

TUMANBAY

Episode 1.07 - "A Tale of Two Cities"

by

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7.1 EXT. WALLS OF TUMANBAY - DAY

7.1

Al-Ghuri's victorious army is MARCHING towards the gates of Tumanbay.

We cut to inside of the city. FANFARE - there are CHEERS from a great crowd. The victory BELL tolls. From the city walls CADALI the Grand Vizier, proclaims:

CADALI

(shouting)

All hail our glorious Sultan! He brings to Tumanbay Victory and peace! All hail Glorious Abu'l Abbas Al-Ghuri, Lion of Lions, Sultan of Eagles...

He DECLAIMS on...

7.2 EXT. OUTSIDE TUMANBAY. - DAY

7.2

AL-GHURI leads his victorious army home, towards the ceremony overseen Cadali is conducting in their honour. QULAN, and MADU ride alongside the Sultan.

CADALI

(off)

... destroyer of enemies, father of the peoples, protector of the poor, the sword of the faith...

AL-GHURI

General, I hardly know what to say.

QULAN

My Lord, it is your triumph - as is the head of Maya on the Herald's lance.

AL-GHURI

Yes, but even so, she's still very desirable...

QULAN

Shall we show her to your people? Shall we let them cheer their great leader?

AL-GHURI

Very well, General Qulan, let us do so!

QULAN

The army will advaaaaance!

HORNS and drums as the vast mass MOVES forward and all around, as they do so, the CHEERING thousands of Tumanbay.

AL-GHURI

Come, Madu, ride beside me.

MADU

The triumph is yours, Majesty -
it's you the people want to see -
you are their Sultan and you have
saved them.

AL-GHURI

(delighted)

Yes, and when we are done, have the
bitch's head sent to my room...

7.3

INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. AL-GHURI'S CHAMBER - DAY

7.3

Al-Ghuri WAKES UP with a smile... then SCREAMS. A SERVANT
RUSHES IN. A BELL sounds off.

SERVANT

Your Majesty? What has happened?

AL-GHURI

(panicked)

Who was it?

SERVANT

What?

AL-GHURI

Someone has come into my
bedchamber.

SERVANT

No, Your Majesty, I swear.

Al-Ghuri SEIZES a dagger lying beside him.

AL-GHURI

This dagger! Who put it there?

SERVANT

I don't know. I was on duty all
night. No one passed me.

AL-GHURI

You were sleeping?

SERVANT

No. I swear.

AL-GHURI

(shouts)

So how did they get in?!

The Servant has no answer.

Al-Ghuri CALMS himself and thinks.

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

If they wanted to kill me they could have, but they didn't... It's a message.

SERVANT

Shall I call the guard, Majesty?

AL-GHURI

What?

SERVANT

Shall I call the guard?

AL-GHURI

Yes. Of course.

The servant SCURRIES to the door and CALLS the guard.

SERVANT

The Sultan wishes you to come.

The Servant COMES BACK to Al-Ghuri who is now sitting on the edge of his bed close to despair.

AL-GHURI

There are spies everywhere. They seep through the walls.

SERVANT

(returning)
Majesty...?

AL-GHURI

I am starting to doubt the very ground that I walk on. Who can I trust anymore? Who can I trust?

SERVANT

You can trust me, Majesty. I have served you all my life and -

AL-GHURI

Yes, yes, yes...
(suddenly alert)
No one must know about this.

SERVANT

Of course. I will tell no one.

AL-GHURI

No, you won't.

Footsteps APPROACHING.

GUARD

At your service, Majesty.

AL-GHURI

(to Guard)

This fellow... take him away. Gag him, sew up his lips, take him to the deepest dungeon, let no one speak with him... pour molten metal in his ears, put out his eyes... let him be silent...

The servant is DRAGGED AWAY WAILING and begging for mercy. The door SLAMS on his cries.

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

How many more betrayals? How many more?

7.4

INT. TUMANBAY. CITY UNDERGROUND - DAY

7.4

In the city below the city there is a constant background rumble of earth and rock shifting and fires below - every so often, near or far, there are eruption. FROG CRIES OUT. FROG'S MOTHER comes running.

GREGOR (V.O.)

A city above, a city below...

FROG'S MOTHER

What is it, my sweet?

FROG

Mama, hold me... hold me.

FROG'S MOTHER

Another dream?

FROG

Another dream.

FROG'S MOTHER

It's nothing, just mist in the sun, my little Frog.

FROG

There's no sun here under the city, Mother, and no mist, and my dreams are real, you know that.

FROG'S MOTHER

They are dreams, you'll grow out of them. I promise.

FROG

But I won't, I have dreamed that too.

FROG'S MOTHER

Sleep now. Soon everything will be good, and all manner of things will be good.

Frog GETS OUT of bed.

FROG

Nothing will be good and there will be all manner of horrors. I have seen it. I must tell the Sultan.

FROG'S MOTHER

Are you mad, my dear sweet child? We cannot leave here, we are safe...

FROG

He will come, he will take me.

FROG'S MOTHER

What are you talking about? The Sultan will come here?

FROG

Someone else will come and he will take me.

FROG'S MOTHER

What? Who?

FROG

The man who murdered Papa, he will come. He will take me.

7.5 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. GREGOR'S ROOMS - DAY

7.5

GREGOR wakes suddenly DISTRAUGHT...

GREGOR

Qulan, no... no...

GREGOR (V.O.)

Three dreams - connected, but how?

HAMMERING at the door.

GREGOR

Go away, damn you.

Feature Gregor's BREATHING - as he gets it under control.

He PULLS himself out of bed, goes to a bowl of water and POURS it over his head.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

It was just a dream...

The KNOCKING is still there.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

What is it?

The door OPENS. A GUARD APPROACHES.

GUARD

Excellency, I am to give you this.

GREGOR

What?

GUARD

A coin, Sir. The one who brought it said you would know-

GREGOR

Yes. I know... yes.

Calms himself. CLOSES door.

GREGOR (V.O.)

I have meetings today. The Sultan - he needs reassurance, he needs *my* reassurance. The envoy, what the hell is he up to? Important...

FLIPS coin. Ping...

GREGOR (V.O.)

But this is more important...

7.6 **OPENING TITLES - MUSIC**

7.6

ANNOUNCER

Tumanbay, Episode 7. "A Tale of Two Cities", by Mike Walker.

7.7 INT. IBN'S HOUSE - DAY

7.7

We follow Gregor as he CROSSES the street to Ibn's house.

IBN is POURING coffee when Gregor is ADMITTED. He LOOKS UP.

IBN

Gregor. Coffee? It is the finest, from...

GREGOR

Enough of your coffee. You sent your man with my coin.

IBN

I did.

GREGOR

Well, where is the slave-girl?

IBN

It isn't that. She isn't here.

Gregor RUSHES across the room - coffee things GO FLYING as he GRABS Ibn.

GREGOR

What else is there? The slut came for her baby and you gave it to her? Is that it?

IBN

Do you think I would have called you if that had been so?

Gregor RELEASES him.

GREGOR

She came and left the baby? I don't believe you. I told you what I would do to the child if you lied to me.

IBN

Come with me.

He GOES out of the room. Gregor hesitates.

IBN (CONT'D)

(off)

Come with me?

Gregor FOLLOWS.

MUSIC swells.

7.8 INT. IBN'S HOUSE. INNER ROOM - DAY

7.8

Ibn and Gregor ENTER. The Nursemaid, SABIRA, stands. The baby is there.

IBN

Sabira is the nurse. She has a message for you.

GREGOR

Well, girl?

A pause as Sabira doesn't answer.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

What's the matter with her?

IBN

She doesn't speak your language.

He speaks to Sabira in a "foreign" language.

IBN (CONT'D)

Sabira, what happened last night?

SABIRA

You know what happened, Sir.

IBN

Tell me again, so the Effendi can hear your words, though he cannot understand them.

SABIRA

I was visited by a Djinn from the spirit world in the form of an old woman.

GREGOR

Djinns? Spirits? What's she talking about?

IBN

She says the spirit gave her a message.

SABIRA

It is so, Master, as I told you before.

GREGOR

What message?

SABIRA

She tells me, he is to bring the baby. To the city of the dead.

IBN

She says you are to bring the baby to the City of the Dead.

GREGOR

Nonsense. What "City of the dead"?

SABIRA

Oh sir it is true, everyone knows there is a city of the dead down there.

(Plain speak)

Down, people, all dead peoples, in down.

GREGOR

These are old wife's tales, things to scare children and maids.

(MORE)

GREGOR (CONT'D)

There's nothing in the catacombs except a few starving prisoners scabbling in the dark.

IBN

Nevertheless, Your Excellency, that's where you are to take her child.

GREGOR

Why should I?

SABIRA

(Plain speak)

Mama wait - you do, she gives... what you want.

7.8A EXT. TUMANBAY. IBN'S HOUSE. COURTYARD - DAY

7.8A

Ibn and Gregor EMERGE.

IBN

Sabira tells me they come up in the darkness and forage for food - they use the water and sewage systems and the old caves. She says all the servants know of it and many leave scraps out so their houses aren't bothered.

Gregor is STRUGGLING to lift a grating.

IBN (CONT'D)

I don't think they come up here though.

Gregor MOVES it.

GREGOR

Footholds, hand holds. I can hear water down there... and maybe...

Pause as he LISTENS.

IBN

What are you doing?

GREGOR

Have you ever been down?

He's beginning to CLIMB DOWN.

IBN

Of course not. It's crazy, it's dangerous down there... stop, come back...

Gregor's voice has a bit of an echo as he GOES DOWN.

GREGOR

It's dark, very dark.

IBN

There are tunnels that go nowhere,
they say and pits and fire... I
don't know but it's madness to go
down alone, without a light. They
say they feed off bodies... so
Sabira says.

Gregor CLIMBS OUT and PUTS the grill back under:

GREGOR

And did she say, your Sabira, if
there's a better way in? A safer
way?

IBN

She said there was, by the old
temple.

GREGOR

Then that's where we're going.

IBN

Look, do you think you should? It's
a baby. It's not safe for her.
She's safe here.

GREGOR

Do you think I care about the baby?

Gregor LEAVES.

IBN

(stutters - calling)
Please!

7.9

INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. AL-GHURI'S CHAMBERS - DAY

7.9

Dishes are PLACED in front of the Sultan. Water is POURED
into a goblet. The PHYSICIAN and TASTER attend to al-Ghuri.

PHYSICIAN

Will you not eat, Majesty?

AL-GHURI

These are the same dates that
poisoned my nephew... how can I
trust them, how can I trust any of
you?

TASTER

But Majesty, I have tasted these dates. If the food were poisoned, I would die.

PHYSICIAN

He speaks the truth, Sire.

AL-GHURI

So you say, Doctor, but what if it were a poison that took... an hour, a day to act, what then?

PHYSICIAN

Your Majesty, you are out of sorts?

AL-GHURI

I can assure you I am not; I am thinking clearly for once. "Trust"... What is trust, eh? Can I trust any one of you?

Several SERVANTS all murmur: *"Yes, yes, you can trust me... I would die for you..."* etc.

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

I have enemies all around me. The hand that offers dates may as well proffer a dagger!

PHYSICIAN

Your Majesty, you have been under a great strain of late.

AL-GHURI

It's true. This threat of war... the burden I have to carry is great.

Physician CLAPS his hands. A Servant brings a bowl of petals.

PHYSICIAN

These petals, Majesty, from a rose grown only in the snowy mountains, smell them, they will calm-

Al-Ghuri KNOCKS the bowl out of his hand.

AL-GHURI

Go! Get out, all of you. Go!

They HURRY out past Qulan who STOPS at the door.

QULAN

May I enter, Sire? Or do you wish to be alone?

AL-GHURI

I wish to be safe, General. Yes, enter. These fools, I can't have them around me any more. I don't know who to trust.

He SIGHS and eats a date.

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

(gasps)

I just ate a date without even thinking!

QULAN

Well they look very good, Sire.

AL-GHURI

But what if they are poisoned? One moment of inattention-

QULAN

May I?

Qulan TAKES a date and CHEWS.

QULAN (CONT'D)

Then we are both dead men.

AL-GHURI

Ah but maybe you know which dates are poisoned and which are not?

QULAN

If you can tell dates apart you are a shrewder judge than I, Majesty. But may we get to business and leave our digestions to God?

AL-GHURI

Very well, General. What news?

He takes more dates and DRINKS.

QULAN

Commander Wolf's scouts inform him that Maya's forces have crossed the borders into the Emerald province.

AL-GHURI

So you say.

QULAN

He says so and I trust him. I believe we need to hit her now and hit her hard. I need to get back to the army, Sire.

AL-GHURI

I don't know. Perhaps we should concentrate on finding this reliquary and handing it over to give us time.

QULAN

We don't need time, she does.

AL-GHURI

She has spies in the city. She'll know all we do. They've already killed my chief wife, we could all be murdered in our beds.

QULAN

If her spies killed Shajar, then she already has the reliquary.

AL-GHURI

What do you mean?

QULAN

It was in her possession.

AL-GHURI

(his suspicions go
stratospheric)
How can you know that?

QULAN

I am your General, it is my business to know these things.

AL-GHURI

Perhaps you know too much, General?

QULAN

I know what I must to defend Tumanbay and your throne.

Out of nowhere it seems, Cadali APPEARS.

CADALI

Does His Majesty's throne need defending?

AL-GHURI

Yes, where is your brother, General? We need to double the guards, treble them. Cadali, where were you?

CADALI

Awaiting your summons, Majesty. As for Gregor... I do not know.

(MORE)

CADALI (CONT'D)

We were meant to meet this morning to discuss certain matters of security. Perhaps he is searching for spies. Not that he's had much success.

AL-GHURI

And the Envoy?

CADALI

Effendi Red is waiting outside. Shall I call him?

AL-GHURI

We have nothing to offer until we find what he seeks.

QULAN

Majesty, this is..

(searches for word)

... inadvisable. This reliquary - did anyone ever go to war for a box? Wars are fought for territory and control. She is trying to divide and confuse, she wants to plant fear and mistrust to weaken our resolve. She'll keep offering us this and that to ensure we stay behind the walls of Tumanbay looking inwards whilst her forces advance.

CADALI

That is one possible course of action but there are others. I am not a distinguished military man like you, General, but it seems to me that this rush to arms betrays our fear of Maya. Let her come to us, we are not afraid of her. To respond first shows weakness; to stand as a city that has stood invulnerable for thousands of years, that shows our power! We'll root out her spies and then we will see.

QULAN

Cut off her damned head and put it on a lance and then we'll see. Give me permission to go back to my army.

AL-GHURI

Your army?! No, no, I want to keep you close, where I can see you. Tell the Envoy to come back tomorrow morning...

(MORE)

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)
and find the reliquary ...and send
me the physician.

They GO.

7.10 EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

7.10

Jackals HOWL in the distance. A wind blows. SLAVE, HEAVEN and BOY huddle around a fire. It crackles as Slave THROWS a scrap of wood on it.

HEAVEN
That won't burn for long. And the
nights are freezing out here.

SLAVE
Would you rather be back in your
cage? Wood is hard to find in a
desert.

BOY
There, over there, what is that?
See? Like the first light of dawn.

HEAVEN
On the horizon. I see it.

BOY
Is that it, is that the city? Are
those the lights of Tumanbay?

SLAVE
How should I know? You ask too many
questions. Maybe you need a good
slapping.

He starts to CLIMB to his feet - the dogs GROWL. The boy CALMS them.

HEAVEN
Stop it. We're a family. You have
to stop behaving like you're a king
or something.

SLAVE
I was a king once.

HEAVEN
I know, you've told us. And now
you're not.

Slave PACES with frustration.

SLAVE
It is Tumanbay. We'll be at the
gates tomorrow.

HEAVEN

And then?

SLAVE

And then we'll find your family.
That's what you want, isn't it?

HEAVEN

I, I suppose... yes, of course it
is.

BOY

What about me?

SLAVE

You can take your dogs and join a
circus or something. You'll be
fine.

HEAVEN

What about you?

SLAVE

I have some business to settle.

HEAVEN

The man who betrayed you - he was
from Tumanbay, wasn't he?

SLAVE

He killed my people and took our
land. Above all things on this
earth I want to look into his eyes
as I push the point of a sword into
his throat.

HEAVEN

And then?

SLAVE

Then? Then I don't know.

The Boy GETS UP, WHISTLES - WALKS OFF with the dogs.

HEAVEN

What...

Off we hear the Boy.

BOY

(off)
Go now. Be free.

The dogs WHIMPER.

BOY (CONT'D)

Go hunt and kill and be full and
free. Go... go...

The dogs RUN OFF into the night. Boy RETURNS to the fire.

HEAVEN

Why did you do that? They were your dogs.

BOY

They wouldn't be happy in the circus. Now they'll be their own masters and have their own way.

SLAVE

We could have sold them, Boy.

BOY

They were not for sale.

SLAVE

That fire won't last much longer. Better wrap up and get some sleep and tomorrow we'll see about Tumanbay.

7.11 EXT. TUMANBAY. TEMPLE OF SOLACE - NIGHT

7.11

Gregor, CARRYING the baby, WALKS slowly across the empty square in front of the temple. An OLD MAN greets him.

OLD MAN

Do you come seeking solitude at the Temple of Solace, my son? You don't look as if you need alms or food.

GREGOR

How do you know what I look like? You've no eyes.

OLD MAN

(laughs)

There are more ways of seeing than with those lumps of jelly, Sir. I listen and I feel the air and I smell...

He SNIFFS...

GREGOR

Yes, you do.

OLD MAN

I have served here for many years, there's not much I haven't "seen".

GREGOR

So what else do you see?

SNIFFS again.

OLD MAN

A fine man in the pomp of his
years; clever, powerful...

(sniffs)

... with a child? Hmm, a man who
has lost something valuable.

GREGOR

It seems to me, old man, that you
know a sight too much for your own
good.

OLD MAN

All I know, Sir, is what you tell
me yourself. What you have lost,
what weaves a thread of fear in the
scent of power and privilege you
carry with you, that is something
else, from long ago.

GREGOR

Enough of this, tell me something
useful.

The Old Man RATTLES his collection bowl.

OLD MAN

Alms for the temple?

The CHING of a coin in a bowl.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Gold, then?

GREGOR

I expect good value for my money. I
want to get into the under city.

OLD MAN

(laughs)

No, Sir, you do not.

Gregor DRAWS his SWORD.

GREGOR

Can you smell the steel? You've
wasted enough of my time.

OLD MAN

Very well, Sir. Go into the temple.
Go to the winding stair. At the
foot of the steps is a wooden door
set into the stone. This key will
open it - you will see that the
stairs wind down as well as up.
Leave the key in the lock and shut
the trap behind you.

GREGOR
I'll need the key to get out again.

OLD MAN
(laughs)
You won't get out, not on your own.

7.12 INT. TUMANBAY. CITY UNDERGROUND - NIGHT

7.12

A heavy door OPENS and CLOSES. As before the constant background rumble. Gregor's boot heels as he DESCENDS the last of the stairs and steps onto a gritty stone floor. He WALKS - and STOPS. Off, a child's LAUGH.

GREGOR
Hello? Hello?

Silence. He starts WALKING again. Then STOPS. The sound of someone RUNNING past.

GREGOR (CONT'D)
You, stop!

The LAUGH again. He starts forward and turns a corner. WHISPERS and words echo over and against each other like a hot wind from different VOICES:

VOICE 1
Who comes?

Gregor STEPS closer.

GREGOR
(calls out)
I mean you no harm.

VOICE 2
What harm?

VOICE 3
Who could harm us?

GREGOR
I am looking for someone. If you help me there will be no trouble.
(beat)
A slave girl. Sarah, her name is Sarah. I have her child here.
(beat)
Her name is Sarah.

The OLD WOMAN APPEARS.

OLD WOMAN
Why do you look where you cannot see?

GREGOR

She... she's under my protection...

The Old Woman CACKLES. They are very close...

OLD WOMAN

The baby, give us the child...

RAPID FOOTSTEPS. The baby starts to CRY. Someone SNATCHES the baby.

GREGOR

Leave her alone... leave her...

They start to GO - like wind in tunnels.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Wait, the child... give her back,
she's mine... give her back, I need
her... come back.

His words ECHO - they are gone.

He STARTS forwards. Bats FLUTTER past his head - he CRIES OUT involuntarily.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Get away, get away...

He WALKS forward and the echo of his steps changes as the space becomes vast around him. A door clangs SHUT.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Where are you? Show yourselves. I
am the Master of the Palace Guard.

VOICE 2

(very close)
Not down here.

GREGOR

I'll have you... I'll have you
arrested and...

Even he can see how pointless this is.

VOICE 2

Most of us have been arrested
already...

The eerie FOOTSTEPS of people CIRCLING him.

OLD WOMAN

And we know who you are, Gregor,
son of No-Man.

VOICE 2

Welcome to the grave.

SCUTTling and scraping.

GREGOR

Get back, I'm warning you...

OLD WOMAN

Your warning days are over.

VOICE 2

You must answer the charges.

GREGOR

What are you talking about?

OLD WOMAN

There must be charges to answer.

GREGOR

You can't charge me, I am Master of the Sultan's Guard...

SCRAPING and RATTling continues in the darkness.

OLD WOMAN

Ankur, will you be the judge?

VOICE 2

Yes. It will be my honour. And you?

OLD WOMAN

I am the Sultan. You can judge and I will pass sentence.

GREGOR

(shouting above crowd)

This is madness. Who are you people? You have no right! I know nothing about any crimes, you, you, who are you to try me?

VOICE 1

Who will lay the charges?

VOICE 3

I will.

VOICE 1

Who are you?

VOICE 3

A free man of the underworld like you.

VOICE 1

What are the charges?

VOICE 3

That you, Gregor No-man, murdered the good man who took you into his house and educated you and gave you a future...

GREGOR

What? Who?

VOICE 1

Do you deny it?

GREGOR

I... I... He was.. He beat us, he was cruel, evil, I had no choice, I...

VOICE 3

That as Master of the Palace Guard you have caused many to die and languish in prison for no reason other than to instil fear.

GREGOR

Not languish, this is policy, for the greater good. There are enemies everywhere. If you show weakness, anarchy rules. There must be control and-

FROG

And what about poor Basim?

GREGOR

Basim? Who's Basim?

FROG

Am officer of the palace Guard. A good soldier. Loyal to his masters. He was strangled in the dungeons.

GREGOR

Well he must have done something otherwise he wouldn't have been in a dungeon.

VOICE 2

The prisoner should remember where he stands at this moment. He is not helping his case.

GREGOR

(bellows)

Damn my case and damn you too. Basim, Basim, who the hell is Basim?

FROG

One mistake he made. He allowed an Envoy into the presence of the Sultan without a search.

GREGOR

Oh, that one. Yes, you cannot keep discipline unless people fear the consequences of their actions. The Envoy carried a severed head. He threw it in front of the Sultan. Someone had to pay.

(beat)

He *failed* to protect the Sultan!

OLD WOMAN

As you failed to protect the Sultan's wife.

VOICE 1

Next charge?

VOICE 3

That you, Gregor, did lay waste a nation. You gave your word to a king and you broke it. You took his country and you enslaved his people.

GREGOR

That's diplomacy... I was just doing my job! I was serving my Sultan.

VOICE 1

Down here you answer to a different master.

GREGOR

Who are you? The dregs and drainings of Tumanbay. Do your worst, I wouldn't waste my spit on you.

VOICE 1

You have no more to say?

Pause.

OLD WOMAN

Then you have sentenced yourself to the worst that we can do...

The unearthly rumble of the undercity SWELLS.

7.13 EXT. WALLS OUTSIDE TUMANBAY - DAY

7.13

Heaven, Slave, and the Boy APPROACH the walls. There are crowds here - camels and donkeys, horses passing, stalls selling kofta and kibbeh and sherbets and conjurers performing as well as a rider passing through fast, blowing a horn to clear the way. They pass a STALL HOLDER.

STALL HOLDER

Sweets and coffee, falafel and cool crystal clear water, the finest sherbets, sweet cheese and soured onions... mint tea, tea from the orient...

BOY

The walls go on forever... and the towers really do touch the clouds...

HEAVEN

My father always said it was the greatest city in the world.

BOY

It must be. There's no end to it... And all these people, what do they want?

SLAVE

They want to make a living just like everyone else.

HEAVEN

We can eat when we get to my father's house... we'll eat like kings and queens!

SLAVE

Right now I'd settle for breakfast.

HEAVEN

(pointing)
Over there.

They APPROACH a stall.

HEAVEN (CONT'D)

(to Stall Holder)
Three kofta, please and a skin of water.

STALL HOLDER

With pine nuts, a wise choice. And the finest water this side of-

SLAVE

Yeah, after it's passed through a camel.

STALL HOLDER

(laughs)

For a man with such a sweet, young wife you've a sour nature, friend.

She PAYS him. Then PASSES food around and they EAT and DRINK as they MOVE through crowds.

BOY

Where do we get in? Mmm, is everything this good in Tumanbay?

SLAVE

There's a gate there... people are going through that way.

BOY

Are all the gates that big in Tumanbay?

Slave KICKS him.

BOY (CONT'D)

Owww!

SLAVE

Are all the boots that heavy in Tumanbay?

Slave and Heaven LAUGH.

BOY

That's not funny.

HEAVEN

Come on, we're almost home.

SLAVE

You're almost home.

HEAVEN

My home is your home. I know my father will welcome you both.

Off we can hear a Guard.

GUARD

Papers. Come on, papers. Keep it moving... keep moving.

BOY

What are papers?

SLAVE

Some kind of pass or permission to show you have business in a place.

BOY

But we don't.

HEAVEN

I'll talk to them, it'll be all right.

They are at the gate, and STOPPED by a Guard.

GUARD

Papers?

HEAVEN

We're together, my father lives in the city.

GUARD

Papers.

HEAVEN

He's a merchant by the name of Ibn Bai. He will pay whatever is needed, if we can only go through -

GUARD

No papers, you can't go through. Next!

Guard turns and PROCESSES the people next in line.

HEAVEN

I was kidnapped, please - my father's a merchant-

SLAVE

Leave it. Don't make a fuss, don't be noticed.

HEAVEN

So close... We're so close... it's not fair!

BOY

There must be other ways in.

SLAVE

We'll wait, we'll think of something.

GRASSIC APPROACHES them.

GRASSIC

Ah, it can be hard, eh?

SLAVE

What?

GRASSIC

To come all this way to the
greatest city in the world and then
to find...

(snaps his fingers)

Boff! There is no way in. Used to
be easy, you could just walk
through, as they say.

HEAVEN

Used to be?

GRASSIC

There's been some... well, how
would you say... "problems", it
seems. Out on the far borders.
Rumours of war. So everything's
been tightened up. Terrible for
trade but there you are, as they
say.

SLAVE

And here we are.

BOY

As they say.

GRASSIC

Indeed they do, my pretty boy,
indeed they do. Terrible times for
us merchants. Like your father, I
heard you say he was in business?

HEAVEN

Oh yes, perhaps you know him?

GRASSIC

What's his name?

HEAVEN

Ibn of the House of Abi Talib.

GRASSIC

Ibn... Ibn...

HEAVEN

He's very well respected.

GRASSIC

And he trades in?

HEAVEN

Slaves.

GRASSIC

I'm sure we've met, the name, as it were... And these are your followers?

HEAVEN

We are friends. But we have no papers and we need to get in.

GRASSIC

Well, there's always a way, as you might put it.

HEAVEN

We have money.

GRASSIC

No, no, no, no, no. We're not interested in your money, my dear girl.

HEAVEN

What would you want?

GRASSIC

We'll be happy to help...

SLAVE

Why?

GRASSIC

You can provide me with a service.

HEAVEN

(suspicion)

What kind of service?

GRASSIC

We are happy to help people who can help us - really, there's no catch. Look, you talk it over...

BOY

As they say...

GRASSIC

As they do, as they do - and I'll wait. Take it or, as you could say, leave it. There's my tent, I'll be there if I can be of service.

He WALKS away, CHUCKLING.

HEAVEN

Can we trust him?

SLAVE

No, but we still need to get into the city. I'll talk to him.

HEAVEN

You're sure?

SLAVE

I'm sure of nothing. Except that we can wait forever outside the gate and never get in and two of us, at least, want to get in very much. Wait here.

He GOES.

BOY

Can we trust *him*?

HEAVEN

I trust him. We've been through a lot together.

BOY

He wants to kill a man. Maybe he won't care how many other people he hurts to do that. People are like that when they want something a lot.

HEAVEN

What do you want?

BOY

I want to fly.

HEAVEN

(laughs)
Nobody flies.

BOY

Well that's what I want.

Slave RETURNS.

SLAVE

All right, I've worked it out. Come on.

They FOLLOW him.

HEAVEN

What did he want?

SLAVE

We are pledged to do certain tasks for him once we are in the city.

(MORE)

SLAVE (CONT'D)

For three moons - and when that time has passed our obligation will be paid.

BOY

And if we don't do what he asks?

SLAVE

We will. They will make sure of it. We are not the only people they have working for them. Don't worry. Come...

They GO into the tent.

GRASSIC

Ah, very good.

He PULLS OUT papers - WRITES and stamps.

GRASSIC (CONT'D)

We can say you two are brother and sister... Now I just need to....

Metal seal CLAMPED in place.

GRASSIC (CONT'D)

Good, that's done and that... Here you are...

He HANDS OVER the forged documents.

SLAVE

Is this it?

GRASSIC

Oh, they work every time. Look through it, be familiar. Hmm?

SLAVE

As they say?

Grassic LAUGHS.

GRASSIC

Oh very good, Sir, you are a man who appreciates the nature of the jest. Now, you two come with me...

SLAVE

The money?

GRASSIC

Of course.

He THROWS a pouch of gold coins.

HEAVEN

Wait, I don't understand. What's-

GRASSIC

You don't need to, as long as you can lie on your back with your legs open. You'll make a fine show, you and your little brother.

HEAVEN

(screams out)

You can't... you can't.

SLAVE

I'll tell you once, bitch. You talk too much - from that first moment, whine, whine, whine ever since we came ashore. You and the boy - I don't need you, I don't want a family, get it? Now I'm rid of you both.

BOY

What's he done?

GRASSIC

He sold you. Don't worry, everyone's a slave in Tumanbay. Who knows where you might end up?

Heaven THROWS herself on Slave.

HEAVEN

I hope you die, I hate you... I hate you...

Grassic GRABS her.

GRASSIC

Be still or I'll bind you. Is everything satisfactory?

SLAVE

Perfectly. Let us shake hands on it as we do in my country.

They do so - Grassic GRUNTS...

GRASSIC

Uh, my friend, you are hurting me... uh... ahhhhh

Slave GRASPS his neck and, with a loud click, WRINGS it. Heaven GASPS as the body FALLS.

HEAVEN

What have you done?

SLAVE

Killed him. You didn't think I'd sell you? Now, shall we test these papers before his friends come back?

BOY

As they say.

7.14 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. COUNCIL ROOM - DAY

7.14

The Council is seated. Al-Ghuri, Cadali, and Qulan wait. A servant fetches the Envoy from outside.

SERVANT

(to Envoy)

His Majesty will see you now.

The Servant and Envoy ENTER the Council Room.

SERVANT (CONT'D)

Your Majesty, His Excellency Effendi Red. Lord Red, please stand here...

ENVOY

Do we really have time for these formal dances?

CADALI

Perhaps formality has a purpose - it ensures at least a measure of respect.

The Envoy SNORTS with derision.

ENVOY

Your Majesty, I made it plain to your man Gregor - where is he by the way?

A pause as no one answers.

ENVOY (CONT'D)

Well he obviously didn't pass the message on. I must be my own messenger, it seems. Maya has made it known that with each day that passes her terms will become less generous...

(beat)

But... she has decided to be merciful.

AL-GHURI

(with mocking gratitude)

Oh, oh...?

(MORE)

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

Should I fall to my knees? Should I
kiss her ass now? Please tell me,
what form does this mercy take?

ENVOY

Give me the reliquary now,
recognise Maya's legitimate right
to govern Amber Province and lead
her people and she will withdraw.

CADALI

(sotto)

This is a clear sign, Majesty, that
she is running scared. She has lost
her nerve.

ENVOY

This is all she has ever wanted.

QULAN

You can't believe him; it's not
true.

CADALI

Be silent, General. I'll handle
this.

(to Envoy)

We need time.

ENVOY

Your man Gregor was meant to meet
me this morning - he wasn't there.
Am I to understand that he is
seeking what is lost?

CADALI

Gregor is pursuing his duties. That
is all.

ENVOY

I leave you to your discussions.

He TURNS.

AL-GHURI

(bellowed)

I have not dismissed you yet!

ENVOY

You have until this time tomorrow.

He LEAVES.

AL-GHURI

He treats me like... like...

(beat)

I swear he will suffer as no man
has ever suffered in this world...

(MORE)

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

There will not be one part of his
flesh that does not scream for
death by the time I have him strung
up...

QULAN

Majesty, I beg you, let me do my
job and get back to the army.

AL-GHURI

You stay.

7.15 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. CORRIDOR - DAY

7.15

WOLF APPROACHES a Guard outside the Council Room. We hear Al-Ghuri ranting through the door.

AL-GHURI

(off)

You stay where I can see you. All
of you!

WOLF

Still in there, are they?

GUARD

Yes, Sir.

WOLF

How long do these things usually
take?

GUARD

(snorts)

They take as long as they take.

Wolf SEIZES the guard.

WOLF

You are not being very helpful,
guard.

The door BURSTS OPEN and Qulan STRIDES OUT, SLAMMING it
behind him. He STRIDES along the corridor. Wolf JOINS him.

WOLF (CONT'D)

What happened in there. General?
Are we ready to ride?

QULAN

No.

WOLF

What do you mean?

QULAN

We are not going back to the army.

WOLF

We're not going? That's crazy.

Qulan TAKES Wolf into a window embrasure - he speaks urgently but quietly.

MUSIC swells.

QULAN

The Sultan is a frightened man, scared for his own life. A man who is afraid to die will never be any good in a fight. Our greatest weakness is our leader. Well, I've said it now. Treason, Commander.

WOLF

More like common sense, General. You know where my loyalty lies.

QULAN

Indeed. Come. We need to talk.

They LEAVE.

7.16 EXT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. STABLES - DAY

7.16

They WALK past horses and grooms.

WOLF

There has been too much talk. Now it's time to act.

QULAN

What are you saying?

WOLF

We return to the army. Prepare for battle. We engage and destroy Maya's forces. If the Sultan can't give the command, you must!

QULAN

A man would be guilty of treason to act in such a way.

WOLF

As you said: a man who is afraid to die is no leader. Be a leader, General. It's simple enough. If we cannot go to the army, order the army to come to us. I have a messenger saddled and ready to ride.

7.17 EXT. TUMANBAY. QULAN'S HOUSE. GARDEN - DAY

7.17

The fountain plays, there are bird calls. DANIEL and MANEL are seated.

DANIEL

The last time we talked, Manel, you were upset. If it was anything I said...

MANEL

No, no it wasn't. Please don't concern yourself about-

DANIEL

But I do. I don't want you to be upset. I care about you, Manel. You have been kind to me.

MANEL

It was no trouble... I mean, I am happy to take trouble...

A pause and then they both LAUGH.

DANIEL

And I am happy that you are happy. When you smile... I am sorry, it is not my place to talk in this way.

MANEL

You can talk about smiles all you want, Daniel.

DANIEL

And kisses? What if I were to talk about kisses, Manel?

A door bangs SHUT off.

MANEL

(gasps)
Father's home.

From off Qulan CALLS.

QULAN

(off)
Daniel. I need to talk with you.

DANIEL

Coming, Sir.
(to Manel)
I'm sorry, duty calls. But you didn't answer my question.

A pause and then she LEANS forward.

MANEL

If anyone saw us doing this...

She KISSES him...

MANEL (CONT'D)

Be safe...

...and then RUNS OFF.

7.18 INT. TUMANBAY. QULAN'S HOUSE. QULAN'S OFFICE - DAY

7.18

Daniel ENTERS.

DANIEL

General.

QULAN

Sit down. Your friend Madu, how is he?

DANIEL

He seems well, Sir.

QULAN

Does he have ambitions?

DANIEL

Hard to tell. He's inclined to sit and write poetry and enjoy himself... but-

QULAN

Stay close to him. He'll be useful to us.

DANIEL

To us, sir?

QULAN

That's right. I am going to save Tumanbay. Of course, if I fail...

DANIEL

I don't understand.

QULAN

You don't need to. Does Madu trust you?

DANIEL

It's hard to be certain.

QULAN

Then you *need* to be certain.

7.19 INT. TUMANBAY. CITY UNDERGROUND - DAY

7.19

Empty cavern except for Gregor in a cage. He RATTLES the bars.

GREGOR

Hello? Is someone there?

The words echo into silence.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**You take a chance. Sometimes it
pays off And sometimes it
doesn't.**

Then off, a door opens, SHUTS. Footsteps - SARAH APPROACHES.

GREGOR

Hello?

SARAH

Hello, my Lord.

The baby GURGLES.

GREGOR

Sarah! They've locked me in here.
They want to... do something... the
worst.. I don't know. You have to
tell them that I brought your baby
back. I saved you...

SARAH

You have an interesting way of
remembering the past.

GREGOR

I brought you into the palace. I
found you a position, a good one. I
looked after you.

SARAH

How you remember things, Gregor.

GREGOR

They want to kill me.

She turns to GO.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Wait!

SARAH

I don't think you're in command any
more.

GREGOR

I brought your baby as you asked...
Now you owe me.

The door UNLOCKS and swings OPEN. Gregor SIGHS with relief.

SARAH

Come with me. There's someone who
wants to see you.

He's out of the cage and GRABS Sarah,

GREGOR

What did you do, you bitch, why did
you have to kill her? What about
the box? The scrolls? Have you got
them?

SARAH

If you want to keep your hands take
them off me now.

He STEPS BACK.

GREGOR

For God's sake, you're my spy,
you're my slave.

SARAH

There are no slaves down here.
You're on your own...

Her voice gets fainter as she MOVES away.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Maybe you'll never get out. Maybe
you'll wander for years going blind
in the dark, eating insects...
before they eat you.

GREGOR

Wait. Wait... Wait, damn you.
(then a plea)
Don't leave me.

A pause.

SARAH

This way, through here... Into the
light.

A door OPENS.

7.20 INT. TUMANBAY. CITY UNDERGROUND. FROG'S CAVE - DAY

7.20

Sarah APPROACHES Frog's Mother.

FROG'S MOTHER

Is it him?

SARAH

Yes.

Frog's Mother GOES into another room.

GREGOR

What's happening, Sarah?

No answer. A door CLOSES.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Sarah?

No answer. He GOES to the door and TRIES the handle - it is locked.

Frog's Mother RETURNS with Frog.

FROG'S MOTHER

This is my son.

Long pause.

GREGOR

Does he speak?

FROG

You had a dream this morning.

GREGOR

What are you talking about? What dream?

FROG

About your brother and something that happened a long time ago.

GREGOR

You're mad, there was no dream. No dream!

FROG

That dream has brought you to me.

GREGOR

Before. You were at that "trial".

FROG

I am the son of the man whose name you couldn't remember.

FROG'S MOTHER

Basim was a good husband, a good father. He was a loyal soldier.

(MORE)

FROG'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Loyal to the Sultan. Loyal to
Tumanbay.

GREGOR

What do you want with me?

FROG

We have a journey to go on.

GREGOR

I don't have time for this. Kill me
if you want but I have better
things to do.

FROG

It doesn't matter. You have no
choice. Everything will happen as I
have seen, just as I saw my
father's death. Oh and the moment
of my death and hers and yours...
I wanted to kill you but I can't
because I have had a vision and I
need to tell the Sultan about it.
You have to take me to him.

GREGOR

Are you insane, boy?

FROG

Here, in my hand, a gold coin. I
turn my hand... and the coin will
fall and there is nothing that will
stop it falling. So it is written
and so I have seen.

He turns his hand, the coin FALLS and rings on the stone
floor - loud, echoing.

7.21 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. MADU'S CHAMBERS - DAY

7.21

Daniel and Madu are in bed KISSING.

DANIEL

I should shave...

MADU

I don't mind your stubble. I'm a
soldier, I'm used to it.

DANIEL

You certainly are!

They LAUGH and roll apart.

MADU

That's how my father died.

DANIEL

In bed with his lover?

MADU

Under the hand of his barber.

DANIEL

He was Al-Ghuri's brother, wasn't he?

MADU

Elder brother. Good ruler, so everyone says. Al-Ghuri was obsessed with my mother - and for whatever reason she plotted with him. Maybe she wanted more power and knew my uncle would give it to her.

DANIEL

They killed him? His brother and his first wife?

MADU

She wasn't the first wife then. There was someone else.

DANIEL

How?

MADU

The barber. They poisoned the blade of his razor and then, one nick and the Sultan died in agony hours later. They were never anywhere near and the barber was long gone. They probably killed him too - as well as the First Wife and her children. Is it any surprise I hate this place? It's a pit of snakes...

DANIEL

It's that, all right.

MADU

I don't want to be Sultan - I just want us to be together and for everyone to leave us alone.

DANIEL

Somehow I don't think that's going to happen.

MADU

Not unless we make it happen.

DANIEL

How?

MADU

Run away.

Daniel KISSES him.

DANIEL

You are the cleverest man in
Tumanbay. Yes, yes, yes!

He LAUGHS delightedly.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Leave the whole lot of them behind.

MADU

But if they caught us - you're a
slave, they'd execute you. I'm all
right but I couldn't bear to lose
you, Daniel.

DANIEL

Then we'd better not get caught.

MADU

No, seriously.

DANIEL

Seriously, Madu, I will go anywhere
with you. Just say the word.

MADU

The word is: I love you.

DANIEL

Yes, I love you.

They KISS.

MUSIC.

End of Episode 1.07.