.

KNIGHT 2

What is your business?

GREGOR

My business is the Grand Master's business. If you wish to go and ask him, do so and I'll wait here.

KNIGHT 2

Very well.

He GOES.

GREGOR

Are you all right, old man?

The Hafiz MUMBLES.

GREGOR (V.O.)

I had to bring him in.

BELLO

The Hafiz is confused.

GREGOR (V.O.)

I need to win the Grand Master's trust and to do that I have to give him this gift.

GREGOR

(to Bello)

You don't have to come any further, Bello, if you don't want to.

BELLO

I have to be here. For him.

GREGOR

Why?

BELLO

(urgent, he needs to get this across at last)

Listen! The scrolls. It was believed they were destroyed, that there were only copies and copies of the copies... but they were hidden, over the ages. Passed on from Hafiz to Hafiz. When my Master and I came to Tumanbay they were taken by Shajar, the wife of Sultan al-Ghuri. She wanted to use them for her own ends... but she was murdered and the scrolls passed to Maya.

GREGOR

Yes, that I remember. I had them in my hands.

BELLO

She sent them to Amber Province where the Balarac fought her armies and took them from her.

The balarac knight RETURNS.

KNIGHT 2

You may pass.

Gregor DRIVES ON.

GREGOR

(to cart)
Forward.
(to Bello)
Why are you telling me this?

BELLO

Because that isn't all. There's more but it's locked away, hidden.

GREGOR

What do you mean?

BELLO

In the Hafiz's mind... it's in there somewhere but... he can't remember... I've tried... so hard but....

HAFIZ

(suddenly he erupts and grabs Gregor)
What happened to the thief after her life was stolen, eh?

GREGOR

Get off, old man!

HAFIZ

Who presided over her burial? Who sealed her tomb?

Gregor FORCES the Hafiz off. The Hafiz CACKLES like it's a great joke and then begins to mumble.

They have reached the MARBLE PAVILION. Heaven emerges.

HEAVEN

Gregor! So, you found him?

GREGOR

I owe you for that.

HEAVEN

My family, did you manage to-

GREGOR

I will do it, I promise. I gave my word.

The Grand Master EMERGES, flanked by knights.

HEAVEN

Grand Master, he found the Hafiz.

GRAND MASTER

I never doubted you would succeed. Help him down, brothers, he is precious to us.

KNIGHT 1

Yes, Grand Master.

GRAND MASTER

He can be re-united with his scrolls now. Take them to their tent, look after them well.

Bello and Hafiz are TAKEN AWAY.

BELLO

(as they help him down)
Careful, he's old, he's not well.

HAFIZ

(variously vague)
Bless you... A blessing on you...

We stay with Grand Master and Gregor.

GRAND MASTER

(as they go into the marble tent)
Come, Commander, you have done well. You will take refreshments? You don't fast?

GREGOR

No.

7.8 INT. MARBLE TENT - CONTINUOUS

7.8

As they ENTER.

HEAVEN

Thank you, Grand Master.

GRAND MASTER

(to Gregor)
Please, sit.
(MORE)

GRAND MASTER (CONT'D)
(to Heaven)
Heaven, bring food and wine.

She GOES.

GRAND MASTER (CONT'D)
(to Gregor)
You have done us a great service.
What can we do in return?

GREGOR
I'm concerned with the balance of
power in the palace. The rule of my
niece, Sultana Manel, may be under
threat.

GRAND MASTER
That is of no concern to me.

GREGOR
But my niece is of very great
concern to me.

Heaven RETURNS with a tray of bread, wine, olives.

HEAVEN
Wine, Commander?

GREGOR
Thank you.

GRAND MASTER
And what do you want?

He DRINKS, EATS under:

GREGOR
I want...

GREGOR (V.O.)
What I want is to stay alive.

He PUTS his glass down.

GREGOR
... Your protection, Grand Master.

GREGOR (V.O.)
And I want to protect Manel.

GREGOR
... The star of the Balarac on my
chest...

GREGOR (V.O.)
And once Fatima learns that I am
not dead, and that her assassin
is...

GREGOR

... And an escort of knights when I enter the palace.

GRAND MASTER

Are you a believer?

GREGOR

I...

(beat)

... believe in staying alive.

GRAND MASTER

You are a cunning fox, Gregor. You have served me fairly and well. It shall be as you wish. Heaven, write the order.

7.9

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

7.9

WORK going on as usual. FROG and DUMPY carry a beam and put it on trestles.

FROG

Is it steady?

DUMPY

It weighs enough, it's not going anywhere.

FROG

You'll be as strong as a wrestler when we're done, Dumpy. You can make a fortune in the arena.

Frog's UNCLE APPROACHES.

UNCLE

Let me see, let me see.

(beat)

Is this it? Is this all you've done today?

DUMPY

It's more than what you've done...

Uncle SMACKS him round the head.

UNCLE

Cheeky camel! Come on, come on, so get to it!

Uncle STOMPS OFF as Dumpy begins to plane the wood.

Off we hear: afternoon call to prayer.

FROG

It's prayer break, Dumpy, come on...

DUMPY

You saw him? You got the money?

FROG

Come ooon!

They RACE AWAY.

7.10 INT. CROWDED PRISON - DAY

7.10

The boys are PUSHING through the noisy CROWD of visitors.

DUMPY

So? Where is he?

FROG

He said he'd be here.

DUMPY

He said!

FROG

There.

Frog spots the GUARD. They PUSH through.

FROG (CONT'D)

(calling)

Effendi, Effendi... Here, I've got it.

GUARD

You again...

FROG

What you wanted, I've got three. Can I see her now?

GUARD

What?

FROG

See the prisoner Matilla, daughter of the merchant Bavand. You know, you prom-

GUARD

It's gone up. Five now.

FROG

You said-

GUARD

You want to see her or not?

Frog PAYS. Guard LEADS them on.

Guard WALKS through the crowd PUSHING people aside. Many are pleading with him to let them in. He UNLOCKS a barred door, it clangs OPEN.

GUARD (CONT'D)

In you go - just one of you.

DUMPY

Go, my friend...

GUARD

You need to be quick, the overseer won't be long.

7.11 INT. LARGE CELL - DAY

7.11

Crowded with women prisoners. Frog ENTERS... Sees MATILLA and pushes across to her. Fade back noise as they COME TOGETHER.

MATILLA

You came! I thought I'd never see you again.

FROG

You'll always see me, whatever happens, always...

They HOLD each other.

MATILLA

Hold me tight! I'm so scared, I'm so scared.

FROG

No, it'll be... We're going to do something, me and Dumpy.

MATILLA

What can you do, Frog, what can anyone do?

FROG

On the night, we've got a plan, we're going to get you out.

MATILLA

You're just a couple of children, Frog, against all of this, they'll smash you... They smash everything...

FROG

Not this, we've planned it all.

MATILLA

Nobody gets out of here.

FROG

Don't you see? It's not here.
It's... out there... when...
when...

MATILLA

When they hang us?

FROG

When... they think they're going to
do that... but they won't because-

MATILLA

(hysteria)
They will, they will, they will...

FROG

Stop it. They won't. There's going
to be fires in the sky... everyone
will be looking up... We're going
to do something... me and Dumpy...
and there's going to be panic...

MATILLA

And... and I'll be dead...
(she weeps)

FROG

(crying too but resolute)
Listen! You have to stay calm.
We'll come for you...

MATILLA

No, no, no...

FROG

Matilla... Remember when we met and
you wanted to fly? And Spider, he
said...

MATILLA

Girls don't fly.

FROG

And what happened?
(a pause - stronger)
What happened?

MATILLA

We flew.

FROG

You and me. We flew over the city.

MATILLA

But the blind man, your dream...

FROG

Look at me, look at me look at me... There's no dream, no blind man, no prison, no guards, no chains, no hanging - there's you and me flying free into the sky, flying away forever... Trust me.

Guard BANGS on the door.

GUARD

Time to go, boy.

MATILLA

I love you.

FROG

I love you.

GUARD

Come on, come on, move.

The guard HURRIES Frog out. Cell door slams SHUT.

7.12 INT. PALACE OF THE BLIND. MANEL'S ROOM - DAY

7.12

We hear, echoed, Cadali's words from episode 5:

CADALI

(echo)

Look at you now, Manel, daughter of General Qulan. 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!

Manel WAKES with a CRY. MEHMED is beside her.

MEHMED

You were dreaming. Crying out...

MANEL

Something I... thought I could remember and then... it's gone. A voice... some-

(shock)

Who are you? What's your name?

MEHMED

My name is...

(pause)

... Mehmed. It was my father's name too. The last person to ask me my name, the only one in a long time, was Gregor. The man you came to see when he was here. He was kind to me but since he left... Is he safe now?

MANEL

He's safe. And I need to see him. I asked the governor and... He promised he would help me get my throne back. I want him to send a message to the city, to Gregor.

A silence.

MANEL (CONT'D)

What?

A silence.

MEHMED

There is no governor.

A BELL tolls, off.

MEHMED (CONT'D)

We have to go now. The bell calls us...

MANEL

I have a friend - someone I care for. She might come. Her name is angel.

MEHMED

There are no angels in this world. Come.

He TAKES her hand.

7.13 INT. PALACE OF THE BLIND. GREAT HALL - DAY

7.13

A babble of voices break out. Manel and Mehmed ENTER. A few CHEERS then they fall silent.

SARP

Ah, there you are! We were just preparing, Majesty.

MANEL

Preparing? What do you mean? For... for what?

SARP

Your coronation. You wanted your throne back, didn't you?

MANEL

I don't understand.

SARP

When we talked this morning, you told me you wanted your throne back, yes? Your throne, you had been deposed by evil forces? Yes?

MANEL

I mean, yes, but...

SARP

And you will be crowned our sultana and the roofs will ring with our praises. Here, I, Sarp, have helped you from the pit of despair to the peak of the throne. I have deposed the pretender, the thief, the evil sultan. Let him eat all the flies he wishes now, his cruel reign is over!

Unsettling, whispered CHEERS and UTTERANCES from the crowd.

SARP (CONT'D)

(loud)

He is dead, the sultan is dead, we shall eat well tonight.

Another CHEER.

SARP (CONT'D)

Now dawns a reign of peace and prosperity. Take your throne. Rule. Hail our sultana!

The crowd PRAISES Manel: "*All hail the sultana*" etc.

SARP (CONT'D)

Old Man...

MEHMED

Uh, yes, Sarp?

SARP

I think you are true and honest, my friend. Gregor told me to look after you and so I shall. You will be the vizier to our Sultana.

MEHMED

I am not worthy...

SARP

But who more worthy in the Palace
of the Blind than a blind man!

MURMUR of mad agreement from the crowd.

MANEL

No! I need to get back to Tumanbay.

SARP

Here is your empire, take your
seat...

MANEL

No!

SARP

(to crowd)
Help Her Majesty...

The residents gleefully SEIZE Manel. Her CRIES are lost in
the crowd.

SARP (CONT'D)

Destiny has led her footsteps to
her rightful place at our head. All
things shall be well and all manner
of things shall be well.

Manel's CRIES continue...

SARP (CONT'D)

Chain her, chain her that she may
be ours forever!

The CLINK of chains as Manel STRUGGLES against the crowd.

MANEL

No, you can't...

SARP

Majesty, behold: your throne, your
vizier, your people! Rejoice.

HOWLS of acclamation. Deeply disturbing.

7.14 INT. TUMANBAY. THRONE ROOM - DAY

7.14

Fatima is being PAINTED by PIERO. ANGEL assists, Cadali
watches.

PIERO

If you can hold that position for a
moment, Madam. It is most heroic.
Angel, can you arrange the fall of
the robe... the pleats catching the
light.

ANGEL

A moment, Mistress?

FATIMA

Should I have a crown, the
sultana's crown...?

PIERO

Uhm... I...

FATIMA

Cadali?

Cadali STEPS CLOSER.

CADALI

I... I think the turban suits you
better...

ANGEL

More intriguing, Madam.

FATIMA

"Intriguing?" I'm not interested in
being intriguing. I want to look
glorious.

PIERO

And you will, Mistress, you will.

ANGEL

Trust the great artist, Mistress.
You won't be disappointed.

FATIMA

Cadali, continue.

CADALI

(reading a list)

So... three hundred oxen, two
hundred swans, a thousand ducks,
two thousand ground fowl, wine for
those who choose to drink, five
hundred barrels, but mostly it will
be the cool clear mountain water
flowing again through your genius,
Mistress, to every fountain in the
city.

FATIMA

Make certain that every district
overseer informs all the people of
that fact.

CHAMBERLAIN ENTERS under.

CADALI

It has been made more than clear to them.

PIERO

You may relax, Madam. Angel, help her down.

Angel DOES so.

CHAMBERLAIN

Grand Vizier, I have these for you to sign for the carts and the tables... and the butchers, we're hiring two hundred...

CADALI

Good...

(he signs)

And has the Head Eunuch taken delivery?

CHAMBERLAIN

Yes, Vizier.

(to Fatima)

And, er, Mistress? There are Balarac knights to see you.

FATIMA

Again? Is the Grand Master with them?

CHAMBERLAIN

I don't think so, Mistress.

CADALI

Probably more arrangements.

FATIMA

Send them in.

CHAMBERLAIN

Yes, Mistress.

Chamberlain LEAVES.

FATIMA

So the day after, you think?

CADALI

Yes, Mistress. The Balarac will be gone, the city will be yours.

FATIMA

Perhaps I *should* wear a crown, then?

The knights ENTER. GREGOR leads them.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

Gregor! What are you...?

GREGOR

You seem a little surprised to see me?

FATIMA

(recovering fast)

Only... surprised by the company you keep, Commander. Have you decided to join the order? Aren't they supposed to be pure in heart?

GREGOR

They are here to ensure my safety.

FATIMA

I see. In that case, indulge my curiosity. My man Aquila?

GREGOR

If you haven't paid him in full, you've saved yourself some money.

FATIMA

(iron self control)

Very thoughtful of you, Commander.
(pointed and poisonous)
How may I serve you?

GREGOR

Where is my niece? I want to see her.

FATIMA

I'm afraid that is not possible at this time.

CADALI

The sultana has been taken ill. The strain, the pressure.

GREGOR

And yet I will see her.

FATIMA

You will not.

Gregor DRAWS his sword.

GREGOR

I will see her.

FATIMA

You dare to draw a sword before me, the mother of the empire?

GREGOR

Madam, you are no more than a grasping, husband murdering thief!

FATIMA

I am the regent of this empire!

GREGOR

And who really believes that? Cadali?

CADALI

I uh... uhm...

FATIMA

Guards, arrest this man.

GUARDS STEP forward. The knights DRAW.

KNIGHT 1

Commander Gregor, do you wish us to cut them down?

Pause.

FATIMA

(laughs)

The Balarac are our friends. I do not wish blood to be spilt - but if it must be, then...

GREGOR

No, we will leave.

Swords SHEATHED.

CADALI

I will escort your gentlemen from the throne room, if I may.

They LEAVE.

7.15 INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

7.15

They EMERGE from the room.

CADALI

I never thought I'd be glad you are still around but I am, I am.

GREGOR

Really?
(to Balarac Knights)
Wait for me outside.

KNIGHT 1

Yes, Commander.

The knights LEAVE.

CADALI

Gregor, this whole thing has...
It's not working, Gregor, she goes
too far... The coach is out of
control.

GREGOR

You decided to take the ride,
Cadali. Where is Manel?

CADALI

Look, can I trust you?

GREGOR

About as far as I trust you. You
need to give me something, Cadali:
where is Manel?

A long pause. At last:

FATIMA (OFF)

Cadali!

CADALI

You know your own way out.

Cadali GOES back in.

Gregor CONTINUES along the corridor. He hears a voice behind
him. Angel.

ANGEL

Commander Gregor?

They keep WALKING.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

We met at the banquet?

GREGOR

Signor Angel, yes. You must excuse
me, though I have to-

ANGEL

They drugged her. They did
something to her. They made her
change. She didn't recognise me.

A pause.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

The sultana, Manel.

GREGOR

Ah. I saw the way you were looking
at her at the banquet. You were...
(MORE)

GREGOR (CONT'D)

(beat)
... friends?

ANGEL

More than friends. I would do anything for her.

GREGOR

Then tell me what happened.

ANGEL

They took her away, out of the city.

GREGOR

Which way?

ANGEL

I don't know. Into the desert. They sent a physician with her.

GREGOR

Ah... yes.

ANGEL

Does that mean something to you?

GREGOR

It means everything. Come with me.

They HURRY ON.

7.16 EXT. CITY MARKET. VEGETABLE STALL - DAY

7.16

A busy market - the knights, Gregor and Angel WALKING through it. Water sellers shouting their wares: "*fresh water, clear water, the best water...*" etc.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**The keys of the city. Under Maya
and even in my exile I kept a set
hidden. I knew they would come in
useful.**

A GREENGROCER is selling, off.

ANGEL

Why are we in the market?

GREENGROCER

(calling out his wares)
Vegetables, the finest, the
greenest, the freshest - apples and
soft fruit, the best red berries
and green...

GREGOR

That's why.

Gregor APPROACHES the stall.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Zubec, how are you?

GREENGROCER

Commander, I haven't seen you in an age.

GREGOR

Nothing to report?

GREENGROCER

Gossip. Rumors about the sultana. Why has nobody seen her recently? Bribes at the palace to get anything done - nothing unusual, as usual.

GREGOR

You still have...?

GREENGROCER

What you gave me to keep?

GREGOR

I'd like them back, please.

GREENGROCER

I always keep them close. With my other keys. Nobody would suspect anything.

He CHUCKLES and digs the KEYS out.

GREENGROCER (CONT'D)

It's what you taught me, Commander: hide as near plain sight as you can.

GREGOR

You're a good man, Zubec.

(to Balarac)

Sergeant, I no longer need you, you are free to go.

KNIGHT 1

Very well, Commander.

7.17 INT. TUNNEL - DAY

7.17

TREKKING through the tunnel. It's big and echoey. They carry lamps and lead horses. They STOP and Gregor UNLOCKS a rusty gate.

ANGEL

What is this? It's vast.

GREGOR

There are many tunnels out of the city, under the walls. This was a smugglers' route, they'd take whole caravans back and forward, avoiding the duty on their goods. Of course, the bribes they paid to those who kept the tunnels came to almost as much as if they'd paid the taxes but that's Tumanbay for you. Given a choice between legal and not, we'll always go for the larceny.

They STOP before another gate.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

This is new... Damn it to the seven hells, I don't have a key.

ANGEL

But you have me and I have this...

Kneeling, Angel JIGGLES WIRE into the lock - tumblers TURN.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

There's not a lock I couldn't pick by the time I was ten. And this is...

(concentration)

... less than child's play.

It CLICKS and the gate OPENS.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

After you, Commander?

They go FORWARD.

GREGOR

What exactly did you do as a ten year old, Signor?

ANGEL

Like your smugglers, I moved things around. How far before we come to the surface?

GREGOR

A good while. Best save your energy...

On their WALKING we mix through to LATER:

ANGEL

It must have taken years to build something this long... Are those...
(shock)
... bones in the wall?

GREGOR

Yes. It's said the city was destroyed and then re-made... Some of it with the bones of the dead. Who knows, something else lost in time. Once we get to the desert, you'll find huge swathes-

One of the horses is SPOOKED.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Stop. Wait.

He DRAWS his sword.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Dowse the lamp.

A CLICK of lamp dowsed. Hold the pause.

ANGEL

(whisper)
I think I can see light ahead.

GREGOR

(whisper)
Wait here with the horses...

He goes forward, we go with him. His breathing.

FADE THROUGH TO SAME - LESS ECHO NOW.

Gregor WALKS, STOPS. Disbelief. ALKIN stands before him.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Alkin?

ALKIN

Hello, Gregor.

GREGOR

Is it you?

ALKIN

I believe it is. Do you?

GREGOR

I don't know.

ALKIN

Touch my hand.

He reaches out - TOUCHES.

GREGOR

(shock)

Oh, warm. What are you? Dead and not dead? No wonder I was mad.

ALKIN

You're not mad, Gregor, you never were.

GREGOR

Thank God for that...

(he has to pause - very emotional)

Thank...

(a laugh - shock)

It's... I have so many questions.

ALKIN

There's a time for questions but we are in the time for answers now.

GREGOR

(asks anyway)

Are you a "Watcher"? The Hafiz talked of-

ALKIN

Listen!

(hold silence for as long as possible)

Sultan al-Ghuri collected all manner of plants and creatures for his delight. He caused a great menagerie to be made for them - where they were able to flourish, to live their natural lives. And, because they knew no other life, they thought they were living in the great world. But they were not. Do you remember when there was a sickness? First the leaves of the plants began to curl and darken. The small animals and birds who ate the leaves began to sicken and die. Then the creatures who ate *them* died as well. It seemed nothing would stop this disease until, at last, al-Ghuri decreed that everything should be burnt and turned to ash and the ash itself buried. Then he would begin again elsewhere with new plants and new birds and new animals of all kinds.

GREGOR

What are you telling me?

ALKIN

What you can understand.

GREGOR

And what is that supposed to mean,
Alkin?

ALKIN

So it will be with Tumanbay and all
the world of which it is part.

GREGOR

What are you saying?

ALKIN

It wouldn't be the first time. It
has happened before. A great dying
comes upon the world and then...
all is remade again... and again...
and again.

GREGOR

That's impossible!

ALKIN

And yet you saw me hanged and saw
my burning body sent out to sea.

GREGOR

(shouts)

What are you, Alkin?

ALKIN

I have to tell you that you have a
part to play, Gregor.

GREGOR

And I tell you that I have to save
Manel, my niece. She should mean
something to you - you were lovers
once! Or was that a game? Have you
been playing with me, Alkin, all
this time?

ALKIN

I have been playing a much more
serious game - for longer than you
can know. You must go back, stay in
the city that you love. That is
your role Gregor, you must play it.
If you go to Manel this world will
burn and she with it.

GREGOR

If I stay?

ALKIN

Do you remember when you came to Tumanbay?

GREGOR

Qulan and me? Yes, two boys who nearly died crossing the mountains.

ALKIN

And your new master offered you a choice: a poisoned needle or a crystal of sugar. To live as slaves and, perhaps, to flourish. Or to leave this world of suffering and uncertainty for oblivion.

GREGOR

How do you know this?

ALKIN

At the beginning, a choice. Now again at the end, a choice. Oblivion or the chance, no matter how slight, to flourish.

GREGOR

What must be done?

ALKIN

There is a covenant between God and man. It was believed lost but was found again.

GREGOR

The scrolls. The Balarac have them.

ALKIN

No, the Balarac have half. The rest are missing, hidden by the Hafiz. If they can be brought together, Tumanbay and this world may live.

GREGOR

Can't you find them?

ALKIN

Once there was one path in the sand - now there are many and even I do not know which to take. Find what is lost, bring them to me...

She's FADING.

GREGOR

No, come back...

ANGEL (OFF)

Commander Gregor?

GREGOR
Where should I...?

ALKIN
You will know, Gregor, you will know.

She's GONE.

Angel is CLOSE:

ANGEL
Where should you what?

GREGOR
Did you see?

ANGEL
Nothing, you were lost in the light for just a moment, then I came to look for you. Shall we go on? We must be near the entrance.

GREGOR
The Palace of the Blind, it's half a day's ride beyond the entrance. Ride towards the evening star. You'll see mountains, a peak... it's called the Snow Tiger's Paw. The palace lies in its shadow.

ANGEL
You're not coming?

GREGOR
I have to go to Tumanbay. Find Manel, save her, keep her safe. Take both horses.

He WALKS away.

ANGEL
What just happened, Commander?

GREGOR
(leaving)
When you find her, don't come back.

ANGEL
(fading)
Commander? Commander!

Gregor HURRIES away.

GREGOR (V.O.)

The Hafiz kept half the scrolls,
she said, but where would he hide
them? Perhaps the old drunk has a
sense of humor after all.

7.18 INT. PALACE OF THE BLIND. THRONE ROOM - DAY

7.18

Manel sits on the throne. She TRIES TO STAND - we hear the chains. Sarp and Mehmed are beside her.

MANEL

I need to go outside.

SARP

No you don't. Outside is only sand.
Isn't that so, Vizier?

MEHMED

Yes, yes, Majesty, you must eat.

SARP

You see? Even your vizier thinks so
and he is wise.

He CLAPS his hands.

SARP (CONT'D)

(shouts a command)

Bring food for the sultana. Why do
you neglect her?

MEHMED

Bring food!

Sarp's followers SCARPER OFF to get food.

SARP

Why would you want to leave?

MANEL

Why have you chained me?

(beat)

Why am I chained?

SARP

It will be a great dynasty, Selony.

MANEL

Huh?

SARP

You can understand that. Do you remember how we used to talk about it, all those years ago when we escaped the court and the crowds and we climbed up to the very top of the great tower? And we sat together and we looked out and it was as if we could see the whole world spread before us and together... together...

MANEL

(she's getting scared now)
What are you talking about?

SARP

And we dreamed of how we would rule together one day... you and I, brother and sister... And so it shall be... you and I: in a glorious, eternal marriage!

7.19 EXT. LODGING - DAY

7.19

Gregor in the street WALKING.

GREGOR (V.O.)

I need to think. I used to be good at that. A menagerie? Is she saying everything is going to end? This whole... so solid world? Is she mad too? Well, she's dead, I saw her die. And burn. I saw her body burn.

He OPENS the door into the Lodgings House and ENTERS. LANDLADY greets him.

LANDLADY

Ah, Commander, you're back. Shall I send coffee to your rooms or to the roof terrace?

GREGOR

The terrace, please. Is the boy here?

LANDLADY

(calls)
Dumpy...

GREGOR

No, the other one? Frog.

LANDLADY

I... think so...

GREGOR
Send him to the terrace.

7.20 EXT. TERRACE - DAY

7.20

Frog and Dumpy are with Gregor.

FROG
Do you need us to fly again,
Commander? To find this garden of
yours?

GREGOR
No, I don't.

FROG
So you found it then?

GREGOR
Possibly.

FROG
You did?

Pause.

FROG (CONT'D)
Look, we're going to need somewhere
to go after... for me and my girl
and Dumpy, after we get her out.
Somewhere safe, where they can't
find us.

GREGOR
What's that to me?

FROG
I helped you when you asked. Help
me now.

GREGOR
All right, but you have to do
something for me.
(writing)
Go to this address. You'll find a
man and a child. Take them to the
garden.

FROG
But we don't know where the garden
is...

GREGOR
When you were flying, did you see a
big copper roof?

DUMPY

I saw something like that. Over towards the Slaughterhouse District, Frog. Near Meat Alley?

FROG

Maybe, yes...

GREGOR

That's it. There's an old water cistern, the entrance is there. There's room for you there and this family.

DUMPY

Why have they got to be there?

GREGOR

That's not your concern, my young friend.

FROG

The Balarac have increased their street patrols. That is.

Gregor PULLS out wallet - coins.

GREGOR

I'll pay you. Ten pieces. Al-Ghuri gold. Just do your job. Go now.

They GO.

7.21 INT. PALACE OF THE BLIND - DAY

7.21

Off we can hear a DISCORDANT orchestra playing and odd WAILING singing. Mehmed is seated by Manel.

MEHMED

They're rehearsing. For the ceremony.

MANEL

Is there a key? Can you get it?

MEHMED

Once I could, once I knew where every key in the palace was held, blind though I was... But Sarp is too clever... he keeps all the keys now.

MANEL

He seems to think I'm his sister.

MEHMED

Yes. They say she was very
beautiful, like you, I'm sure.

MANEL

What happened to her? Was she here?

MEHMED

Oh no, no... She was never here...
Something happened to her before he
came.

MANEL

To her? What?

MEHMED

I don't know... Something
happened...

MUSIC.

End of Episode 4.07.