

TUMANBAY

Episode 1.04 - "Hidden Knowledge"

by

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A crowd of OFFICIALS are busy as GREGOR ENTERS briskly.

GREGOR
Information, that's what I want.
This is...
(slaps a report on the
table)
... vagaries.

SUBORDINATE 1
I'll see to it at once, excellency.

GREGOR
(over him, to another)
Where's your report?

SUBORDINATE 2
I'll have it by this after-

GREGOR
You'll have it now or you won't
have a job. Or a head.

GREGOR (V.O.)
It's good to be in charge. Power is
about knowing what other people
don't.

GREGOR
Ata, the street patrols?

ATA
Have been increased as you ordered,
excellency. I could use more men.

GREGOR
How many?

ATA
Twenty four at least.

GREGOR
Make it so.

GREGOR (V.O.)
We all want to build our empires
and we all want to be in favour
with the Sultan... because in the
end all power flows from him.

GREGOR
(to another)
You, go to the Hareem, the gateway.
There will be a girl waiting. Bring
her to my rooms. Keep it subtle.

SUBORDINATE 1
Very good. For "questioning"?

GREGOR
Is there something you find
amusing, guard?

SUBORDINATE 1
No, Your Excellency.

GREGOR
Good. Now, I've an appointment with
the Sultan. Get my sash of office.

SUBORDINATE 3
(rushing off)
Yes, Excellency.

Gregor MOVES towards the door and stops.

GREGOR
(to Subordinate 1)
Khalid have you heard of... er...
Yes?

Subordinate 3 is hovering.

SUBORDINATE 3
Excellency, your sash.

GREGOR
Leave us.
(quietly to Subordinate 1)
Have you heard of... the Hameed
brothers?

SUBORDINATE 1
No, Sir. Should I instigate...?

GREGOR
No. Never mind, carry on...

Gregor LEAVES.

MUSIC swells.

4.2 **INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. COUNCIL ROOM - DAY**

4.2

Gregor WALKS along a corridor, pleased with himself. He turns
and ENTERS the reception area of the council room and sees
CADALI with his STAFF.

CADALI
Yes? How can I help you?

GREGOR

You can't, Cadali. I am here to see the Sultan.

He PASSES Cadali and ENTERS the large Council Room. His FOOTSTEPS ECHO as he paces around looking for the Sultan.

CADALI

The Sultan is not here.

Gregor TURNS. It's Cadali, who CLOSES the door behind them.

GREGOR

(angry - a tad worried too)

What do you mean, where is he?

CADALI

I told you, he's not here.

GREGOR

I had an appointment!

Cadali steps CLOSER.

CADALI

And now you don't. The Sultan is not happy with your progress Gregor. He is a very busy man. Matters of state. He doesn't have time to hear about your failures.

GREGOR

And my appointment?

CADALI

You can report to me.

GREGOR

(annoyed)

The Sultan directed me to search out spies, he will wish to be kept informed of progress.

CADALI

As far as you are concerned, Excellency, today I stand for the Sultan.

A pause.

GREGOR

Very well. I have found a number of low level operatives in the kitchens, the stables. They reveal very little when put to the question.

CADALI

Because they *know* very little,
presumably?

GREGOR

Exactly. The only high level spy
we've found so far is the maid.

CADALI

And, unfortunately, she killed
herself before revealing any
information.

GREGOR

On the contrary, she revealed that
Maya has a cadre of spies who are
not afraid of death. Indeed, they
welcome it. I think we have learned
something important there.

CADALI

That she was prepared to die rather
than face your tender mercies? I
think any rational being would take
that course. I hear that our
honoured physician has prepared you
potions to keep your subjects alive
and in agony far beyond any natural
span.

GREGOR

Palace gossip, no more than that.

CADALI

When I say "hear," I mean I have
listened to their screams for days
echoing around that cellar you keep
down there.

GREGOR

How you amuse yourself is your
business, Cadali. As for the rest,
I am waiting and looking for the
one little thing that is out of
place and will lead to a highly
placed spy. The flaw in the marble.
The crack in the wall that reveals
the room beyond.

CADALI

And so far?

GREGOR

(A significant pause)
The work is proceeding.

Cadali STROLLS across the room towards a window. Boys are
playing outside. After a pause, Gregor follows him.

CADALI

I understand Lady Shajar has a new maid?

GREGOR

Does she?

CADALI

I think you must be losing your memory, Excellency. You organized it.

GREGOR

Ah, that one. Yes, yes, a recent purchase, She has no palace loyalties. So unusual.

CADALI

Has she come up with anything?

GREGOR

"Come up with..." ?

CADALI

She's working for you.

GREGOR

I can assure you-

CADALI

It wasn't a question. And you can assure me of nothing.

4.3 **OPENING TITLES - MUSIC**

4.3

ANNOUNCER

Tumanbay, Episode 4. "Hidden Knowledge", by Mike Walker.

4.4 **EXT. DESERT - DAY**

4.4

Far off the stomping THRUMMING trumpeting sound of the moving town. Close to, the rasp of BREATH as SLAVE and HEAVEN CLIMB up a sand dune.

HEAVEN

What is it, then?

SLAVE

Just keep your mouth shut and follow. And keep your head down.

HEAVEN

But it's not an army, there are no soldiers. Do you think it's some sort of caravan?

SLAVE

I don't know what it is-

A COW BELL rings.

SLAVE (CONT'D)

Get down!

He GRABS her and they SLIDE down the dune to some scrubby bushes where they crouch. He looks around.

SLAVE (CONT'D)

Stay here, keep quiet.

He MOVES AWAY.

HEAVEN

No, don't leave me, I'm coming with you.

She FOLLOWS him.

SLAVE

I'll be back. Stay.

HEAVEN

No!

She STANDS up.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

I wont be left al-

He PULLS her down. She CRIES out. They STRUGGLE.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

Let me go, I'll scream!

She is about to scream but the Slave slaps his HAND OVER HER MOUTH.

SLAVE

(Intense)

Listen to me. I've been a slave once, I'm not letting it happen again, ever. Not on your account, not on any account. Do you understand?

HEAVEN

Mmmm...

He LIFTS his hand away and she SITS UP, WIPING her mouth.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

I don't think there's anyone there. It was just a goat.

SLAVE

It's never "just" anything, believe me.

HEAVEN

Why should I?

SLAVE

Because I'm saving your useless life. And we're going to die out here unless we get food and water and some horses or camels.

He waits.

HEAVEN

(Reluctantly)

Yes, all right...

SLAVE

I'm going to get into the caravan somehow and get what we need and then I'll come back. It'll probably be a while. It'll be dark. You'll have to wait. Alone. Can you do that?

HEAVEN

How do I know you'll come back?

SLAVE

You'll have to trust me.

HEAVEN

Why should I?

SLAVE

Because you're still alive and not buried in some sand hole half a day back.

HEAVEN

(She seems very young and scared)

Give me something. So I know you'll come back.

SLAVE

I was a slave, they took everything. I have nothing.

HEAVEN

Promise.

SLAVE

You really are just a child.

HEAVEN

Didn't you say nothing is "just" anything?

SLAVE

I will be back.

He GOES swiftly and is lost over the dunes. Heaven wraps her arms around herself and SHIVERS. After a few moments she begins to HUM to herself the melody she sang in the boat. She seems very lost.

Then COW BELL sounds again. She FREEZES, then SHRINKS down behind the inadequate scrub. A BOY (10) appears.

BOY

Have you come to take me?

HEAVEN

What? Stay back.

BOY

Are you the angel come to take me to paradise?

HEAVEN

No, I'm... lost.

BOY

Do angels get lost?

HEAVEN

I'm not an angel.

A pause.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

BOY

How did you get here then?

He APPROACHES.

HEAVEN

I told you, stay back.

BOY

I won't hurt you.

HEAVEN

Just stay back.

(After a pause)

I was on a ship and then... I wasn't. And then we came here - to that coast over there. And then we walked and walked. Can you help me? I'm hungry and thirsty.

BOY

Who are you?

HEAVEN

Where is your father, can I speak to him?

No answer.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

Your mother?

BOY

I don't have a mother or father. I look after the goats.

A few GOATS have begun to APPEAR, their BELLS tinkling.

HEAVEN

Who for?

BOY

Whoever pays me.

HEAVEN

I can pay you. Look.

She TAKES OUT a purse. Reveals the COINS.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

I've got gold and silver.

BOY

All right. Come.

He starts WALKING towards the dunes. She FOLLOWS.

BOY (CONT'D)

Are you alone?

HEAVEN

Why do you want to know?

The Slave TACKLES the Boy and HOLDS him down.

SLAVE

(Bellows)

Who are you?

The Boy CRIES OUT. The Slave slaps his HAND OVER HIS MOUTH.

SLAVE (CONT'D)

What do you want? Where are the others?

He LIFTS his other fist.

HEAVEN

Stop it! Stop it! He can't speak,
he can't breathe!

The Slave LOWERS his fist, the terrifying explosion of anger
simmering down.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

Leave him alone. He can get us food
and drink.

SLAVE

And why would he do that?

HEAVEN

Because you're not going to kill
him. Take your hand off his face
before he suffocates.

The Slave LIFTS his hand away. The Boy GASPS for air.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

It's all right, he wont hurt you.

BOY

I don't like him.

The Slave LIFTS the Boy onto his feet.

HEAVEN

Me neither.

SLAVE

I could have saved your worthless
life.

HEAVEN

From him? Besides... you used me as
bait, didn't you? You were never
going to the caravan, you just
waited to see who it was following
us.

The Slave shrugs.

SLAVE

It's never "just" anything.

(to Boy)

Do you come from over there?

(loud, aggressive)

Do you? Who are they, what are
they? Answer or I'll -

The Boy is CRYING.

HEAVEN

Stop it! He's scared, can't you see? He's a child, he's only a child...

BOY

(through tears)

I can help you, I swear. You have to believe me.

HEAVEN

I believe you. Leave him alone.

4.5 EXT. DESERT - DAY

4.5

They are WALKING amongst the goats. Heaven does not like the way they nibble at her robes. The RUMBLING CARAVAN is close now and now more bizarre than ever.

BOY

It's a town, see. With tents and temples and inns and... everything.

HEAVEN

But it's moving?

BOY

That's what it does. That's how we live. We follow armies and after battles we use everything that's left.

HEAVEN

What do you use?

BOY

I told you. Everything.

The Boy POINTS to the great moving mass. Smoke rises, some is blue wood smoke but some isn't...

BOY (CONT'D)

You see the smoke rising from the town? No, not the fire smoke, the other...

SLAVE

Thick and greasy. I've seen smoke like that before.

BOY

It's from the vats. They cook all the time, even on the move. People, well they were people once, rendered down for fat and glue and soap. We use it all.

SLAVE

I'm liking this less and less...

HEAVEN

It's better than the desert. We have to eat... and have a bath.

BOY

Come on.

He SETS OFF.

4.6 EXT. DESERT. MOVING TOWN - DAY

4.6

Heaven and the Slave FOLLOW the Boy THROUGH the carts, crowds, tents, inns, stalls and shops that have sprung up under the stars.

BOY

This way... along here...

SLAVE

If you're leading us into a trap, Boy...

HEAVEN

Leave him alone! How big is this "moving town"?

BOY

How big is big? You would need a day and night to walk all the way round.

SLAVE

Better walk away.

BOY

In here.

They enter a compound. The growling and BARKING of dogs. Heaven cries out.

BOY (CONT'D)

It's all right, they're in cages. Come.

RAJIK intervenes, THREATENING his dogs. Rajik is something of a buccaneer.

RAJIK

(bellows)

Hey! Be quiet... I'll kick you... I won't tell you again...

The dogs GROWL and back off.

BOY

Rajik, I've brought some friends.

RAJIK

Friends, what friends?

He sees Slave and Heaven.

RAJIK (CONT'D)

Uh, who're you?

SLAVE

Who're you?

HEAVEN

We were shipwrecked. We were going to Tumanbay. We are really hungry and thirsty.

RAJIK

Am I an Innkeeper?

PAMIRA

(off)

Where are your manners, Rajik?

PAMIRA, a middle aged, well dressed woman with many bangles and necklaces appears and immediately APPROACHES Heaven.

PAMIRA (CONT'D)

These are travellers, guests, and guests are sacred to our kind. Are we not all travellers through this world? Why, she's hardly more than a child, this little beauty. Come, my sweet, you must be tired and thirsty... Come...

She LEADS her away into the tent before the Slave can intervene. Rajik regards him.

RAJIK

It's all right, big man. We're all running away from something here. You want to come in? Fine. You don't? Fine.

Rajik FOLLOWS his wife and Heaven into the tent.

BOY

It's all right. I swear.

SLAVE

Nothing's all right, I swear.

The dog GROWLS.

4.7 EXT. TUMANBAY. STREET - DAY 4.7

MUSIC swells. Carriages and people. A BUSY street.

4.8 INT. TUMANBAY. IBN'S HOUSE - DAY 4.8

Gregor and SARAH ENTER Ibn's home.

IBN

Yes, yes, everything is prepared.
This way.

He CLOSES the door. He LEADS THEM along a passage. They ENTER a room we haven't seen before. It is luxuriously appointed. He goes to a crib, where the BABY COOS.

IBN (CONT'D)

Here she is. She's well...

He LIFTS her tenderly - Gregor takes it in.

IBN (CONT'D)

She's growing every day. Her eyes
can see properly now...

Sarah STARTS forward. Gregor GRASPS her arm, holds her back a moment.

GREGOR

You see? I have kept my promise.
You work for me and I will protect
you and your child.

IBN

She's hungry.

SARAH

My milk has dried up?

IBN

She has a wet nurse.

(calls)

Sabira!

He SNAPS his fingers. SABIRA enters.

IBN (CONT'D)

She will stay with you. She will
feed her.

Gregor RELEASES Sarah. She HURRIES to the crib and LIFTS the baby. She is radiant.

GREGOR

Ibn Bai, a word?

IBN

In here.

They LEAVE the room and we go with them as they pass INTO the library. Gregor looks around at the ranks of books and scrolls.

GREGOR

There's a whole world of knowledge in this room. If a man knew half of it, one quarter, he would be wiser than any man living. But then there is not the time in a whole life to learn it.

IBN

But that is the thing, Excellency, a man does not need to know the answer, he only needs to know where to go and find it.

He runs his hands along the book spines.

GREGOR

Exactly, and I come to you, my friend, for the answer to my question.

IBN

Ah, yes, the Hameed brothers. They have a workshop in the street named "The Poet". It's beyond the market, under the temple walls.

GREGOR

Thank you. I have some business to attend to.

Gregor makes to LEAVE, then TURNS.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Remember, your head on my slave still being here when I return.

4.9

EXT. TUMANBAY. STREET NAMED THE POET - DAY

4.9

Less busy than the market, it runs under the soaring walls of a temple. There are shops, workshops and stalls, most of them related in some way to calligraphy, art and literature. Gregor WALKS along the row, stops at one and KNOCKS at the door. No answer. He KNOCKS AGAIN, then again.

We are close and hear a peephole OPEN. Behind it stands PARIK.

PARIK
 (from inside)
 Yes?

GREGOR
 Hameed Brothers?

PARIK
 (from inside)
 What do you want?

GREGOR
 I...
 (beat)
 ... have been sent by the Lady
 Shajar. May I come in?

The peephole SHUTS. Gregor waits. MUTTERING behind the door.
 The peephole OPENS.

PARIK
 (from inside)
 The Lady Shajar, you say?

GREGOR
 Yes.

A pause then the door OPENS and Gregor STEPS INTO the
 workshop.

4.10 INT. TUMANBAY. WORKSHOP - DAY

4.10

Parik USHERS Gregor in. He CLOSES the door behind them. PANIG
 stands with a long paintbrush gripped between his lips.

PARIK
 Come... In here...

PANIG
 Mmm mmm mmm mm?

PARIK
 Oaf, he cannot understand you,
 don't chew your brush.

Panig REMOVES the brush, looks at the end.

PANIG
 Medium thin. She sent you?

PARIK
 The lady?

GREGOR
 (Impatiently)
 Yes.

PARIK

Only we don't know you.

PANIG

Never seen you before.

PARIK

Not from Samarkand, are you?

PANIG

Of course he's not, look at him,
look at that colouring. You've nice
colouring, Lord.

PARIK

Besides, she knows it's not
finished. Only last week when she
came to inspect the work...

PANIG

Last week indeed.

GREGOR

She wants a progress report.

PARIK

You have to understand, we are
artists, art cannot be hurried. Oh,
your mistress might find a hundred
mere artisans who would do the work
and promise paradise but she is
wise-

PANIG

Wise she is, she knows, for work of
this quality only the best will do.

PARIK

And if I may say so, Hameed
Brothers are the best.

PANIG

The very best.

PARIK

Every brush stroke, every inlay
will match the original. It will be
as if one becomes the other and
there is no difference to be seen.

PANIG

Such is our artistry. But it takes
time...

PARIK

Time.

GREGOR
The original is...

PARIK
Precious...

PANIG
Rare...

GREGOR
Indeed, she explained to me...

PANIG
Then you will understand our care.

A single fly BUZZES across the shop.

PANIG (CONT'D)
The need for-

PARIK
Time.

GREGOR
But perhaps a thing of such beauty?

The fly LANDS in wet paint.

PARIK
There, stuck in the paint. He
wishes to see it, Brother.

PANIG
Of course he does, Brother. Who
would not, it is a wonder of the
world. Shall I?

GREGOR
I would be in your debt, gentlemen.

The fly BUZZES further - then a slap.

PANIG
Won't be able to use that paint
now. There's lapis in that.

PARIK
Terrible waste, that is.

GREGOR
At least it stopped the damned fly
buzzing. Now...

The long drawer SLIDES OPEN. Gregor MARVELS at the contents.

4.11 INT. TUMANBAY. IBN'S HOUSE - DAY

4.11

Sarah is HOLDING the baby - playing with it.

SARAH

You said, earlier... your wife and daughter?

IBN

The plague. They were coming to Tumanbay. My daughter was to be married.

SARAH

By ship?

IBN

A ship. A ship of death. Not one lived to tell the story. I watched it burn in the harbour. Their pyre. All of this... the house, the library, my business... it all means nothing. I discovered that for each of us there is something, one thing that is more... no, that *is* everything. For some, it is their honour, for others, power. For me it was my family and I didn't know it until I lost it.

Big CRY from the baby.

SARAH

She'll be strong...

IBN

She's already beautiful. She has your eyes. Her father's too?

(beat)

I'm sorry.

SARAH

His eyes were full of lust.

The baby GURGLES.

SARAH (CONT'D)

The heart is a traitor. When I hold her in my arms, I can feel the love flowing out of me... Shouldn't I hate her? But I don't. My child... Perhaps you are right about family.

IBN

And your brother?

SARAH

Yes, of course. Him too.

IBN

Life. Life has a way. I say: my life is over and yet I get up and eat and do this and do that and... life goes on and I find myself caught up by this, by that and I hate myself for it. "You are finished, Ibn," I say. "Your life is over," you've said it a thousand times and yet-

The baby CRIES.

IBN (CONT'D)

Naima is hungry... and Naima must be fed.

SARAH

Naima *is* hungry... and Naima *must* be fed.

A pause, they both laugh.

IBN

(calls)

Sabira.

The maid ENTERS.

IBN (CONT'D)

Give her the baby... It's all right. Sabira has taken good care of her.

Sarah PASSES the baby over. A KNOCK at the door off. Both are instantly alert.

SARAH

Gregor?

IBN

I'll go to him.

SARAH

Wait! Do you trust him?

IBN

Say nothing.

Ibn LEAVES the room and we go with him as Gregor is ADMITTED.

IBN (CONT'D)

All is well, Excellency?

GREGOR

She is still here?

IBN

Of course.

GREGOR

Two scrolls about so long.

(He indicates holding his
hands apart)

Old, definitely, torn a little with
text in... You have paper?

IBN

The library...

As THEY GO:

GREGOR

(to Sarah)

Make yourself ready to leave.

SARAH

Excellency.

In the library Ibn HANDS Gregor a sheet and a pen. We hear
the nib on the thick paper as he DRAWS.

GREGOR

Not a script I am familiar with.

IBN

Nor I. Ancient, certainly. Were
there illuminations?

GREGOR

Yes, decorating the margins.
Symbols mostly.

IBN

You have an amazing memory, Your
Excellency, if these are accurate?

GREGOR

They are and I do. You should never
forget that.

He DRAWS - the pen SCRATCHES.

IBN

Religious. There the sickle moon,
the sun and stars. I'd say it was a
Creation Story. They are popular, I
believe amongst the rich. There are
many copies available. Many of them
very fine and worth a lot.

GREGOR

And the original?

IBN

Who knows. Lost in time, perhaps?

GREGOR

But if it were real?

IBN

(Laughs)

If it were real...

He shrugs as if such a thing would be quite impossible. Gregor FOLDS the paper and slips it in his robe as they LEAVE the library. Sarah is waiting for them.

SARAH

Are we going now.

GREGOR

Hurry.

Gregor GOES ahead.

IBN

Don't worry, I will care for the child. She will be safe.

They look at each other - it is clear an unspoken agreement has been reached.

4.12 EXT. DESERT - DAY

4.12

MARCHING. Drum. Horses hooves...

SERGEANT

Keep up there. Keep up there.

4.13 EXT. DESERT. ARMY CAMP - NIGHT

4.13

The army is camping for the night. The men are lining up for chow. DANIEL and MADU walk over with their rations and squat beside a FIRE. Madu doesn't eat.

DANIEL

Why aren't you eating?

MADU

Not hungry.

DANIEL

You're hungry.

MADU

Just leave me alone, will you?

DANIEL

You don't eat tonight, you won't have the strength to get through tomorrow.

MADU

Why did you help me back there?

DANIEL

I didn't.

MADU

I'd be dead if you hadn't got me off the sand. Those bloody birds would be picking my bones clean right now.

DANIEL

It would be jackals after dark.

(Beat)

I was helping me. I wanted to make my own mind up about something. I wanted to be in control.

Madu thinks about this. Then he starts to EAT.

MADU

Well thank you anyway. I'm Madu.

DANIEL

Daniel.

MADU

You've got blue eyes. That's unusual round here. Are you from the north?

Daniel FINISHES his food - considering whether or not he wants to answer this question. He wipes his mouth, CLEANS his fingers fastidiously with water from his water skin. Madu notices.

DANIEL

Yes.

MADU

How did you come to be here?

DANIEL

Things happened.

MADU

I don't mean to pry.

DANIEL

Then don't.

A pause.

MADU

You weren't always a slave?

DANIEL

No, I was born a free man.

MADU

And...?

DANIEL

And what?

MADU

What are you doing here? How did you become a slave?

DANIEL

I was travelling home from Salmania.

MADU

In Amber province?

DANIEL

(suspicious)

So?

MADU

So nothing. Just curious.

DANIEL

You said you didn't want to pry.

MADU

I don't.

DANIEL

Then don't.

There's something intractable in his mouth.

MADU

What do they put in these rations?

DANIEL

It's best not to ask. Someone makes money out of it.

MADU

The general?

DANIEL

No, I don't think so. He's a hard bastard but I trust him.

Madu LAUGHS.

MADU

I'd sooner put my hand in a bag of snakes.

He takes a DRINK from the waterskin.

MADU (CONT'D)

So you know Maya, you've seen her?

DANIEL

Hmmm.

MADU

Amber is where she comes from isn't it?

DANIEL

You don't have to ask that.

MADU

What's she like? Maya the Grim, the Fearsome?

A long pause - during which SOLDIER is APPROACHING. At last:

DANIEL

She's like... I didn't really see her.

MADU

I don't believe you.

Before Daniel can respond Soldier KICKS Madu.

SOLDIER

Move it, boy. This fire's taken.

DANIEL

Yes, by us.

SOLDIER

I wasn't talking to you, Blue Eyes.

SOLDIER 2 has now ARRIVED.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

What are you doing here, boy?
You're no soldier...

SOLDIER 2

He's from the court. A spy, huh?

He GRABS Madu and PULLS him to his feet.

DANIEL

Leave him alone.

SOLDIER 2

What are you, his father? You suit each other, Blue Eyes and a little weasel from the palace.

(laughs)

SOLDIER

(amused)

You reporting on us, shortie? Run off back to the General, do you?

Madu STRIKES OUT, knocking the soldiers' rations into the fire.

MADU

Go to hell, you bastard!

SOLDIER

(laughing darkly)

I'm going to enjoy this.

With a ROAR both soldiers launch themselves - a FIGHT starts, the fire scatters.

DANIEL

Leave him alone!

Daniel LAUNCHES himself into the fray. The brawl ESCALATES. A crowd has gathered. A SERGEANT comes running up, BEATING everyone with his staff.

SERGEANT

Enough, enough, stop it! What happened here? You?

SOLDIER

Blue eyes, he started it. Him and the boy.

MADU

That's a damned lie-

SERGEANT

Shut your mouth. Is that true?

By now the Watch has arrived.

SOLDIER 2

He's trouble, that one, Sergeant. Bloody Blue Eyes.

SERGEANT

(laughs)

Blue eyes. I knew you should not be trusted.

(to Watch)

Bring them to the lock-up.

DANIEL
Sergeant, it wasn't like-

SERGEANT
Silence! No fighting in camp. Save
it for the enemy.

The men of the Watch GRAB Daniel and pick up Madu and MARCH
them away

4.14 EXT. ARMY CAMP. PRISON CART - NIGHT 4.14

The WATCHMEN DRAG Madu and MARCH Daniel to the cage.

MADU
You'd better not touch me. There'll
be trouble, I can promise you that.

DANIEL
Just be quiet, Madu, let them do
what they have to.

MADU
What do you mean?

WATCHMAN 1
You should listen to your friend.

As one of them OPENS the door, the others surround the
prisoners. They've drawn their beating sticks.

MADU
You can't...
(Struggles)

DANIEL
They can and they will. Right,
Corporal?

WATCHMAN 1
Right, Blue Eyes.

The Watch wade in, THUMPING and KICKING. CRIES from Madu.

4.15 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. SHAJAR'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT 4.15

Sarah is serving supper to SHAJAR, POURING wine from a jug. A
SERVANT ENTERS.

SERVANT
My Lady, the Vizier Cadali.

SHAJAR
What does that fat snake want at
this time, I wonder?

Sarah is nervous, she DROPS a plate.

SHAJAR (CONT'D)

What's wrong with you? You've been clumsy all afternoon.

SARAH

I am sorry, Madam, it slipped.

SHAJAR

Have you been crying?

SARAH

No, Madam.

SHAJAR

Let me tell you, tears are a waste of water. Now send him in.

Sarah HURRIES to the door then CLEARS UP the mess under Cadali.

CADALI

Greeting, Lady. Forgive my intrusion. I happened to find some ambergris and hearing you were Shajar..

SHAJAR

Are we short, Sarah? I don't think so.

SARAH

No, My Lady.

CADALI

Ah, I thought your Steward mentioned something... but no matter. Let me present you with this anyway, it is particularly fine, I am told.

SHAJAR

Very good, give it to the girl.

CADALI

Don't drop it, my dear. It might mean a trip to the market to replace it.

(to Shajar)

Do you allow your slaves to leave the palace, Madam?

SHAJAR

What's that to you?

Shajar HANDS the jar to Sarah, who takes it away.

CADALI

Hmmm. But of course, I haven't come just to deliver bath oil.

Another pause.

CADALI (CONT'D)

Madu. How is the young man getting along in his new career?

SHAJAR

I didn't know you were so interested in his welfare?

CADALI

I am interested in everyone's welfare.

SHAJAR

Then I am sure you will be happy to know that my son is learning many valuable lessons that will stand him in good stead in times to-

Gregor ENTERS.

GREGOR

I'm sorry. Am I interrupting?

SHAJAR

... come. Excellency, it is usually considered good manners to ask the permission of the Chief Wife before entering the Hareem.

GREGOR

I will return when you are finished.

He makes no move to go.

SHAJAR

I believe we are finished, Vizier, are we not?

Cadali STANDS and bows.

CADALI

For now, Madam. Excellency. I will leave you to your...

(beat)

... conversation.

He GOES. They watch until he has left the room.

SHAJAR

So, what *is* your business, Gregor?

GREGOR

My business is catching spies, as you know.

SHAJAR

Well then, you can't be wanting anything here.

GREGOR

Your last maid was a spy.

SHAJAR

And you think the new one is also? Do you want to put her to the torture too?

GREGOR

It may come to that. May I sit down?

SHAJAR

I... think not. I prefer you standing.

GREGOR

As you wish, Shajar. But your previous maid, when I was questioning her...

SHAJAR

Before she killed herself?

GREGOR

Something she said.

SHAJAR

Go on.
(calls)
Sarah.

GREGOR

Look at me. Why wont you look at me?

SHAJAR

You know why, Gregor.

GREGOR

I could serve you if you'd let me.

SHAJAR

I don't know you.

GREGOR

Look at me.

SHAJAR

I don't *know* you.

GREGOR

But we... I can't forget that.

SHAJAR

Stop this, I am the First Wife. Ah, Sarah...

She indicates her cup. Nervously Sarah pours then:

SARAH

For His Excellency?

SHAJAR

His Excellency will not be staying.

GREGOR

It was about the Hafiz.

SHAJAR

(lost)
What?

GREGOR

Why I am here. The maid, the spy in your service.

SHAJAR

I am hardly responsible for whatever rubbish fear draws out of your victims, Gregor.

GREGOR

When the Hafiz came here, where did he come from?

SHAJAR

You know very well where he came from.

GREGOR

And after leaving there, he travelled through Ghabrell?

SHAJAR

So I believe. Is there any point to this or are you merely engaging in a geography lesson?

GREGOR

He was desperate, relying on the generosity of strangers by the time he got here and placed himself under your protection?

SHAJAR

I ask again, is there any point to this?

(MORE)

SHAJAR (CONT'D)

What would you call it, Sarah?
You're an intelligent girl. What do
you think Gregor wants?

Sarah looks from one to the other.

SARAH

I... I would not presume to know,
Madam.

SHAJAR

Exactly, and neither would I.

GREGOR

Just questions, Madam. I merely
needed to update my records.

SHAJAR

I never really saw you as a book-
keeper. Sarah... you may show his
excellency out.

GREGOR

It's all right, I know my own way.

He BOWS and as he LEAVES.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Oh, and I imagine you would have no
objection to me seeing the Hafiz?
For my records? Given that he's
under your protection.

SHAJAR

I... I suppose not.

GREGOR

Thank you. You might put your sign
on this for me?

Pause.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Unless for some reason...

SHAJAR

Give it to me.

He does, she CLIPS her sigil and then he's GONE.

SHAJAR (CONT'D)

Can you believe it? I once thought
that man desirable. Do you?

SARAH

Madam?

SHAJAR

Think him desirable. Those swarthy looks, the dashing manner, the eyes.. They say women love cruel eyes.

SARAH

(unable to stop herself)
I do not like cruelty.

SHAJAR

Interesting. I wonder if that's the first real thing I've ever heard you say. If you do not like cruelty then stay away from that man - even the things he professes to love and cherish will feel the lash of his lust sooner or later. Sooner clasp a scorpion to your breast.

MUSIC swells.

4.16 INT. DESERT. MOVING TOWN. TENT - NIGHT

4.16

EATING. Slave and Heaven are obviously ravenous. The Boy squats in the corner of the tent. Rajik entertains, Pamira brings more food. We can hear the dogs BARKING outside.

PAMIRA

These are from Zaghloul Plains, the high orchards.

HEAVEN

You live well here.

PAMIRA

Many prosper in the town. There are always opportunities.

HEAVEN

The cages outside. The dogs. What are they for?

RAJIK

Armies need dogs bred for war, I train them.

BOY

Rajik traps them and breeds them.
But-

Rajik SHUSHES him abruptly.

RAJIK

Fighters. Strong. Muscle and teeth. Very elegant and bred for one thing.

PAMIRA

Here, drink this, it's good wine
from the mountains.

Pamira POURS the wine. Heaven DRINKS.

HEAVEN

It *is* good.

RAJIK

The dogs will fetch a fine price
when the battle begins.

HEAVEN

Battle?

RAJIK

For Tumanbay. Let a pack of my dogs
loose in a town and you'll soon see
the blood flow.

HEAVEN

Will there really be a battle?

PAMIRA

Who knows. It's men's business is
what I say, and not for such pretty
ears as yours. What's your name?

HEAVEN

Heaven.

PAMIRA

Heaven?

Pamira LAUGHS. Rajik LAUGHS too.

PAMIRA (CONT'D)

So, "Heaven", where have you come
from?

HEAVEN

Mers el Kebir. My father was a
merchant there. Then he went to
Tumanbay to start a business. I was
to be married to... someone.

PAMIRA

I'm sure he'll be safe.

RAJIK

Tumanbay is finished. Everyone
knows it and it's inhabitants will
be marched out into the desert and
massacred.

PAMIRA

You're a cheery soul.

RAJIK

They've grown fat and lazy.

PAMIRA

Don't listen to him, dear. He's angry.

HEAVEN

Why angry?

PAMIRA

That's just his character.

RAJIK

(to Slave)

And how did you get here?

SLAVE

Never mind.

RAJIK

So you do have a voice?

The Slave SHRUGS.

RAJIK (CONT'D)

You should train your slave to answer when he's spoken to.

HEAVEN

He's not my slave.

RAJIK

And your father's a merchant in Tumanbay?

SLAVE

All we want are a few supplies, maybe a camel. We can pay. We won't bother you for more.

PAMIRA

It's no trouble. We will be happy to help but now, you are tired. We'll let you sleep.

SLAVE

We can find beds for ourselves.

PAMIRA

No...

RAJIK

As you wish.

PAMIRA

We are not throwing this poor child out into the night. It is our duty.

Rajik STANDS and STALKS to the tent flap.

RAJIK

Damned women. Think they rule the world. Well have it your own way. We'll talk in the morning. I'll see someone about a camel... Boy, come with me.

The Boy LEAVES the tent.

PAMIRA

Come. I will show you where you can sleep...

Pamira indicates a sleeping area.

PAMIRA (CONT'D)

Here. Please, it is quite safe. Certainly safer here than out there; everyone knows Rajik's dogs and no one would risk their jaws.

HEAVEN

Thank you.

PAMIRA

You're pretty aren't you? Very pretty.

With a last STROKE of Heaven's hair she LEAVES the tent.

SLAVE

You talk too much.

HEAVEN

I'm tired, I'm going to sleep now.

SLAVE

We have to leave.

HEAVEN

Why?

SLAVE

I don't trust them.

HEAVEN

There are kind people in the world, you know?

SLAVE

I've heard of them but I've never met them.

HEAVEN

You've been a slave too long.

SLAVE

You've been a pampered brat too long. We have to go.

HEAVEN

You go. I'm going to sleep.

She LIES DOWN and WRAPS herself in sheepskins. The Slave shifts into the shadows, SITS and prepares to wait it out.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

Aren't you going to sleep?

4.17 EXT. DESERT. ARMY CAMP - NIGHT

4.17

CICADAS. Picket guards call out. A few jackals HOWL at the moon. Otherwise it is quiet. Under the dialogue QULAN is ARRIVING with some staff OFFICERS.

MADU

At least in the prison cart we won't have to march anymore. And we won't be harassed by these, these... brutes.

DANIEL

Have you ever been flogged?

MADU

No.

DANIEL

I have. And you wont like it.

MADU

It won't come to that.

DANIEL

Why not?

QULAN

(OFF)

I'll inspect the sentries after we've settled with the Quartermaster General...

OFFICER 1

(OFF)

Very good, Sir. He should be waiting for you with his accounts.

QULAN

(OFF)

Good. I'll be meeting with the provincial governors tomorrow.

(MORE)

QULAN (CONT'D)

I'll need to have my facts straight and up to date to handle those slippery bastards.

MADU

General Qulan. I know him. Once I get a chance to speak to him I'll sort it all out. We'll get out of here...

DANIEL

You better be right because if you're not... There, show me... there he is...

Madu CALLS OUT.

MADU

General... General Qulan... Over here...

Qulan sees him and WANDERS OVER.

QULAN

Madu. Well, have you learnt anything useful yet?

MADU

Tonight, we were beaten... the watch.

QULAN

Yes, I can see.

MADU

Well?

QULAN

Well - what?

MADU

(angrily)
Will you please just get me out of here?

QULAN

(calls)
Sergeant.

SERGEANT

Sir.

Madu relaxes. They're free...

QULAN

These two?

SERGEANT

Fighting in the camps, Commander.

QULAN

Punishment?

SERGEANT

As per regulations. Fifty lashes each.

QULAN

Very good, carry on.

He starts to GO.

MADU

No, no, you can't. My mother will hear about this, you know she will - and when she does, she'll have you whipped through the streets of Tumanbay.

QULAN

It is for the sake of your mother that I will answer that outburst, young man. Your mother knows exactly where you are, exactly what happened to you and when she hears about the fifty lashes you will receive, she will be content that her plans are being carried out as she would wish.

(to Sergeant)

Send for me when they are ready for punishment.

He WALKS away, leaving Madu in total shock.

SERGEANT

So, got any more to say?

DANIEL

Nothing to say, Sergeant.

The Sergeant starts to give ORDERS.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(quietly to Madu)

So who are you?

MADU

I'm the son of Shajar, the chief wife. He can't do this to me. If he harms me, my mother... Okay, not my mother. But my uncle the Sultan will-

DANIEL

Listen, do you think they would have sent you here if you mattered? You really need to get this into your head. Anybody can do anything to anyone in this world.

They are PULLED from the prison cart and DRAGGED to a flogging frame.

SERGEANT

Strap them up.

Madu WEEPS as it is done.

DANIEL

Do you think that will help? It's just wasting water...

MADU

What can I do...? I can't... I can't...

DANIEL

(takes a breath)

Tell him... tell him I know Maya. I was brought up in Amber. Tell him I can help him.

MADU

Is it... Do you?

DANIEL

(urgent)

Tell him.

Qulan APPEARS from the tent.

QULAN

Sergeant?

SERGEANT

Ready, Commander.

QULAN

Carry on.

SERGEANT

Fighting in the ranks - fifty lashes each. Begin.

MADU

(calling out to Qulan)

General... You asked me if I had learnt anything from my experience?

QULAN

Yes?

MADU

This man, my friend.

QULAN

Yes?

MADU

He grew up in Amber Province. He knows Maya's court, he knows her world - he's met her. He knows how she thinks.

Qulan APPROACHES Daniel.

QULAN

Is this true?

Silence. Daniel doesn't answer.

MADU

I swear it is...

(sotto)

I hope it is.

QULAN

Let him speak for himself. Is this true?

DANIEL

It is, General.

QULAN

You know something of the way Maya's people fight?

DANIEL

Yes, I do.

QULAN

Well?

DANIEL

You know Alamut?

QULAN

Her fortress? I know of it.

DANIEL

Shortly after her husband died and she took power, a Prince from the Plains People decided to lay siege to the castle. After all, what was Maya but a weak woman? She invited him in, under the flag of truce and took him up onto the walls.

QULAN

Go on...

DANIEL

There was a company of guards escorting the party. Twenty men. She told them to walk off the walls. They did so, every one, without a murmur, and fell to their deaths on the rocks. The Prince left, raised the siege and went home to the plains. She'd fought off an invasion at the cost of twenty men.

A pause as Qulan considers.

QULAN

With loyalty like that you could rule the world. Is it her they follow or some belief?

DANIEL

It's complicated, Sir.

QULAN

Cut him down. Bring him to my tent.

The Sergeant ACKNOWLEDGES. His men CUT Daniel down.

DANIEL

And my friend?

QULAN

What about him?

DANIEL

Bring him too.

QULAN

What use is he to me?

DANIEL

I won't help you unless he comes too.

Qulan MOVES closer.

QULAN

You will if I want you to. Maybe I should have had you whipped after all.

DANIEL

I believe in loyalty, General.

Qulan looks at him for a moment, trying to work him out.

QULAN

Loyalty?

He turns to GO.

QULAN (CONT'D)
All right. Bring them both.

Madu is CUT FREE too. They RUN after Qulan.

GREGOR (V.O.)
Loyalty - my brother always placed
great reliance upon it, both giving
and receiving it. Me...? I prefer
fear, it's cleaner and sharper and
if you need to cut with it, far
more efficient...

4.18 INT. DESERT. MOVING TOWN. TENT - NIGHT

4.18

The tent flap MOVES and the Boy SLIPS IN. He looks around.
Only the sounds of sleeping. He CREEPS across the floor.
Heaven lies asleep.

BOY
(whispered)
Wake up, wake up.

Slave GRABS the Boy.

SLAVE
What do you want?

BOY
You have to come.

SLAVE
Why, where?

BOY
Quickly, it isn't safe here.

He SHAKES Heaven who WAKES UP groggily.

HEAVEN
What is it?

BOY
Now, you have to come now.

He's PULLING at her, frantic.

BOY (CONT'D)
They'll be back soon, with the
others. It isn't safe for you.

HEAVEN
Why, what?

SLAVE

What do you mean, Boy?

BOY

There isn't time... They mean you harm, they want to sell you to the others... the body men.

He is genuinely SCARED and urgent.

SLAVE

All right. Come on, Girl.

He GRABS Heaven and PULLS her after him. The Boy HEADS to the back of the tent.

BOY

This way, through here...

He LIFTS a flap... they RUN through. CLANG, a cage door slams shut.

4.19 EXT. BACK OF TENT - NIGHT

4.19

The Slave and Heaven are in a cage. The Slave ROARS and attacks the bars. Heavens STRUGGLES too. The bars are immovable. The Boy emerges. He has tears on his cheeks.

BOY

You won't break them.

SLAVE

I'll kill you, Boy! I'll kill you!

BOY

Once they have you, they never let you go. I'm sorry... I'm sorry.

MUSIC.

End of Episode 1.04.

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