

# **TUMANBAY**

Episode 1.09 - "The Jaws of Victory"

by

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9.1 EXT. TUMANBAY. PORT - DAY

9.1

Busy dock side scene - unloading ships - carts and mules, slaves etc.

GREGOR (V.O.)

Help, they say, often comes from unlikely sources - gifts from new friends. I say, beware new friends...

9.2 EXT. TUMANBAY. PORT. SHIP'S DECK - DAY

9.2

DON DIEGO is watching the unloading - CREAK of ropes.

DON DIEGO

Be careful with that...

GREGOR (V.O.)

... You never know what they want in return.

DON DIEGO

We've not brought it seven hundred leagues to have some oaf drop it!

DONA ANA JOINS him.

DONA ANA

This place stinks, Diego.

DON DIEGO

My dear Dona Ana, all ports stink. They stink of trade and profit.

Off we hear a SLAVER BELLOW and the crack of his WHIP.

SLAVER

Get moving, damn your useless hides... *move!*

DONA ANA

Not for those poor devils.

The WHIP again.

DON DIEGO

They all start out as slaves... Some of them end up as Generals, Sultans... anything really.

DONA ANA

It's a dangerous idea, Diego; there is an order to society, overturn that and you risk anarchy.

A CREAK and a THUD, off.

SLAVER

(off)  
Gently, Calsior!

DON DIEGO

It is a sight to have seen, eh? The walls of Tumanbay, the painted towers, the... what do they say, "a million rooftops reflecting the sun..."

DONA ANA

Very poetical for a man in your line of work. You know what I think?

DON DIEGO

No one knows what you think, Ana.

DONA ANA

I think it's all held together by a web of fear and ambition and obligation that seems to them like... the ropes that hold the weight of your precious cargo but that are, in fact, as light and airy as spider's silk floating on the morning wind. And as fragile.

She LAUGHS.

DONA ANA (CONT'D)

You're not the only one can spout poetry, Diego. But it still stinks, to me. But not of money, it stinks of death.

DON DIEGO

Well, isn't that the business we're in?

9.2A **OPENING TITLES - MUSIC**

9.2A

**ANNOUNCER**

**Tumanbay, Episode 9. "The Jaws of Victory", by Mike Walker.**

9.3 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. GREGOR'S ROOM - DAY

9.3

FROG is BOUNCING a ball off the wall and floor: thump-thump-catch, thump-thump-catch. GREGOR is WRITING.

GREGOR

Will you stop that noise, please.

Frog doesn't.

FROG

I want to go back now.

GREGOR

You can't.

FROG

Why do you say that?

GREGOR

The Sultan wants you here in case he needs to ask a question.

FROG

He can send a message if he needs me. I'm ready to go home now.

Thump-thump-catch, thump-thump-catch. Gregor STOPS writing.

GREGOR

It doesn't work like that in Tumanbay. If the Sultan wants you here, here you will stay, and it's my job as Master of the Palace Guard to carry out the Sultan's wishes. So you will remain here for as long as His Majesty deems it necessary. And will you stop bouncing that ball.

Frog doesn't.

FROG

I want to go back. *Now.*

GREGOR

(sighs with annoyance)  
I will look after you, you'll be quite safe. I can send a message to-

FROG

I have dreamt this. We will go back. You will take me back.

GREGOR

Well no, actually, I won't. So what does that say about your dreams?

Feature the ball BOUNCING.

FROG

You will, because more than anything you want the scrolls.

Thump-thump-catch and then silence as Frog lets the ball drop and ROLL.

GREGOR (V.O.)

I don't like this child. And yet I am dependent on him - even getting back underground is only possible because he's leading me...

(beat)

... and I have never liked being led.

9.4 INT. TUMANBAY. CITY UNDERGROUND - DAY

9.4

The THRUMMING as before. They WALK down the last steps of the spiral staircase then start out along the passage. There are WHISPERS and hisses around them. Gregor DRAWS his sword.

FROG

Put your sword away. Keep walking. No one will hurt you while you're with me.

A creepy LAUGH off.

FROG (CONT'D)

Besides, I have seen your death. You are quite safe...

(beat)

... for now.

They WALK on through the sibilant darkness. At last:

GREGOR

This death of mine that you've seen? Am I old or young?

FROG

Neither old nor young.

GREGOR

And... what is the nature of my death?

FROG

A wise man wouldn't want to know.

Gregor STOPS.

GREGOR

But of course he would. If you knew for certain when you would die...

FROG

Everything would be impossible for you.

GREGOR

Tell me.

FROG

You will fall a great distance...

GREGOR

Fall to my death? From the city walls?

FROG

... Before you die. But first you will meet one who wishes to mend that which was broken.

Pause as they WALK then Gregor bursts out:

GREGOR

Why can't you damned prophets ever be plain and clear?

FROG

Because nothing is plain and clear in the world. The one who wishes to mend is high above you.

GREGOR

How will I know him?

FROG

He will know you.

GREGOR

And will he kill me?

FROG

Perhaps he will kill what you value most.

GREGOR

What's that, my position, my reputation?

FROG

You will know when the time comes, I have seen it. We are here.

A big door creaks OPEN. FROG'S MOTHER GREETs him.

FROG'S MOTHER

I knew you would come back, my little Froggy.

She HUGS him.

GREGOR

You see, I have brought him back just as I promised.

FROG'S MOTHER

Perhaps... and perhaps not.

GREGOR

I was wondering... now that I'm here, could I see the girl Sarah and her baby? I have news of her brother she will want to hear.

A long pause.

FROG

Yes, let him see her. Take him, Mother, so his foot does not stray.

9.5

INT. TUMANBAY. CITY UNDERGROUND - DAY

9.5

Gregor is being LED through a cavernous chamber by Frog's Mother.

FROG'S MOTHER

This way...

There is a roar of fire and Gregor STUMBLES. She GRABS him and PULLS him back.

FROG'S MOTHER

Careful...

GREGOR

What in God's name is that?

They WALK on.

FROG'S MOTHER

It's the chasm. There's fire down there, no one knows how deep. Sometimes it rears up like a dragon...

GREGOR

Like the mouth of hell.

FROG'S MOTHER

Over there... Go, she will be there waiting.

GREGOR

What if it's a trap?

FROG'S MOTHER

I have brought you here, just as I promised. Go... if you wish to see her.

He starts WALKING forward - the chasm belches flames again. He comes to a HALT. SARAH is waiting in the darkness.

GREGOR

Hello? Hello?

Sarah's baby GURGLES.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Are you here?

SARAH

What do you want, Gregor?

GREGOR

You deserted me last time before I could give you news of your brother.

SARAH

What news?

GREGOR

Do you have the scrolls?

Silence.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

I am the Sultan's representative and he demands their return.

SARAH

If you want the scrolls it's for your own power.

GREGOR

I'm trying to help you. Give me the scrolls and I'll leave you and your child alone.

SARAH

(sarcasm)

I'm indebted to you.

GREGOR

If you want to make it difficult I can return with an army and march this whole rats nest of thieves and vagabonds out in chains.

A silence.

SARAH

Once, there was a Teacher who rather than sit in the temple went to the market place one day and told the people that there is only one god. He doesn't want gold and silver and huge temples and statues, he wants the hearts of men and women. Men and women who were not afraid to die for their beliefs because they knew they would die blessed.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

And he wrote all these things down on two scrolls, and over the years these scrolls became the most sacred relics to the believers.

Sarah is COMFORTING her baby who is fractious.

SARAH (CONT'D)

And that is why the Sultan will lose Tumanbay and why Maya will triumph in the end.

GREGOR

(fascinated by her)

Who are you? You were never a slave girl, that's for certain. Is anything you say the truth?

SARAH

Aren't you the man who can find the truth?

GREGOR

Yes, that's what I do.

SARAH

Tell me, they said you murdered a good man who was your benefactor.

GREGOR

He was a bad man, he abused us both...

He falls silent.

SARAH

*Only the truth will do now.*

GREGOR

Yes, he bought us in the mountains when we were starving children. It was he who gave Qulan and I our start in Tumanbay. And that is why he had to die: if Qulan and I were to rise to the top, we could be beholden to no one. There, I give you that, a free gift.

(angrily)

*The scrolls.*

SARAH

First you must do something for me. A message...

GREGOR

To whom?

SARAH

Ibn Bai. Take this to his house, so that he knows the baby and I are safe. Bring his answer and then I will give you what you want.

9.6 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. COUNCIL ROOM - DAY

9.6

QULAN and AL-GHURI are examining maps.

QULAN

Maya's forces are here, and here.

CADALI ENTERS.

CADALI

Excuse me, Majesty, if you have a moment that I might-

AL-GHURI

Not now, Cadali. Go on, General.

QULAN

They are lightly armoured and consequently able to move fast; they can adapt to local conditions but they don't have the weight of armour and infantry to sustain a battle.

AL-GHURI

We must fight on our terms, not hers.

QULAN

Exactly, Majesty. Wolf's cavalry, will pen her forces in like sheep for the slaughter.

AL-GHURI

Her people are fearsome archers, we hear. They can deliver a rain of arrows that can cut down an army.

QULAN

It's all about discipline and good shield work. Arrows will not penetrate iron-wood and metal.

AL-GHURI

If they stand. She'll try to make our men panic and once they break....

QULAN

They won't. They have discipline.

CADALI

Even, if I may put in a word,  
Majesty, even the provincial  
troops?

QULAN

They will hold if they believe they  
are on the winning side. If they  
doubt it, they'll scatter.

CADALI

And how, General, will you convince  
them they are on the winning side?

QULAN

Come, Majesty. Cadali, you can come  
too. I want to show you something.

He LEADS them out.

9.7 EXT. TUMANBAY. BATTLEMENTS - DAY

9.7

It is quiet. The only sound: the squeak of a SCREW TURNING  
and:

QULAN

Go ahead.

DON DIEGO

Elevate a little more... so much...  
Hold... Very good. Fire!

The HISS of slow match, splutter of powder and a terrific  
BOOM of a cannon. Al-Ghuri and Cadali are impressed.

QULAN

We will allow these muzzles to do  
the convincing for us, Majesty.

DON DIEGO

The finest brass. I think you'll  
find the gold you spent has paid  
real dividends.

(to aides)

Reload!

AL-GHURI

You ordered these without my  
knowledge?

QULAN

Would you rather not have them,  
Majesty? These aren't like our  
little cast iron cannon, they won't  
blow up in your face.

AL-GHURI

I want to see them work properly.

DON DIEGO

I don't understand you, Majesty.

AL-GHURI

And you are?

DON DIEGO

I have the honour to be Don Diego  
Costa de los Barrenca y Carribas.

QULAN

From across the Great Sea, Sire,  
where they have mastered the art of  
the foundry.

AL-GHURI

All of this means nothing. Show me  
something real, show me what it  
does... To that building.

CADALI

Sire, surely that is the-

AL-GHURI

I know what it is, Cadali. What I  
want to know is what this cannon  
can do to it.

Off Qulan BELLOWS to an aide.

QULAN

Get that barracks emptied now!

The man RUSHES OFF, repeating the order.

CADALI

Sire, whatever you wish... but..

AL-GHURI

Show me what it does. I want to see  
results for my gold.

DON DIEGO

(to Aide)

Traverse three points south of  
west, set range at two thousand  
yards.

Aides WORKING with the cannon.

AL-GHURI

Is it too far away?

DON DIEGO

Not at all, Majesty. The effective range is three thousand yards.

AL-GHURI

Maya has nothing to equal that.

DON DIEGO

Ready?

Off we can hear the barracks being EMPTIED of men. SHOUTS echo from near: *"Clear the barracks... Clear the barracks - to further and further away..."* etc.

QULAN

I'm not certain the barracks are -

AL-GHURI

Ready!

DON DIEGO

Fire!

HISS of slow match, splutter of gunpowder and BOOM of cannon. After a few long moments the CRASH of a falling building. CRIES of agony, off. Al-Ghuri LAUGHS delightedly.

AL-GHURI

That, General, is what I call complete... It's just a pile of rocks.

He LAUGHS again.

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

I like these cannons of yours. Do we have the men who can fire them?

QULAN

Don Diego has provided a gunner for each crew.

AL-GHURI

Each? How many?

QULAN

There are six of them, Sire. Do I have your permission to carry on and complete the purchase?

AL-GHURI

You have done well, Qulan. Yes, General.

CADALI

Yes, well done, General.

QULAN

Thank you for your approbation,  
Cadali. It does help, of course,  
not being locked up in a stinking  
cell.

CADALI

A little hardship is good for the  
soul, we are told. But, Majesty, if  
I may, there is something of the  
greatest importance I must discuss  
with you.

AL-GHURI

By God, I'd like to see her face  
when she sees these.

He SLAPS the barrel.

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

Ahh, it's hot.

DON DIEGO

Hotter than hell, Majesty.

AL-GHURI

Then that's where we'll send her.  
Come, Cadali.

They WALK away.

9.8 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. COUNCIL ROOM - DAY

9.8

Off we can hear cannons being FIRED. Cadali and Al-Ghuri  
walk.

CADALI

We need, as I'm sure you can  
understand, Majesty, to make some  
provision, inadequate though it  
will be, for your absence.

AL-GHURI

I'll hardly be away for long.

CADALI

And you will return victorious, but  
the city must have proper  
authority. What if these spies of  
Maya's provoke an insurrection?  
There must be someone who can act  
fast and firmly.

AL-GHURI

And you suggest?

CADALI

I would have said Gregor. After all he is Master of the Imperial Guard but... where is he? Where has he been? And then there is your nephew Madu. The young man has come on wonderfully from the army but he is young and the Court can be treacherous. He's untested... And there is, of course, his, ahem, personal life...

AL-GHURI

Go on.

CADALI

I have served you long and well.

AL-GHURI

Really?

CADALI

Can you doubt it, Sire?

AL-GHURI

And yet General Qulan went to prison... was it not on your advice?

CADALI

Majesty, I... like any man -

AL-GHURI

There was suspicion against Qulan, the scales tipped and you added the weights. Now he is free.

Feature the sound of cannon FIRING...

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

Does not balance demand the scales fall on the other side? Your council was wrong.

CADALI

I have my faults but... but, my Lord... mistakes, yes... I mean any man may get it wrong.

AL-GHURI

That's what is so interesting, Cadali. Did you get it wrong?

Boom!

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

Or did it go just as you wished?

Boom!

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

After seeing that cannon - I wonder what it would do to a man to stand in front of the one that fired a thousand spikes?

Boom!

CADALI

(tearful - on his knees)

My Lord... Majesty... Sire... I... Majesty...

AL-GHURI

Here we all came from the dirt and to the dirt we shall all return.

Boom!

9.9

INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. DUNGEON - DAY

9.9

Echoey corridor. A heavy door OPENS. GUARD WALKS up and down and comes to ATTENTION as Gregor ARRIVES.

GUARD

Your Excellency.

GREGOR

He's in there? Maya's Envoy?

GUARD

Yes, Sir.

GREGOR

Open the door, I wish to speak to him.

GUARD

Sir, my orders-

GREGOR

Your orders come from me.

GUARD

But, Sir, the Vizier...

Cold silence.

GUARD (CONT'D)

Yes, Sir. Certainly, Sir.

The cell door is OPENED. The ENVOY SIGHS.

ENVOY

Ah, have you come to set me free?

Pause.

ENVOY (CONT'D)

Of course you haven't. You've come to ask me a question.

GREGOR

You think you know my business better than I do?

ENVOY

Probably I do.

GREGOR

Then you can give me the answer without hearing what I have to say.

ENVOY

Yes.

GREGOR

That's it?

ENVOY

Maya still wants the scrolls, they are still your best chance of surviving what is about to happen.

GREGOR

(angry)

Unlike your chances, which are getting shorter by the moment.

ENVOY

Don't pretend to be the fool you're not, Gregor.

GREGOR

Our forces will crush Maya. Then you will die.

ENVOY

And dragons are real and Djinn's haunt our dreams.

(calling out)

Guard, my visitor is leaving.

GUARD

(approaching)

Your Excellency, shall I-

Gregor stands and WALKS out - the Guard SLAMS and LOCKS the door. Gregor WALKS rapidly and we go with him.

GREGOR (V.O.)

**Is it time to get out from under?  
Not yet, perhaps, but soon... maybe soon.**

**(MORE)**

**GREGOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

**And maybe I'll take the slave-girl  
with me. There's something about  
her that...**

9.10 EXT. OUTSIDE WALLS OF TUMANBAY - DAY

9.10

Troops being EXERCISED. WOLF RIDES across the frame - comes to a HALT and LEAPS OFF his horse and STRIDES over to Qulan.

WOLF

General.

QULAN

What do you have for me, Commander?

WOLF

My scouts tell me that at least two more provinces have declared for Maya. Men are flocking to her banners from all over the Empire, even from beyond the borders.

QULAN

How do you see it from the saddle?

WOLF

Either we take her now or she'll advance and lay siege on Tumanbay.

QULAN

Then we have the Sultan's permission to go.

WOLF

Very good, General.

He WALKS away.

QULAN

Wait, Wolf. You were treated badly. As was I. I have reason to be loyal to this city, you don't.

WOLF

I offered my loyalty to you, General. You still have it.

QULAN

I never doubted it. Your men will play the decisive role in the battle to come, Commander.

WOLF

That's how we like it, General.

He REMOUNTS.

QULAN

Very well. Keep your scouts in the field; we need to know every move she makes from now on. Things are beginning to move fast.

WOLF

Very good, General.

He GOES. Qulan BECKONS a MESSENGER over.

QULAN

Messenger.

MESSENGER

Sir.

QULAN

To the Sultan: we march with the sun tomorrow.

MESSENGER

General.

He GOES. Qulan summons DANIEL.

QULAN

Daniel, walk with me.

They WALK together.

QULAN (CONT'D)

I haven't had a chance to thank you yet.

DANIEL

I did my duty, General.

QULAN

My wife and daughter were not your duty. I had been imprisoned, you stood by them, you took care of them. You could have been arrested.

DANIEL

It would have been an honour. Besides, I had no doubts you would be freed. Tumanbay needs its greatest general.

QULAN

Nevertheless, I value your loyalty. Now, some time ago I asked you to get close to the Sultan's nephew.

DANIEL

We are firm friends, Sir.

QULAN

What's he like, the young man? I've seen him at Court and when he was with the troops - entitled and weak.

DANIEL

Yes. He was thinking of running away. His mother had a palace in the mountains. He thought it would offer peace and safety. I persuaded him it was his duty to stay.

QULAN

Why?

DANIEL

You wouldn't have asked me to be his friend if there was not some purpose, some use...

QULAN

Do you object to that?

DANIEL

In this world we are all to be used and, perhaps, if we are lucky, to use.

QULAN

Very good. Now, I'm going to command you to give up the chance of battle...

DANIEL

Sir, no, battle is where a man can shine, show his worth.

QULAN

War is unpredictable. No one can be sure of what will happen, how the day will go. It is vital that Tumanbay has stable leadership.

DANIEL

You really think that Madu can provide that?

QULAN

I think things are changing. Nobody quite knows what's happening... I'd feel more comfortable if there was someone I trusted standing at young Madu's shoulder.

DANIEL

You think he'll be needed in some way?

QULAN

I don't know.

An OFFICER CALLS.

OFFICER

(a little off)

General, the Provincial Commanders  
are waiting for you now.

QULAN

Good. Let's go and show them how  
the cannon roar.

9.11 EXT. TUMANBAY. PALACE WALLS - DAY

9.11

Gregor is WALKING.

**GREGOR (V.O.)**

**I need to show my face in the  
palace. See and be seen... doing my  
job...**

Out of nowhere Dona Ana APPEARS.

DONA ANA

A formidable sight.

GREGOR

Yes. The greatest army in the  
world.

DONA ANA

The largest, I have heard.

GREGOR

Madam, we've not been introduced.

DONA ANA

My husband Don Diego has provided  
your sultan with six cannon...  
There, you can see them being  
harnessed...

GREGOR

And naturally you are interested in  
such things - armies and  
artillery... even to the extent of  
making notes?

DONA ANA

Travellers' tales are very popular  
in my country, Gregor, Master of  
the Sultan's Guard.

GREGOR

How do you know who I am? We've not been introduced.

DONA ANA

All courts have gossip and tittle tattle, Sir. Yours no less than mine. Perhaps we will meet at the celebration tonight.

GREGOR

Ah, yes, of course.

She GOES.

**GREGOR (V.O.)**

**Are there maggots on the body  
before it's dead?**

9.12 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. DUNGEON. ENVOY'S CELL - DAY 9.12

Echoey corridor. Guard WALKS up and down, the Envoy's voice is slightly off.

ENVOY

What's your name?

GUARD

What?

ENVOY

What's your name? It's all right, I'm in a cell, I can't hurt you. Not that I'd want to, of course.

GUARD

I'm not supposed to talk to you. I'm a guard. I guard the prisoners, that's what I do.

ENVOY

Well, I'm not going to cause any trouble.

GUARD

You're Maya's Envoy, you're the enemy.

ENVOY

Is that what I look like? Stuck in a cell... And yet you seem scared... I've noticed that about Tumanbay. Everyone's looking over their shoulders all the time. Have you been a guard long?

No answer.

ENVOY (CONT'D)

Come on, they've all gone off to war. No one's coming down here.

No answer.

ENVOY (CONT'D)

Would you have liked to be off to war? A real soldier?

GUARD

I just do what I'm told.

ENVOY

And what were you told about me?

GUARD

That they are going to kill you and it won't be quick. They'll make it last. That they have things that stop traitors from dying so the pain goes on and on.

ENVOY

(laughs)

Is that what I am. A traitor?

GUARD

It's a rebellion, isn't it? That's what they all say. Aren't you scared?

ENVOY

Do I sound scared to you? I've been freed from all that. I know we will win in the end, my brothers and sisters and I. We don't fear men and their gold and their armies because our hearts are strong in the God of all Things.

(beat)

You are burdened by worry. Have you, my young friend, have you ever done anything simply because you wanted to and you knew it was absolutely the right thing to do?

GUARD

I don't know. I... don't know.

ENVOY

Listen to me. Once you accept what is true, everything else falls into place. You know what your duty is, you know who your true commander is and you know that this world is the merest nothing...

(MORE)

ENVOY (CONT'D)

And you know that there is a real world beyond this world of illusion...

GUARD

I... I don't know.

ENVOY

All you have to do is put the key in the lock and turn it. No more worry. Just open the door. Open the door.

The Guard REACHES for his keys.

9.13 INT. TUMANBAY. PALACE. THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

9.13

The room is crowded - a BUZZ of conversation. We MOVE around the room picking up fragments, beginning with Gregor and Cadali:

**GREGOR (V.O.)**

**This is the last place I want to be...**

GREGOR

What are we waiting for?

**GREGOR (V.O.)**

**But the first place I have to be...**

CADALI

For you, Excellency. Your absence has been noted.

GREGOR

My absence was due to my work. I hear your work has been less well received by the Sultan? Stories of crawling on the floor, weeping tears of remorse, begging... was there begging?

CADALI

I think you were misinformed, Gregor.

GREGOR

Really? Gossip is usually-

CADALI

Just gossip. Enjoy your evening.

He WANDERS off.

**GREGOR (V.O.)**  
**Now what is that slimy, conniving  
bastard up to?**

We move on to MADU and Daniel:

DANIEL  
I hear the army are marching out in  
the morning.

MADU  
The morning?

DANIEL  
So I hear, from the General.

MADU  
So it looks like things are  
happening.

DANIEL  
Then it's right that we are here.

MADU  
I don't like it.

DANIEL  
You don't have to, you're the  
Sultan's nephew - be confident and  
let people see that you are.

We move on Don Diego, Qulan, and Dona Ana:

DON DIEGO  
General.

QULAN  
Don Diego.

DON DIEGO  
May I present my wife, Dona Ana.

QULAN  
Madam, it is a pleasure. I hope you  
don't find our ways too tedious or  
old fashioned for your taste.

DONA ANA  
I find everything in Tumanbay  
fascinating. It is like seeing a  
legend come to life.

QULAN  
Aren't legends generally myths?

DONA ANA  
Oh you all seem solid to me.

She LAUGHS. A GONG is sounded. The HAFIZ is preparing to preach. His assistant, BELLO, is close by.

DONA ANA (CONT'D)

What is this?

QULAN

That... will no doubt bless the enterprise if he can stand upright long enough.

HAFIZ

(off - sober)

God has said that an idolator will come out of the East who will preach in His name, though she is the furthest of all people from His Divine Grace. She will fly black flags which begin with victory but will end in defeat and misery. Her followers are the worst of the people, runaways and outcasts, murderers and adulterers and they will be scattered.

We FADE the speech back and continue picking up dialogue in fragments.

BELLO

As you asked, Your Excellency, I have sobered him up.

GREGOR

You've done a good job, Bello.

BELLO

It wasn't easy, I can tell you, but he can at least do what he's supposed to do.

GREGOR

Keep him that way.

The Hafiz FADES UP as we MOVE across the room, then DOWN again as we reach Cadali and Madu.

CADALI

I hear you're not going with the army, Madu? All got a bit much for you, has it?

MADU

Not at all, Cadali. Like you, I serve at the Sultan's command.

CADALI

And will your friend be remaining behind too?

MADU

My friend?

CADALI

I'm referring to the handsome blue eyed soldier who goes in and out of your rooms.

MADU

We are at war, Cadali. I'm surprised you still have time to waste on gossip and snooping.

CADALI

I've time for everything when the security of Tumanbay is at stake.

MADU

I thought that was Gregor's job or are you... changing things?

CADALI

Are you thinking of running away with your blue eyed friend?

MADU

What? I don't know what you're talking about.

CADALI

Just remember, I am the Grand Vizier. I know everything.

MADU

Is that a threat?

CADALI

It can be whatever you choose. Now, please do excuse me, I think that old fake is finally finished and His Majesty is about to make an announcement.

HAFIZ

(off)

... across the whole world the name of Tumanbay will resound no louder than that of His Majesty, our Master Abu'l Abbas Al-Ghuri, Lion of Lions, Sultan of Eagles, destroyer of-

Al-Ghuri STANDS and the Hafiz falls SILENT.

AL-GHURI

I will crush this rebellion! And whilst I am leading our victorious forces, the Grand Vizier Cadali will be my voice...

CADALI

I will not fail you, Majesty.

AL-GHURI

... and will advise my nephew Madu who will sit upon the throne as my regent.

CADALI

What?

AL-GHURI

Together, they will preserve that balance that has been so important a part of Tumanbay.

CADALI

But Majesty, surely one voice, if I may be permitted to say... Madu is young, he-

AL-GHURI

That is my decision, do you object?

CADALI

Oh no, no, of course not, Majesty.

AL-GHURI

To show my faith in my nephew Madu, I will place this ring, my ring, upon his finger. Madu, come...

Madu WALKS forward.

MADU

Majesty, Uncle, I accept this ring and swear on all I hold sacred and dear to me that I will serve Tumanbay and you faithfully. As I know will the Grand Vizier Cadali.

A pause - goes on a bit too long.

CADALI

Of course, with all my heart.

MADU

Come, Cadali, kneel and kiss the ring to show that we are united in our service.

Pause.

MADU (CONT'D)

Vizier?

Cadali GOES forward and KISSES the ring. As he KNEELS, Madu leans forward.

MADU (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Well, it seems you don't know  
"everything", Cadali.

QULAN

Let every man here kiss the ring in  
earnest of his duty!

They LINE UP - Qulan kneels first.

QULAN (CONT'D)

(sotto)

I will serve you.

MADU

Thank you, Qulan.

GREGOR

(kneeling)

I pledge my allegiance to you.

DANIEL

(sotto)

Did you know about this, General?

QULAN

A wise man takes into account every  
possibility.

AL-GHURI

At dawn we march. Beside me at the  
head of our armies will ride His  
Holiness the Hafiz...

HAFIZ

What? In battle? I am no soldier,  
Sire, I'm just a humble priest...

AL-GHURI

You don't need to worry, you'll be  
carried on a palanquin. You will  
show this treacherous enemy that  
God is on our side and not hers!

We PULL BACK until the room and ring KISSING is just a  
mumble.

DON DIEGO

It seems that all is not at peace  
in the palace.

DONA ANA

I wonder, Diego, if we are seeing  
the last of something rather  
amazing...

DON DIEGO

... And rather out of time in this  
world?

DONA ANA

Leave the decisions to me, Diego.  
Everything is to play for in this  
game. Now we must say our good  
nights as if we are what we pretend  
to be.

They WANDER OFF. We pick up on a sotto conversation:

DANIEL

Did you know?

MADU

I had an idea, yes.

DANIEL

And you didn't tell me?

MADU

It was... yes, I should have shared  
it but I wanted it to be a  
surprise.

DANIEL

It was certainly that but... I'm  
happy for you.

MADU

It could be a curse.

DANIEL

It could be a new beginning for  
Tumanbay.

MADU

Will you...

DANIEL

I will always be there. But you  
should be with your uncle right  
now, I think he's calling.

MADU

He's probably got a victory perfume  
up his sleeve.

As he GOES.

QULAN

Daniel, while I'm away, do not be a stranger. Manel will want to see you.

DANIEL

Of course, Sir.

QULAN

And my wife, too. She loves feeding hungry young fellows.

He LAUGHS and LEAVES.

GREGOR (V.O.)

Sounds like my brother's blue eyed boy is playing a double game too. Well, I must be off...

CADALI

(calls)

Gregor, a word.

GREGOR

I am busy.

CADALI

As are we all. The Sultan wishes you to keep a close eye on the foreigners. The woman especially.

GREGOR

I am ahead of you, Cadali.

CADALI

For once it seems you are doing your job. Day and night watch, daily reports to me and the Sultan. Don't fail him in this, my friend.

GREGOR

I'm not your friend.

CADALI

Or the next head on the floor will be yours. Madu is no more your supporter than I am. Remember that.

9.14 OMITTED 9.14

9.15 EXT. TUMANBAY. CITY WALLS. MAIN GATE - DAY 9.15

The sound of many horns - the army is MARCHING out. The thud of thousands of feet. Trumpets and drums. Elephants and camels and horses as they GO PAST US.

HEAVEN, IBN, and BOY watch.

HEAVEN  
Who's in charge?

IBN  
Look, look, there - the Sultan, on  
the white horse.

BOY  
He looks... rather small.

IBN  
(acting like a father)  
Size isn't so important in sultans.  
But look at how big his army is...  
There, there... riding up now...

A horse GALLOPS past.

IBN (CONT'D)  
You see? That's General Qulan, the  
greatest soldier in Tumanbay. And  
that, that's the Hafiz being  
carried along there... Can you see?

HEAVEN  
They all look the same to me.

IBN  
What is it? I thought this might be  
interesting for the boy..

HEAVEN  
Why did we have to come here?

IBN  
What do you mean?

HEAVEN  
If we'd stayed at home none of this  
would have happened. They would  
have had their war and Mother would  
still be alive and we'd be happy  
and instead I...

She CRIES - he HOLDS her.

IBN  
What is it, Heaven?

HEAVEN  
Nothing. I'm sorry, I-

IBN

It's not for us to know God's plan.  
I have my daughter who was a girl  
when I left and is now a woman I am  
so proud of.

A pause.

IBN (CONT'D)

We should go. We should go home.  
(to Boy)  
Come, Boy, let's go.

9.16 EXT. ARMY MARCHING - DAY 9.16

Now we are with the army as it MARCHES out. We hear horses  
hooves on the cobblestones. Cheering crowds.

9.17 INT. IBN'S HOUSE - DAY 9.17

The SERVANT OPENS the front door onto the street. Gregor is  
waiting on the other side.

GREGOR

Tell your master I need to see him.

SERVANT

Yes, Your Excellency. Please, wait  
here.

He CLOSES the door behind Gregor. We FOLLOW the Servant into  
the house where Heaven and Ibn are TALKING.

IBN

...I could teach him. He seems like  
a bright boy. He could help in the  
business.

SERVANT

Master Ibn Bai, there is a visitor.

IBN

Yes, yes, send him through.

(to Heaven)

It's the builder. He's promised to  
mend that crack in the wall at  
last, and finish the painting.

(Gregor approaches)

Now, my friend-

(see it's Gregor)

Uh... It's you...

GREGOR

And what colour were you thinking?

A pause. He LAUGHS - but not nicely.

IBN

Your Excellency - I... You...  
you...

GREGOR

Survived the underworld? Of course.  
Who is this?

IBN

A pearl that was lost and is found  
again. My daughter, Heaven, she has  
been restored to me.

GREGOR

The Gods have been kind to you, Ibn  
Bai. She is indeed a jewel. But I  
thought you and your mother... The  
plague, that the ship was burnt?

HEAVEN

It was, Sir, but I wasn't on it.

GREGOR

And yet here you are?

HEAVEN

There was uh... a storm, I was  
washed overboard and a fellow  
passenger saved me... he jumped  
into the sea... I... I would have  
drowned if it hadn't been for him.  
But we couldn't get back to the  
ship, we were washed ashore and...  
oh, we had so many adventures, it  
was like the old stories...

She falls silent.

GREGOR

What were you doing on deck?

HEAVEN

What?

GREGOR

During a storm?

HEAVEN

I... I don't know. I was...

GREGOR

And a fellow passenger dived in to  
rescue you?

HEAVEN

That's right.

Pause then SLAVE ENTERS.

GREGOR

And you survived at sea until you were washed ashore?

HEAVEN

Yes... No. We were in a life raft. They launched it when they saw...

GREGOR

Of course. How foolish of me. It must have been difficult for them with the ship lurching around in the storm.

HEAVEN

I suppose so... Ah, this is the gentleman who saved me.

GREGOR

The swimmer? How fortunate. I am told many sailors do not know how to swim.

SLAVE

My name is...

(beat)

Akiba.

GREGOR

Akiba?

SLAVE

You have the better of me, Sir?

GREGOR

Gregor, Master of the Palace Guard.

SLAVE

Gregor...

GREGOR

Where were you travelling from?

SLAVE

Alkubel-Lan. Are you a traveller, Sir?

GREGOR

Not really. It's only that... there is something familiar... Have we met?

SLAVE

I think not.

GREGOR

I was in the Kingdom of Bornu some time ago. Do you know it?

SLAVE

By reputation. I was never there.  
Isn't it a province of Tumanbay  
now?

GREGOR

We have a long reach and a great  
appetite.

SLAVE

For other peoples' lands? So I have  
heard.

A tense pause.

HEAVEN

But you have come to see my father,  
Sir. We will leave you. Akiba, I  
have something to show you... Will  
you come, please?

SLAVE

You will excuse me, Sir.

GREGOR

Of course. I hope we meet again.

Slave and Heaven are LEAVING the room.

SLAVE

I am sure we will.

GREGOR

Oh...

They STOP at the door.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Congratulations...

SLAVE

Sir?

GREGOR

On surviving.

SLAVE

Perhaps that has yet to be  
ascertained.

HEAVEN

Will you come now.

They GO.

IBN

It's a miracle - I lost the babe in the darkness of the night and the very next day I have my daughter back.

GREGOR

The baby is safe. Here, read this.

He GIVES Ibn the note.

IBN

Where... How is she, Sarah? Is she safe, are they-

GREGOR

They are safe. I need you to write a reply.

IBN

What, you're a messenger now?  
(He's gone to far and  
knows it)  
Forgive me, I spoke out of-

GREGOR

Once I would have cut your throat for that. Times change. Write your reply.

9.18 INT. IBN'S HOUSE. SLAVE'S ROOM - DAY

9.18

Slave is BUCKLING on a sword. Boy watches.

BOY

What are you doing?

SLAVE

I'm going after him.

BOY

He's the one, then?

SLAVE

He's the one.

He GOES to the door. Heaven BLOCKS his way.

HEAVEN

You can't.

SLAVE

I can, and I will.

BOY

Listen to her. It would come back  
on her father, on all of us. They'd  
kill us for it.

SLAVE

What do I care?

HEAVEN

I don't know. What do you care?

Slave PUSHES past her and LEAVES.

9.19 OMITTED 9.19

9.20 EXT. DESERT - DAY 9.20

Wolf on his horse, waiting. CLINK of harness. A wind blows -  
a horse APPROACHES at the gallop.

The approaching RIDER calls out, then brings his horse to a  
HALT.

RIDER

Brother Wolf? She's coming.

WOLF

How long, how far?

RIDER

Her scouts are half a day, the main  
army close behind.

WOLF

Numbers?

RIDER

A hundred hands at least.

WOLF

Ten thousand. Very well, brother,  
take the news, tell the General.

The Rider SPEEDS AWAY. Wolf stays still for a while...

WOLF (CONT'D)

"We are the puppets and God the  
puppet master."

9.21 INT. DESERT. AL-GHURI'S TENT - DAY 9.21

Wine being POURED. A servant takes it to Al-Ghuri who drinks,  
while awaiting news from his Officers.

AL-GHURI

It's warm, take it away. Where is she, why doesn't she come?

OFFICER

She will come, Majesty.

AL-GHURI

Now or by dark?

OFFICER

Majesty, you know no one fights in the dark if they can avoid it.

AL-GHURI

Then where is she? We were told by afternoon it would be all over... the Hafiz, where is he?

OFFICER

Shall I call for him?

AL-GHURI

Of course. He must be here...

OFFICER 2 HURRIES IN.

OFFICER 2

Majesty, General Qulan sends that the enemy is in sight. Does he have your permission to engage?

AL-GHURI

Of course he does. And tell him I want her alive. Alive, mind you, his own head on it.

OFFICER 2

Yes, Majesty.

Officer 2 LEAVES.

OFFICER

Your armour, Sire...

(to Servants)

Quick quick, the Sultan's armour...

Servants start DRESSING Al-Ghuri in haste.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Will you watch the battle, Sir? There is a platform where you may see your victory.

AL-GHURI

Yes, yes, hurry... It was never that tight before... Never mind, come... Where's the Hafiz?

(MORE)

AL-GHURI (CONT'D)

Bring him, let him bless the troops  
as they advance.

9.22 EXT. DESERT. QULAN'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

9.22

The sound of Maya's DRUMS off.

OFFICER 2

She has fewer archers than we  
expected.

QULAN

She has enough to do the job she  
wants. Order shields up on my word.

ARCHERS PREPARE; bows up, arrows fitted...

OFFICER 2

(bellows)

Bows up!

The order is echoed down the line of Officers.

OFFICER 2 (CONT'D)

(to Qulan)

Will they try a ranging flight?

QULAN

No need. On my word...

OFFICER 2

Lock arrows!

The order echoes down the line again.

OFFICER 2 (CONT'D)

Pull!

Echoes.

QULAN

That's it. Shields up!

OFFICER 2

Shields up!

SHIELDS RAISED across the line.

OFFICER 2 (CONT'D)

Here they come.

QULAN

Pray we stand firm.

The hiss of ten thousand arrows WHISTLING through the air and  
THUDDING into ironwood shields.

OFFICER 2  
We'd have gone down like corn  
before the scythe...

QULAN  
Signal Commander Wolf to ride.

OFFICER 2  
Signal.

The order echoes down the line.

A FLARE shoots up - bursts. GUNNER calls from off.

GUNNER  
On your mark, General, cannons  
ready to fire.

QULAN  
Wait, wait for the cavalry to  
contain them. If they scatter we'll  
lose them.

OFFICER 2  
Where in hell's name are the  
cavalry? Another flare, sir?

GUNNER  
(calls)  
She's falling back, we'll lose the  
range, sir, if the cavalry don't  
charge now.

OFFICER 2  
What shall I do, Sir?

QULAN  
I'll go myself and give the order.

He kicks his feet and RIDES OFF.

QULAN (CONT'D)  
(shouting back)  
Hold them steady, you'll have your  
range, Gunner, I swear it!

SOLDIER  
(off)  
Here they come!

OFFICER 2  
(bellowed)  
Shields up!

CRY REPEATED as another flight of arrows arrives and THUDS  
into ironwood.

9.23 EXT. DESERT. WOLF'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

9.23

Horses at a stand. Harness clinks, flags flutter. Qulan ARRIVES at a gallop.

QULAN

Wolf, what in God's name are you doing? I need your cavalry... now, now, or we're lost.

Pause - no movement.

QULAN (CONT'D)

(urgently)

Now, man! We have her, we...

He stops.

QULAN (CONT'D)

Wolf?

WOLF

It's over, General.

QULAN

What do you mean?

WOLF

The battle is lost. Tumanbay is lost. It always was.

QULAN

What are you... I trusted you...

WOLF

Arrest him.

Riders come forward to SEIZE Qulan.

QULAN

You betrayed me. You're a traitor.

WOLF

No, General, I was never a traitor; I was hers from the very beginning.

MUSIC.

**End of Episode 1.09.**