

Prelude: Rahm the Shaman

🕒 1:15:00

S Storyteller Rina 00:00

theme music Thank you for joining us wherever you are. This podcast episode is brought to you by the Old Ways actual play team. This actual play uses the fifth edition Vampire the Masquerade tabletop role playing rules by World of Darkness. This actual play is performed by adults and in an adult setting. Listeners should know that this podcast is intended for a mature audience and will include strong language and mature themes. All content including names, places, events, companies, and so forth that may bear resemblance to entities living, dead or undead is strictly coincidental. My name is Rina Haenze, and for tonight's game, I will be your Storyteller.

S Storyteller Rina 01:00

Good evening and welcome to another episode of the Old Ways Podcast's Vampire the Masquerade Chronicle, "Blood Moon Rising". I'm your Storyteller, Storyteller Rina, and tonight we are bringing you, again, one of our character prologues to introduce another member of our coterie to you, our wonderful listeners. So, without further ado, I would like to introduce our player and their character for tonight. So Teagan, why don't you tell us a little bit about who you are and who your character is?

T Teagan (Rahm) 01:32

Absolutely. My name is Teagan Gilbert, I use she/they pronouns, and I work for a vague yet menacing government agency, and the other half of my life is LGBT housing; I have been tackling that problem. And my character, as I kind of shift into that voice, this is Rahm, Rahm the Shaman. And Rahm the Shaman uses he/they pronouns and is an interesting creature; Rahm the Shaman has a business in his...for an unliving, he has a group of ghouls that sell homeopathy solutions and medical curatives that have a little bit of himself in them. He is about five and a half, six feet tall, pretty skinny with kind of a muscle-less, Yoga flexible body and I imagine has a brown or blonde topknot on the top of their head, very, very stylish for the time.

S

Storyteller Rina 02:58

And what is Rahm's clan?

T

Teagan (Rahm) 03:00

Rahm's clan... Rahm is a Malkavian.

S

Storyteller Rina 03:06

Excellent. I can't wait to see what natural healing you can bring to our coterie as they progress through our Chronicle. So without further ado, let's get into our subject matter for this evening. So it is a fairly warm October evening in San Francisco; the last few nights have been a bit chilly, a little bit drizzly, but tonight, the drizzle has subsided, there's not as much of a wind coming across the bay. It's about 6:30pm as you are awakening into this slightly warmer October night and you can hear the chatter of people outside, you can hear a few dogs fighting off in the distance, this tends to be a fairly normal occurrence when you wake up, but as you wake up, you do your stretches to welcome the evening. Tell us about where Rahm sleeps. Where is his safe place and does he have other people in the building or apartment or whatever it is he sleeps in?

T

Teagan (Rahm) 04:19

Rahm has a space that has been carved out of the basement. Even the basement itself has windows that can see the sunlight and to protect himself a little bit further, he's dug under the building and into the yard a little bit, added cinder blocks and timbers to boost it up maybe towards an old carriage house in the back. So it's a bit of an expanded basement space and that's where he'll stay during the daytime in a place very tucked away from sunlight. Where he lives is an actual sizable Victorian house, Victorian or Edwardian house in San Francisco. Not an uncommon sight in that city. But it is notable for having multiple bedrooms, maybe about seven bedrooms, and that space, it goes up about three storeys, even has one of those classical little towers that people love to sip tea and read books in. But this building is occupied by his ghouls, his familiars, what he would call himself his "Tribe". And these are the humans, the warm blooded, the Kine that he has gathered around himself to operate this business, and there are perhaps half a dozen of them. And they all live in the rooms and the common spaces have been converted; over there are stainless steel tables, and vats of oil, and Amazon boxes piled up and flattened in the edges of the spaces because this building is not simply a residence, but a small factory for the products that his company provides.

S

Storyteller Rina 06:39

Excellent. So you have people all above you, as you awaken to face the evening; you can hear footsteps just above you and low muted discussion, as people are working on their tasks for the evening, whatever it is you have set them to do. Do you begin with some yoga to face your

night time? Or what would Rahm normally do when he first awakens?

T Teagan (Rahm) 07:09

I believe that is probably the best thing for him when he wakes up. It's very unfortunate that one of the things that he misses is the sunrise and being able to do his stretches in the morning sun, it's likely that he has set up some sort of high def TV down there for a simulated sunrise, his plastic yoga mat in front of it, and does his stretches. He's a creature of routine, because he knows that if he is not a creature of routine, then he is a creature of chaos. And so every single evening, when he gets up, there is a set number of minutes for stretching and for meditation.

S Storyteller Rina 08:00

Alright, so before you can greet the moonrise and perhaps do some downward hanging bat, you first need to make what we call a Rouse check. So this is what you roll when you first wake up to see if you're able to control your hunger, because you can already feel that it's getting close to time to feed. But this is going to determine how well you're able to control that. So you need to roll 1d10, and you want to roll a 6 or higher.

T Teagan (Rahm) 08:33

Understood. Ah, I have rolled a 7.

S Storyteller Rina 08:40

Your posture as you greet the moonrise this evening is in perfect shape, you're able to focus your inner mind on other things, you can ignore completely the hunger that rises in you every evening. And you're able to banish it from your thoughts for the time being so that you can focus on your meditations, on your poses, and on whatever else it is that Rahm thinks about while he's preparing for the night ahead.

T Teagan (Rahm) 09:14

Absolutely.

S Storyteller Rina 09:16

After you complete your set time for meditation and stretching, and you turn off your television screen, what are your plans for this evening? What would you do next?

T Teagan (Rahm) 09:31

The absolute next thing that I have to do is I have to check the supplies and the stocks and the

work that was done throughout the day. Most of my ghouls operate diurnally instead of nocturnally, so they are obviously shutting down for the evening, maybe relaxing, maybe finishing up the prep. The post office is closed, so all of the shipments have already gone out. But I just need to make sure that I check the numbers, check the ledgers and make sure that everything is going as planned.

S Storyteller Rina 10:14

Yes, we we have to make sure there's no discrepancies in the ledgers. Can't have that. Not in our studio. So you make your way upstairs to where your tribe is prepping everything for the next day so that they can go off to bed or outside or whatever it is they do at night. And there's two of your ghouls who are just upstairs as you come up. There's a young woman who's wearing a sarong, she's got long dark hair, she's Indian ancestry, and her name is Preethi. And she looks at you and she smiles and says,

P Preethi 10:59

Greetings, Master Rahm.

R Rahm the Shaman 11:02

Greetings. How was your day?

P Preethi 11:07

It was quite calm and peaceful. Today, I took my time to meditate at noon, as you suggested, and my mind was so much calmer and more relaxed as as I prepared your potions for tomorrow's shipment.

P Preethi 11:24

Absolutely, I can feel your relaxed mind myself. This is good. You're taking time for yourself, that is absolutely excellent.

S Storyteller Rina 11:36

She presses her hands together palm to palm and bows her head slightly and says,

P Preethi 11:45

I set aside what you asked me to prepare for your evening appointments.

S

Storyteller Rina 11:50

And she points over to your back room that you have set off with curtains of beads and other things to receive some evening clients. So she points to this back room where you meet with your evening clients, it's got these long curtains of crystals and beads over a bright tie dye fabric where you receive your clients here who the rest of your little tribe don't quite get to meet normally, or perhaps even the mortals who come to see you and don't wish to be seen.

P

Preethi 12:27

I hope I prepared everything according to your liking.

S

Storyteller Rina 12:32

And she looks sideways for a minute, almost as if she's a little nervous about something.

P

Preethi 12:39

But, uh, Master Rahm, there was, there was someone watching the house about an hour ago.

R

Rahm the Shaman 12:51

someone was watching the house? Do you have any...did you get any photographs of this individual?

S

Storyteller Rina 13:00

No, they were very good at...what's the word?

R

Rahm the Shaman 13:08

Snooping?

P

Preethi 13:09

Camouflage! Yes, no, camouflage. He was hiding. I almost didn't notice he was there. I think it was a he. But I only noticed because I let the dog out. You know, I had to bring my dog with me this afternoon because I couldn't get the dog sitter to come and so I let him out for a while to do what he needs to do, and he ran straight to this tree. And, and he started barking and and I saw this person trying to shoo him away just for a minute. And then he was gone again. But he was there and he was watching.

R Rahm the Shaman 13:49

No, absolutely. Unwanted visitors are something that we definitely need to keep an eye out for, and you can...

T Teagan (Rahm) 13:56

And I imagine that she sees his expression change as soon as the mention of an unplanned visitor or somebody snooping around. It definitely brings him out of his daze a little bit, that he lives in, and starts taking matters like that very seriously.

P Preethi 14:19

I didn't want to to approach him or or anything. You never know when someone's watching your house... It's always a little a little scary, but I don't know if he's still there. He might not be. When I looked out again, he wasn't there but he could be.

S Storyteller Rina 14:40

She looks around again.

P Preethi 14:41

He could be anywhere. He could be behind the house. He could be beside the house...

S Storyteller Rina 14:47

And her eyes just get big and wide.

S Storyteller Rina 14:51

Master Rahm, why would someone be watching our house?

R Rahm the Shaman 14:58

Well, not all neighborhoods are good neighborhoods, there are always people who come around and might wish to...I mean, we are not absolutely hiding what we're doing here. We have many products that are worth valuable amounts of money. Maybe it's someone's snooping or casing the house, I think is the term. Do we umm... Let's take a look around ourselves. Why don't we... Do we have anyone else that still hasn't gone out for the evening that we can do kind of a look through and check security outside the building with me?

P Preethi 15:43
Eric is still here. He wasn't planning to go out tonight, I think.

R Rahm the Shaman 15:49
Oh good, good. Yes, no, let's grab Eric. And let's go take a look outside.

S Storyteller Rina 15:56
She nods vigorously.

P Preethi 16:00
I'll go find him, Master Rahm.

S Storyteller Rina 16:03
And she walks off, but not too hurriedly, because you have taught them the value of being calm and relaxed, even when you are stressed, even in your hurried movements. So she moves off at a leisurely pace, although you can still see the stress in her shoulders as she moves away from you. And she returns a moment later, with a tall, broad-shouldered older man in his late 50s. He's got red hair, that's fairly obviously dyed with henna. And he's got a face full of piercings, from his nose to his eyebrows to his chin, his lips. And he's shirtless, wearing harem pants and no shoes. But he's also fairly muscular. And Eric has been with you for a few years now. And he's acted as your muscle as needed, but also occasionally as security when you've needed it.

T Teagan (Rahm) 17:11
Fantastic, excellent.

R Rahm the Shaman 17:14
Yes, Eric, we we need to check the grounds. I'm worried that we may have somebody snooping around, possibly looking for a way in the off hours and I wouldn't want them to fall into any trouble. I think we should take a look at the surroundings, perimeter and just become confident in our current security, don't you think so?

S Storyteller Rina 17:43
Eric crosses his brawny arms over his chest and says

E Eric 17:51
Snooper. Don't like snooping.

R Rahm the Shaman 17:58
Neither do I. But my main fear is that if it's just a common snooper and they were to make their way inside, then you know, that would be something that we would have to handle and well, I wouldn't want them to get hurt. So the best thing we can do is deter them. But if perhaps there's something more, someone creeping around with other motives, then it's best that we try to understand what those are as well. Let's go outside and see if we can find this individual. If not, then pizza's on me tonight.

S Storyteller Rina 18:48
Eric smiles slightly at the mention of pizza, which is his favorite food in the world. But Preethi looks up a little bit anxiously.

P Preethi 18:56
Do you need me to come with you, Master Rahm?

R Rahm the Shaman 19:02
Actually, I'd like you to stay inside in the common space, just in case we need you for something. We'll bring you on the telephone or, or give a shout.

S Storyteller Rina 19:17
She nods vigorously. You'd say she looks a little relieved.

P Preethi 19:21
Oh, yes, it's probably a lot better. I do have to look after the dog. One moment.

R Rahm the Shaman 19:33
Absolutely. You don't want to be chasing him down the street now.

P Preethi 19:38

P Preetni 19:38

No, no, no.

S Storyteller Rina 19:41

Preethi has hardly left the house for the last six months, and she looks absolutely terrified at the idea of having to chase the dog down the street. So she goes out into the common room. And Eric sort of flexes his biceps a little bit and then cracks his knuckles.

E Eric 19:59

Hm. Find snoopers. Don't want anyone getting hurt. Mostly because I don't want you to have to pay bail again. Heh.

R Rahm the Shaman 20:16

It's not like we don't have the money. But you know, paperwork. It's, it's, it's incredibly tedious.

E Eric 20:25

I was trying to make a joke, Master Rahm. You said I should work on my sense of humor.

R Rahm the Shaman 20:33

That is true. We'll...we'll work on it together.

S Storyteller Rina 20:39

He nods and sets out for the the front door, checking to make sure you're following behind him. It's fairly quiet in the rest of the house. It is a Saturday night. So you know, the few people who aren't upstairs, probably stoned out, are probably out at a party getting stoned out, or those who don't live in the house are off with their their families or their roommates or whoever they do live with. So it is a fairly quiet building as you move through. But there is this kind of slight air of tension at the idea of this person, whoever they are, who's been snooping around. You don't know if that tension is coming from you, if it's coming from Eric, if it's just in the general atmosphere of the house, but it feels a little uncomfortable. And it's almost a relief when the front door opens and you can feel the fresh air of the San Francisco evening.

R Rahm the Shaman 21:47

Absolutely.

S Storyteller Rina 21:50

Eric doesn't let you step outside until he has stepped onto the front porch, very ostentatiously looked to the right, looked to the left, looked up and then he waves at you, turns and beckons for you to come outside and join him on the porch

T Teagan (Rahm) 22:11

Absolutely. As we walk around I want to effect an aura of casualness, so I begin to tell Eric a joke, because we said we were going to work on his humor.

R Rahm the Shaman 22:25

Eric, have you if you heard the one about Sherlock Holmes and his companion Watson going camping?

E Eric 22:34

I thought Sherlock Holmes did not like the outdoors.

R Rahm the Shaman 22:37

Well, in this case, he did.

T Teagan (Rahm) 22:39

And I'm looking around, and I'm checking the foundation and I'm looking around casually, trying to be as if I'm not looking for a person outside. But I'm, I'm just out for a night stroll on my own little premises here. And I say,

R Rahm the Shaman 22:54

Yes, there was a part where Watson and Sherlock went out into the woods. And they went camping and they lay down their grass, and they looked up to the sky. And Sherlock said, "Look at those beautiful stars up there. Now, what can you deduce from that?" And Watson says, "Oh, well, you know, the sky is very clear. And we're expected to have weather, good weather for many days. And the stars are so far away. And it makes you think about, you know, the existential reality of life." And Sherlock looks at him and says, "You know what I've deduced?" Watson says "what?" Mr. Holmes says "someone's stolen our tent!"

T Teagan (Rahm) 23:46

And at that... Rahm is not great at telling jokes, but that, it was his best attempt at a joke.

- S** Storyteller Rina 23:56
Eric was looking around the tree that's in front of the house for an intruder as you're telling this joke, and when you finish telling the joke, he stops, and he turns and he looks at you and says,
- E** Eric 24:12
What kind of detective doesn't notice when their tent is being stolen from in front of them?
- R** Rahm the Shaman 24:18
I imagine not a very good one.
- S** Storyteller Rina 24:22
And then he stops and he looks, and then he looks at your face.
- E** Eric 24:27
Ah. You were telling a joke.
- R** Rahm the Shaman 24:30
I was attempting to tell the joke. Hm. I'm...
- E** Eric 24:36
attempts to laugh Ha ha ha ha ha. Very good one, Master Rahm.
- S** Storyteller Rina 24:42
And he turns back to look behind the tree again.
- T** Teagan (Rahm) 24:46
Absolutely. At this point, Rahm's just going to try to expand his senses as much as possible. Especially scent, but I imagine that Rahm also has a bit of a 6th or 7th sense about these things and is reaching out on every wavelength they can and try to see, because he suspects that it

wasn't a mortal here, the mortals usually don't care too much for what he does out here. But he's trying to see if he can sense anything more on his level in the vicinity.

S Storyteller Rina 25:33

Ok, so I'm going to have you make a roll. So you're going to roll Investigation, plus Intelligence, so that'll be 4d10. And you're going to need at least 2 Successes, you're going to need 2 that are 6 or higher.

T Teagan (Rahm) 25:52

Alright, so I have rolled, oh, I have rolled a 7 and a 10.

S Storyteller Rina 26:01

Excellent. So you kind of close your eyes as you hear Eric not very stealthily moving around, looking for whoever this intruder may be. A car alarm goes off as he bumps into a car that's parked on the street, in front of the sidewalk. But you're able to shut all of that out easily with all of your training, your mental discipline, and you inhale deeply of the chill San Francisco night. You take in the scent of someone's Chinese takeaway somewhere down the street, beef and broccoli tonight. Excellent choice. You take in the slight hint of salt water from the bay far away from where you live, relatively speaking, but you can smell it. You can feel it on the air. And then you catch cigarette smoke. Which is not common for your area. It's normally smoke of a different kind.

T Teagan (Rahm) 27:12

No, absolutely. I wonder if I can tell if it's even ventilated or closed or anything like that. Or just plain tobacco.

S Storyteller Rina 27:20

It smells like plain tobacco, yes.

T Teagan (Rahm) 27:28

How mundane.

S Storyteller Rina 27:30

But with that roll, you can even tell this cigarette smoke comes from a cigarette that was lit but not actually smoked. And you catch another scent behind it. And you breathe in, more out of reflex than anything else because you don't need to breathe, and you open your senses further.

Ah, that sort of sour animalistic tang on the wind. There was a Gangrel here.

R Rahm the Shaman 28:19
Just as I suspected.

T Teagan (Rahm) 28:21
I say out loud in Eric's reach.

R Rahm the Shaman 28:25
I think perhaps you should go inside, Eric.

S Storyteller Rina 28:32
Eric looks up from the anthill he was investigating very thoroughly in the crack in the sidewalk.

E Eric 28:42
Oh, go inside, Master Rahm? Have you, have you found him?

R Rahm the Shaman 28:52
Yes. I'm not absolutely sure. But I believe this is not the right place for you right now. Why don't you go inside and order some pizzas in a little bit? How about that?

S Storyteller Rina 29:15
Eric nods. He's used to you telling him to leave at certain times when you've had other people to speak to and he straightens up, cracks his back, rotates his neck around a little bit. And he just gives the street one more look up and down. And then he walks inside the house without looking back and you hear the door slam shut.

T Teagan (Rahm) 29:41
At that point, Rahm is going to look around a little bit more and then he's going to say,

R Rahm the Shaman 29:55
Alright we're alone

...right, we're alone.

L Luther 29:59
Oh, are we, though?

S Storyteller Rina 30:03
You hear from behind you.

R Rahm the Shaman 30:08
Oh, we're as alone we're going to be. What can I do for you?

L Luther 30:17
This is too open. Not on the street.

S Storyteller Rina 30:22
And a car drives past on the street as if to highlight this person's point.

R Rahm the Shaman 30:28
Well, if you promise to play nice, there's a carriage house out back that we've been using as a garage. I think some of the fine ladies and gentlemen that I employ I've been growing some substances in there. But other than that, would that be private enough for you?

S Storyteller Rina 30:49
You hear a short bark of a laugh.

L Luther 30:53
I'll see you there.

S Storyteller Rina 30:55
And then everything is quiet.

- T** Teagan (Rahm) 30:57
I'm going to, with my limited experience, not let my defenses down. I know that that can be a deception. But I am going to make my way to the carriage house.
- S** Storyteller Rina 31:16
You make your way around the back to the carriage house; you catch a glimpse of Preethi's somewhat nervous face looking out the front window at you as you walk past. and she just sort of gives a half-hearted wave as if to ask if everything's okay.
- T** Teagan (Rahm) 31:34
I give her a smile, not a full smile, not a smile that would show the fangs, but more of a comforting smile. Like, "don't worry about it. It's okay."
- S** Storyteller Rina 31:48
She half-heartedly smiles back at you and then closes the blinds on the window. And so you can make your way around the back of the house towards the old carriage house. The smell of weed and other things is very strong back here, especially since you have opened your senses a bit already this evening. It is very, very strong, a little bit heavy for you, even in your undead state. But the door is open.
- T** Teagan (Rahm) 32:19
sarcastic I love that. Alright. In that case, I walk inside, cautiously.
- S** Storyteller Rina 32:29
You walk in and there's one electric light bulb hanging in the middle. There's other lights to aid in the growing of the plants, but this particular light has been turned on and leaning against a table that is covered with rows and rows and rows of plants is a man. He's short. He's only about five foot two, five foot three, but he looks built like a predator. He's lean. He's agile, you can see in the way he moves that he's a hunter of some kind. His features are very lean and almost kind of fox-like, that's how you would describe them to yourself as you look at him. He's got little beady eyes and very sharp, angular facial bones. He's wearing a long dark trench coat and a neat dark suit and he's holding a battered fedora in one hand and he tucks the fedora under his arm as you come in. He leans back and cocks his head and he looks at you, and he says,
- L** Luther 33:45
Rahm the Shaman, I presume?

R Rahm the Shaman 33:50
That's my name. I hope the grow lights aren't a problem for you.

S Storyteller Rina 33:55
He lets out that short bark of a laugh again. It's not exactly unpleasant, but there's something a bit feral in it.

L Luther 34:08
It would take a lot more than this to bother me. Nice little operation you have going here.

R Rahm the Shaman 34:19
It is, it is a nice little operation. Are you coming as a potential customer? You're not usually the type that comes around.

L Luther 34:41
Rahm, Rahm, Rahm. You and I both know this operation isn't exactly "little", and we both know who's letting you keep it going, don't we?

S Storyteller Rina 34:59
As he says that, and the way he looks at you, you've never met him, but you know that the sheriff of San Francisco, the Prince's right hand man and enforcer is a Gangrel. And that just kind of clicks into place as you're looking at him, and as he makes this comment about who lets you run your little operation.

R Rahm the Shaman 35:27
Hmm. So is this a shakedown for protection money?

L Luther 35:34
disdainful As if we had need of such things. And as if our noble prince would ever resort to such tactics. No, no, I have a more personal request for you.



R Rahm the Shaman 35:50

Absolutely. I live to serve.

L Luther 35:57

Do you?

R Rahm the Shaman 36:00

Well, I'm not going to say everything I do is altruistic. I have goals of my own. But for the most part, I'm, you know, congenial and accepting of...

T Teagan (Rahm) 36:16

He's just, he's kind of just rambling on a little nervously at this point.

S Storyteller Rina 36:21

The sheriff flashes this feral smile at you with his very sharp fangs.

L Luther 36:29

Don't worry, Rahm. I'm not here for anything problematic. I'm not going to shut you down. I don't even want to ask about your business. But I'm pursuing a line of inquiry, you might say, unofficially. Unofficially, got it? I wasn't here. Do you understand, Rahm?

R Rahm the Shaman 36:59

Absolutely. What can I do to assist?

L Luther 37:04

I'm looking for one of your clanmates, another Malkavian who's causing some...distress, let's say in my clan. I can't find her. No one seems to know who she is. And I thought, well, with your connections and with the oversight of the prince of your masquerade... bending, shall we say, that you might be able to assist me?

S Storyteller Rina 37:34

And he flashes his fangs and that smile again.

T Teagan (Rahm) 37:38
Well that's not threatening at all.

R Rahm the Shaman 37:43
What do you know about this individual?

L Luther 37:46
She's been in Chinatown. I know that. She goes by the name of Dina Forthright, which I assume is a pseudonym...Joshua.

T Teagan (Rahm) 37:59
Oh, he does **not** like that. **laughs** Oh, yeah, no, any mention of the person that Rahm was before Rahm was Rahm. Um, it's like slapping them in the face or elbowing them in the stomach. It's not an outright attack. But yes, it snaps them right out of whatever daze that they were...daydream they were in, because it is not a pleasant experience. Wow. They've almost completely forgotten everything else that the individual had said. But now, I mean, if they didn't have Rahm's full attention, they have Rahm's full attention right now. But I have to ask you, do I know this individual? Do I...have I seen anybody by the description provided in the locations mentioned?

S Storyteller Rina 39:10
You have heard through your Malkavian network - there's a fairly decent number of Malkavians in San Francisco, it's a good place for vampires with the Malkavian talents for future seeing and all that sort of thing - you have heard about a Malkavian who came from somewhere south, you're not sure if that means Central America or if that means South America or where they came from exactly. But that some Malkavian came into town recently and started spouting some crazy prophecies, and crazy by Malkavian standards. So you have heard some rumors. You have not encountered Forthright herself, but you have been hearing some some chatter and some discussion in the clan.

T Teagan (Rahm) 40:09
Hmm. Then in that case, Rahm's gonna respond with something along the lines of,

T Teagan (Rahm) 40:17
I've heard probably the same things that you've heard: someone in town being a particularly Malkavian Malkavian. I know the reputation that we have, and seems this one's probably overdone it a little bit. but I don't think I have much more information than you probably

overdoing it a little bit, but I don't think I have much more information than you probably already have.

S

Storyteller Rina 40:49

He smiled a little bit when you said that this person was overdoing the Malkavianness. He tilts his head at you almost like a bird, the way he's tilted it, and his sharp eagle-like eyes, you'd say, the way he's looking at you, and he says,

L

Luther 41:11

But you could find more, couldn't you, Rahm?

R

Rahm the Shaman 41:16

I tend to head to Chinatown every once in a while. I could ask around. The only thing is, of course, you're asking me to poke around and ask for information about a clanmate. Even if they are being a little dangerous, you know, I don't want to get a bad reputation. I'm not saying that I'm not going to do it, but I am putting myself out there at a...small, but noticeable risk. And I'm just asking, is your intention...I'm sorry to cut to the chase here.

T

Teagan (Rahm) 42:09

And Rahm never cuts to the chase, Rahm takes forever to get anything out of their mouth. They say,

R

Rahm the Shaman 42:17

Are you intending to threaten me if I don't do this? Or is there some sort of reward or boon that you might be able to grant or bestow upon myself if I do help you in this endeavor?

S

Storyteller Rina 42:41

You see the fangs glint slightly again as he sort of smiles and he reaches one long lean hand out and plucks a leaf off a plant. He looks at it, starts rolling it between his fingers.

L

Luther 43:04

I don't threaten, Rahm. I have no need to threaten. I just would like to remind you how you are allowed to continue your somewhat...unorthodox experiments in our Prince's realm, and that some other princes might not be so accommodating, were you no longer welcome to operate in this principedom. We have been very good to you, Rahm. Very good, wouldn't you say?

S Storyteller Rina 43:41
And he holds the leaf up to his face and then blows it away.

R Rahm the Shaman 43:49
I would of course say that I see this is more of a situation of debts already incurred. Understood. Paying a little bit extra on the principal is never a bad idea. Alright. I shall head there this evening and make some inquiries. How, how do I...how do I get word to you? Do you, do you have a cell phone? Do you know what a cellphone is? You have one?

S Storyteller Rina 44:33
He blurts out this short barking laugh.

L Luther 44:42
Do I look like a neonate?

S Storyteller Rina 44:45
And then he pulls a small card out of the pocket, inside pocket, of his trench coat and he hands it to you and it just has a phone number on it. Nothing else.

L Luther 44:58
You can reach me here. Ask for Luther.

R Rahm the Shaman 45:01
Luther? Fan...fantastic.

L Luther 45:03
And I do appreciate your acquiescence in this matter. You will find us most grateful Enjoy your evening.

R Rahm the Shaman 45:14
And you yourself.

S

Storyteller Rina 45:16

Before you can finish saying that, he's gone. You feel him brush past you in this swift, almost feline motion. It's astounding to you, even in your hyper-flexible body, how quickly this man moves. He's gone into the darkness

T

Teagan (Rahm) 45:37

Absolutely. I probably grumble under my voice, you know, "you as well" or something like that and look around the dusty carriage house at the fruits of everyone else's endeavors here and exit and proceed to the house. I did promise pizza and now I got to put the order in and then I got to go. So I don't get to enjoy watching them eat. I have a job to do this evening. Apparently I will not be hanging out.

S

Storyteller Rina 46:21

Does Rahm enjoy the vicarious thrill of watching mortals eat?

T

Teagan (Rahm) 46:28

There's so much juice in pineapple and ham pizza. I'll just leave it at that.

S

Storyteller Rina 46:41

You order some some pizzas for the few tribe members who are still in the house. Most of them are vegetarian, especially Preethi. But Eric is the Hawaiian pizza lover. So you order him an entire Hawaiian pizza just for himself, and you give them some cash to pay for the pizza when it arrives and you set off for Chinatown. How are you getting there? Are you taking the trolley? Do you drive? Do you Uber? How do you get there?

T

Teagan (Rahm) 47:16

Not sure the trolley makes it into my neighborhoods. So I think I'm doing ok enough to use Uber. San Francisco's the Tech City. I mean, this is the home of Google. You gotta, you gotta Uber, you gotta Lyft. And while I may be a little behind the times, and maybe not keeping up with all the technology, I know how to use a few apps. So yeah, yeah, I'm gonna go ahead and rideshare my way down there.

S

Storyteller Rina 47:48

Ok, is Rahm kind of guy who would do the Uber rideshare where you're literally sharing a car with another passenger who's going in the same direction or does Rahm want his own transportation?

T Teagan (Rahm) 48:05

Rahm will pay the extra few dollars to ensure that we don't have to pick up anyone else.

S Storyteller Rina 48:11

So you get into the Uber. There's plenty of Ubers going around on a Saturday night in San Francisco, so one shows up fairly quickly. And the Uber driver, who is a young Black man wearing very neatly pressed suit and tie, looks like maybe he got off from his job and went to make a few bucks driving Uber around for a few hours, looks at you, smiles, looks like he's about to initiate conversation, and then thinks better of it and just turns his attention to the road.

T Teagan (Rahm) 48:51

Oh, it's always wonderful when things work out the way that you want them to,

S Storyteller Rina 48:57

You're able to think and ruminate on this whole strange conversation. Maybe you're feeling a little bit nervous, perhaps, it's never really good when the sheriff pays an individual call; he's usually the person the prince sends out when the Masquerade has been broken. And if the prince hadn't been so kind to you, a few years back, he would have shown up at your door for completely different and far more violent reasons. So maybe you're a little uncomfortable. Maybe you're a little intrigued. Who knows what Rahm is feeling as you make your way down and up and down the streets of San Francisco to Chinatown. You get dropped off at a small pagoda that's been set up fairly recently for the tourists to take pictures in and you can make your way to the The Lotus Palace which is a quote unquote tea room and Mahjong parlor for other Malkavians, let's say. So it's got a bustling, touristy business in the front for the tourists to come in and have what they think is a real Chinese tea and play what they think is real Mahjong, but you can go all the way into the back and find others of your clan hanging out, making some small talk with their ghouls when they bring them along, or with the few other vampires from other clans who venture in by invitation. They're just...it's a place where Malkavians can sit and chat and enjoy the the heavy scents of spices and cooking and all of the different blends of of food that they might miss from their living days. And it would be a logical place to start in your look, in your search for this. Dina Forthright, whoever she is.

T Teagan (Rahm) 51:17

No, absolutely. No. So I'll enter this building and I I'm wearing...you said it was October, correct?

S Storvteller Rina 51:25

Yes.

T

Teagan (Rahm) 51:27

Oh, yes. It's probably starting to get a little chilly in San Francisco.

S

Storyteller Rina 51:32

It's a bit nippy.

T

Teagan (Rahm) 51:34

No, absolutely. I've gone ahead and put on some street clothes. I think in this case, I'm probably just wearing a white tank underneath a jogging jacket, a windbreaker with a zipper up the front, probably in navy blue or something with a couple of white stripes down the side. Pants wise, completely mismatching, it's some "work casual" wool pants, probably attained by somebody from Ross. So it's just this weirdest mix of like, you know, undergarment, you know, exercise gear on top and like comfortable wool pants on the bottom. I don't even want to think about what Rahm's wearing on his feet. It could be anywhere from flip flops to...

S

Storyteller Rina 52:38

It's flip flops. Let's be real. It's flip flops.

T

Teagan (Rahm) 52:41

You know what, it's flip flops. If it's flip flops, it's actually really nice ones. He got them from Target. And they're cloth, so they wrap around the back of the foot as well. They're really good. They're very worn down, though. But he has two sets. He has them in pink and he has them in blue. They're very nice.

S

Storyteller Rina 53:03

Is he wearing the blue ones tonight?

T

Teagan (Rahm) 53:05

I'm wearing the blue ones, because that somehow does match the top and it makes sense. It makes sense to Rahm, and that's all the matter is that it makes sense to Rahm, alright? Okay, so anyways Rahm is going to proceed into this place with his topknot, and his very hipster

outfit, accidentally hipster outfit, um, and is just looking around, nodding at people that they recognize looking for anyone out of place, anyone by this immediate description, but not expecting to see them immediately here.

S

Storyteller Rina 53:45

So you look around, there's a few people you recognize from the clan who are hanging out and playing mahjong together because they actually do genuinely enjoy playing mahjong. So you can hear the loud clicking and clacking of the of the tiles in the back corner and no one even pauses to wave at you as you come in because they are very focused on this game. You know how it gets. There's a couple who are sitting at the bar drinking air quotes red tea, and there's a large platter of red bean cake sitting between them with...well let's just say it's not red beans, but these are fairly normal accoutrements for for this particular parlor, and as you look around, people are talking to each other. It's pretty much all Malkavian in here tonight. Someone does wave at at you as you come in. There's a an older looking female vampire, another Malkavian, in the back corner, Rhonda. She looks to be in her early 60s, she's got her hair all piled up on top of her head, she's wearing a long flowing purple dress in a very, very, very neon purple, and just tons of necklaces and crystals and all sorts of gaudy jewelry. And she's sitting in a back corner apparently reading a book, but when you when you walk in she looks up and she waves at you and gestures to the seat across from her.

T

Teagan (Rahm) 55:29

No, absolutely. I'm gonna go ahead and move immediately towards Rhonda and take a seat there. I'm checking my wallet at that point and I haven't gotten used to app pay or anything like that and I don't know if this place takes it so I'm just making sure I have a few bills in case I need to pay for anything or tip mortals working here or anything like that.

S

Storyteller Rina 56:00

You see a few ghouls moving around, you know you're in the back parlor where the Malkavians gather. So there's not really much in the way of mortals other than a couple of ghoul servants who are happily moving things around this particular club. It's popular with the vampires because being a tourist location in the front, nobody looks twice at a bunch of usually Caucasian or Latinx vampires moving through; they just think you're another group of tourists. So you're able to get to Rhonda fairly quickly; she's reading a nother interminable Dan Brown novel for some reason, but she she gestures that gestures at the seat across from her and says,

R

Rhonda 56:48

Rahm! It has been so long since I have seen you. What brings you here tonight? Have you sensed something?

R

Rahm the Shaman 56:58

Rahm the Shaman 57:33

Well, I am here against my will. What are you reading? Is that...is that the one, is is that the one with the paintings? Or is that the one with the well and everyone gets...well, I don't want to give any spoilers away.

R

Rhonda 57:19

Oh no, it's the it's the one with the movie with young, very hot EwanMcGregor and that's the only reason I picked up this book.

S

Storyteller Rina 57:29

She shows you; it's the Angels and Demons movie cover, so it's got Tom Hanks and Ewan McGregor on the cover.

R

Rahm the Shaman 57:38

Oh, fantastic. It's nice to see that you're...

T

Teagan (Rahm) 57:42

And I'm saying this very congenially, this is just the rapport we have.

R

Rahm the Shaman 57:44

It's like, it's nice to see that your reading material is as trashy as your choice in partners is.

S

Storyteller Rina 57:50

She sniffs.

R

Rhonda 57:52

Yes. Well, I see you haven't changed much. I predicted you wouldn't change anyway.

R

Rahm the Shaman 57:59

Well, I have so much time ahead of me to change. Look, I didn't come here just to trade barbs. I had an inquiry that I needed to make on behalf of a friend of mine. And I thought I'd come down and see how the group was doing.

R

Rhonda 58:28

Yes, you only come when you need something. Isn't that just like you and just like your sire to only ever around when we can do something for you?

R

Rahm the Shaman 58:38

Well, I, you know, everyone, everyone has their goals. Everyone has their plans. I, you know, I have to, I have to I have a living, a nonliving, I have work to do. I have, have to make, you know, expenses. You know, I have, you know, there's always that trip that I wanted to take overseas and, and endeavors like that, you know, require financing. And I'm just trying to get by, you know how it is.

S

Storyteller Rina 59:14

She sniffs. Her nostrils flare slightly, and she tilts her head a little bit and she puts her fingers up to her temple. You've seen her do this act for mortals in her fortunetelling occupation at Ren Fairs and things of that nature. But she looks actually serious this time and a grimace sort of crosses her face, as if she suddenly got a bad headache. And she closes her eyes and shakes her head as if to clear something away and she shakes it again more violently, and then she looks at you.

R

Rhonda 59:52

Goodness Rahm, what are you getting into? There's...there's a bad aura around you today. Something...something's wrong. What is it? Tell me quickly, I don't I...I don't want you to, to poison my aura. Well, what do you want? Hurry up.

R

Rahm the Shaman 1:00:13

Oh, you probably sensed Luther. I I got a visit today.

S

Storyteller Rina 1:00:20

Her eyes widen when you say Luther.

R

Rhonda 1:00:22

Garibaldi?

R

Rahm the Shaman 1:00:24

Yeah.

R Rhonda 1:00:25
What did you do?

R Rahm the Shaman 1:00:27
Yeah. I actually...this time, this time it's not me. He...he's looking for someone. I think someone's pissed off the Prince is what I'm guessing or at least pissed off Luther. Apparently one of us...

T Teagan (Rahm) 1:00:51
And he's motioning back and forth and to the others in the room

R Rahm the Shaman 1:00:57
...is getting a little, let's say, a little too manic. And it's becoming a problem. I, I told him of course, there's not much that I can do. I didn't have information. I am... I'm not a snitch. But I thought, you know, he he came and implied that I still needed to come down and ask. You, I, you know what I do. He's...I owe people. I have to at least make appearances.

S Storyteller Rina 1:01:36
When you mentioned another Malkavian that was making a bit of a stink, she stops fidgeting with one of the rings on her fingers, and she cocks her head and looks at you, and she puts her hands on her hips.

R Rhonda 1:01:52
And I bet it's that Dina Forthright. She just won't shut up, that one. She's always drawing attention to herself. I don't even think that's her real name.

R Rahm the Shaman 1:02:04
Absolutely. Dun dun, executive producer Dick Wolf, we've solved the problem, you've you've gotten it! The Law and Order case is wrapped up. That's exactly who they're looking for. Now, what is...what's her deal? What's going on? I don't want to necessarily deliver her into the hands of someone like that. But what's...what do you think has got his boxers in a bunch?

S Storyteller Rina 1:02:33

No one really knows who Dina is. Again, I don't even think it's her real name. But I think she's from Brazil, or Argentina or something like that. She's from there. South America, one of the South American Malkavians. She just blew into town two weeks ago. Remember, we had that huge windstorm? She just must have come along with it. But she showed up at the usual, you know, fortune telling booths and things, but she wasn't hired for any of them. She just showed up and started muttering things and scaring the humans, and well, I was rather afraid that the Prince was going to get involved just on that basis because people were starting to look at her strangely. But have you seen her? She doesn't look like one of us.

R

Rahm the Shaman 1:03:34

No, I've...she doesn't look like one of us? What does that mean?

S

Storyteller Rina 1:03:43

She looks down at herself in th long flowing purple dress and these crystals and everything and she looks very pointedly at you in your flip flops and your topknot and everything and she says,

R

Rhonda 1:04:02

Well...eccentric. She looks like a model. Like one of those Brazilian or Argentinian or Chilean or something models. She's very tall and gorgeous legs to die for, let me tell you. And they just follow her everywhere. Stupid humans. But then she just stopped after about a week, she stopped talking to the humans and then she started talking to Kindred and I saw her talking to a large group of Gangrel just a few days ago. The city ones, not the crazy feral country ones, no one talks to them. They're impossible to speak to. But she was talking to them and getting very animated about something. And they weren't looking at her just because she was, well, gorgeous. I mean, they looked scared.

R

Rahm the Shaman 1:05:10

They looked scared because of her?

S

Storyteller Rina 1:05:15

Have you ever seen a scared looking Gangrel? That is something terrifying to behold, let me tell you, young man.

R

Rahm the Shaman 1:05:26

Well, I mean, I can't say that I have, but were they scared of her?

R Rhonda 1:05:32

No, I think it was something she said. Because have you ever seen a cornered Gangrel, Rahm? When you...when you scare a Gangrel, they don't run away. They attack. And if they were scared of her, then all of these 20 or 30 Gangrels would have just made mincemeat out of her, Masquerade or no Masquerade. But they left and I haven't seen them since.

R Rahm the Shaman 1:06:11

Well, it's certainly odd. A girl comes in, forgets her social graces, causes a ruckus with the mortals, causes a ruckus with the no longer mortals. And then someone comes knocking on my door. Well, wait, did you say you haven't seen her in some time?

R Rhonda 1:06:40

Well, it's been at least two days since we saw her. No one's seen the Gangrels that she was speaking to since she she was seen speaking to them. But actually, it has been a few days since I've seen her as well. That's odd.

S Storyteller Rina 1:06:59

And Rhonda looks thoughtful for a moment.

R Rhonda 1:07:03

Hmm. Yes, she hasn't been around really.

R Rahm the Shaman 1:07:09

If she was easy to find, they wouldn't have come talking to me.

R Rhonda 1:07:13

That's true. Luther is very good at finding things that he wants to find.

S Storyteller Rina 1:07:19

And she almost reflexively crosses herself and then thinks better of it.

R Rhonda 1:07:24

I just thought it was another, you know, scary vision of the future something but
nothin' nothin' comes to mind. They they went she went now Luther's lookin' for her

nothing...nothing comes to mind. They, they went, she went, now Luther's looking for her.
Hmm.

- R** Rahm the Shaman 1:07:51
Do you know where she was holding up for the night? Or for the day? Sorry, old habits die hard.
- R** Rhonda 1:08:00
lascivious So did you from what I hear. And well.
- S** Storyteller Rina 1:08:08
She wiggles her eyebrows at you.
- R** Rahm the Shaman 1:08:11
So the alternative would have been far less hair up here. You know, if I would have stayed in my previous condition.
- R** Rhonda 1:08:18
Oh, we can't have that now, can we? But where she stayed? No, I I can't say that I know. I mean, I only saw her a couple times. I never actually spoke to her other than to scream at her the one time she tried to step in when I was telling fortunes the first week she was here. I can ask around a little bit. Mind you, I don't want to get too involved in this.
- S** Storyteller Rina 1:08:51
And she winces again, as if this spasm of pain has gone through her head again.
- R** Rhonda 1:08:58
It's, it's not good, whatever it is you're getting yourself into, Rahm.
- i** 1:09:02
I'm not getting myself into anything. Honestly, I'm trying to get the bare minimum of information that I need to get Luther to fly off.
- R** Rhonda 1:09:17

R Rhonda 1:09:17

He doesn't fly, unfortunately. He does the running thing.

R Rahm the Shaman 1:09:24

Well, I can think of a couple other things I'd rather him be off doing. But that being said, yes. Look, I don't want...you and me, we're friends. I don't want to get you wrapped into this. If you can ask around and it causes you no heartburn whatsoever, then do so. But like I said, I'm intrigued. But I'm not putting my neck out for anyone I don't have to.

S Storyteller Rina 1:10:03

She sighs and her hand goes up to a large amber pendant that she wears amongst the 15 other beaded necklaces she's got on and she's just sort of clasps at it.

R Rhonda 1:10:19

Well, I suppose...I suppose if I don't have you to trade insults with, who else am I going to find around here? Alright, if Luther comes back, you tell him you're looking into it and give him what I told you and I will make some discreet inquiries. I can get around most places, you know.

S Storyteller Rina 1:10:41

And she picks up a turban from the seat next to her. It's got this massive feather and a huge obviously fake gem in the middle of it.

R Rhonda 1:10:55

Madame Zelda has entrance to many places.

S Storyteller Rina 1:10:59

And she smiles slightly.

R Rhonda 1:11:01

But I'll let you know if I find anything out. But just be careful, Rahm. I've got a bad vibe around here lately. First her, then those Gangrel, then I haven't seen some of my friends around lately. I don't know what's going on around the Bay Area, Rahm, but I don't like it. And now you're mixed up in this. And I know you don't want to be mixed up in this, but...

S Storyteller Rina 1:11:24

S Storyteller Rina 1:11:34

She closes her eyes for a moment, and she lets out a call of some kind; it sounds almost like a bird call. And one of the ghouls who was working behind the bar comes running over and just sort of kneels next to her. And she reaches down and bares her fangs and just bites into his wrist as he holds it up to her. And she feeds and her eyes start going kind of gray and milky. And the blood is trickling down her mouth and back onto this boy's arm, and she finally releases his hand and she throws her head back, and a voice that isn't hers comes out of her lips. As she says,

R Rhonda 1:12:30

There's only trouble for you on this path, Rahm. Watch for the blood moon. It's all going to end.

S Storyteller Rina 1:12:44

And then her eyes return to their natural color, and she delicately wipes the blood away from her mouth.

T Teagan (Rahm) 1:12:52

sarcastic Great.

S Storyteller Rina 1:12:55

And she shakes her head and looks at you and says,

R Rhonda 1:12:58

Was that helpful? What did I say?

R Rahm the Shaman 1:13:02

This is about as helpful as an...as an animatronic fortune teller. Cryptic, random and terrifying when eventually accurate.

R Rhonda 1:13:17

You're always so helpful, Rahm.

R Rahm the Shaman 1:13:21

Something about... By the way, I love the hat. It's only in a city like this can someone still get

away with that.

R

Rhonda 1:13:32

Mortals want what they want. They would never take me seriously if I showed up looking like an ordinary person. No one would take you seriously if you wear a suit.

S

Storyteller Rina 1:13:44

And she smiles at you.

R

Rahm the Shaman 1:13:46

Oh yeah. No. The suits were always for my Sire. Never for me.

R

Rhonda 1:13:54

Go home, Rahm. Enjoy the time you have. That's all I can tell you right now.

S

Storyteller Rina 1:14:06

And that is where we will end tonight's session.

T

Teagan (Rahm) 1:14:09

Fantastic.

S

Storyteller Rina 1:14:11

Thank you, Teagan, for joining us and thank you to our listeners for learning more about Rahm the Shaman. I hope you'll tune in next week for our final prologue and soon for the official beginning of our Chronicle. Thank you, and good night.