

Kalila Stormfire's Economical Magick Services. The following entry is for initiated ears only. Case Twenty Eight: Manifestation.

KALILA

Today's date is October 4th. The moon is waxing crescent. Sun is in Libra. Oh, right. Um. As a note for future initiates, I'm not sure if you're ever going to listen to these in order so I might as well make it clear. I know for the most part these early recordings are just me talking into my recorder, and there's been good reason for that. Client confidentiality, mostly.

(clears throat) And before she butts in, yes. To...to some, I, like most people who like to record themselves for hours, can appreciate the *drama* of performing in an empty room.

FADE IN: MUSIC - NATURE BY KETSA

But this isn't about *me*. For posterity, I am now offering live recording for clients. My memory is even worse these days...and the liminal has placed more stress on everyone's concept of reality. So recording is important, for transparency with myself and my clients. So. (clears throat) Let's get started.

Client name is Victor Kumari. Alright, Vic. I'm going to start by asking your birth month and day.

VIC

Oh! Right. Uh. November 27th. Almost always hits around Thanksgiving. Blessing and a curse really, massive feast, but never really focused on me you know?

KALILA

Got it. Sagitarrius then. Alright, I'm going to ask you a few more questions that we didn't get to over the phone. This is for me to understand your elemental alignment. We already got through some of the questions to help me narrow things down. You said you were an extrovert, right?

VIC

Yup. Undeniably.

KALILA writes it down.

KALILA

Great. Okay. Don't try to think too much about the questions. Just...go with your gut. First question, do you prefer talking with people or adventure?

VIC

Oh, talking for sure. (laughs) You should have seen me last year, my boyfriend took me out to Great Falls and I nearly fell in. Twice. He's the adventurer, really, not me.

KALILA writes it down.

KALILA

Mmhmm. Okay. Which do you prefer, mercy or justice?

VIC

Justice.

KALILA writes it down.

KALILA

Ah, alright. You are an extroverted air with a secondary of fire. Okay. Do you have any patrons?

VIC

Used to. Cernunnos. Um...haven't really heard from them in a bit though.

KALILA

Okay. We'll get to that in a minute.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

KALILA closes the notebook.

Just a few housekeeping notes for you before we go any further. For the record--uh, literally--I am recording this session and you, Victor Kumari, can rescind your consent to be recorded at any time.

VIC

I'm still onboard. For posterity sake and all that, right?

KALILA

(kindly) Your safety matters more than posterity here. If you want the recording turned off, please do not hesitate to let me know.

VIC

What kind of thing would make me want to stop recording mid-session?

SHADOW

Emotions can get a little...intense when you work with us. Don't want to record something that lingers in the deep dark parts of you that can't be taken back and all that.

VIC

(nervous laugh) Okay?

KALILA

(sighs) Like I said, at any time. Shadow knows the rules too.

VIC

Cool cool cool. Uh. Right. So, how does this go? You know, this whole...assessment session.

KALILA

Well, since your primary complaint is physical, I'd like to talk to you more about your symptoms. Where exactly in your arm do you feel pain?

VIC

My elbow. I went to the clinic--the one that's still open on West Key Street, he said it was probably carpal tunnel. But he didn't really consider my other...issue.

VIC pauses, not sure if he should say his "issue" out loud.

KALILA

You don't need to be specific, Vic. You've already told me in person, so this doesn't--

VIC

There's always new closets to open, Kalila. This is an old one, the door has long been blown off the hinges. Anyway, the doc didn't think that my shifts had much to do with the pain, that's not how shifting works, but I keep getting so worked up about it before the full moon. It's like the pain accelerates and then dissipates after I turn. I mean, my pack jokes about all toothaches and growth spurts, that happens to us all the time. But no one has heard of this. Shifting *causes* pain, it doesn't *cure* it.

KALILA

So I'm hesitant to give you anything or suggest anything that

isn't tailored to you physically.
I am not a werewolf specialist.

VIC

Oh, I know. That's not what I'm
looking for.

KALILA

Just to be clear, you're looking
for what kind of information,
exactly?

VIC

I want to know if this is, I don't
know, psychosomatic or something.
Or one of those weird spiritual
things that Delilah suggested.

KALILA

A block in the mesh between your
two physical states, right?

VIC

Yeah. She thinks I'm hung up on
something about my shifting. And
this only started a year ago.
After the border pushed into our
world. No one else seems to be
affected like this, though.

KALILA

Okay. I'll do a general scan, see
if there's anything that sticks
out, right?

VIC

Sounds good, should I come over?

VIC starts to get up.

KALILA

No, no. You can stay seated for
this. I don't need to be close or
anything.

VIC

Oh. Sorry.

VIC settles back into the couch.

KALILA

It's okay! Just relax and focus on your breathing for this first go.

Vic takes slow, steady breaths.

Mm. Good. Alright.

Silence for about 3-4 more breaths.

Ooh, yeah. Okay, you can open your eyes now. There's a block right at your shoulder, but it originates somewhere else. Can I come closer?

VIC

Sure, go ahead.

KALILA gets up and walks over to the couch. She hovers her hand over his shoulder.

VIC

Do you need, like, direct contact?

KALILA

Nope, no need to touch. I can just hover it and see--

SHADOW

I think there might be something to his repeated requests. You *do* remember that plenty of people don't have touch aversion based in trauma, right? You have healing hands, Kalila. Act like it.

KALILA

(sighs) I realize that. (to Vic) Sorry about that. I have a general policy not to touch unless necessary and with informed consent. A lot of my clients have medical-associated trauma. I don't want to inflict more.

VIC

Yeah, that's reasonable. Better safe than sorry, right?

KALILA

Right. Though, Shadow might have a point. Would you prefer if I put my hand on your shoulder to assess the pain?

VIC

Um, yes? (notices KALILA'S hesitation, adds more confidence)
Yes.

KALILA

Okay. Just keep relaxed, slow steady breaths. Good.

KALILA places her hand on his shoulder.

OH, yup. Right there. Vic, I want you to tap into that feeling you get right before you shift.

VIC

I'm not sure--

KALILA

Oh, no, I'll hold you from diving too deep into the pain. I just need an echo.

VIC

Ah, okay. That's fine.

KALILA

Deep breath.

There. Good. Stay there for me.

Okay.

KALILA removes her hand.

VIC

Well?

KALILA walks back to her armchair.

KALILA

The pain is in your shoulder, but it originates in your chest. Your heart.

VIC

Why would my pain be in my heart?

KALILA

It's...it's about grief. Like you're losing something before you shift.

VIC

Yeah, my humanity.

KALILA

Maybe. Is that what you tend to feel before you shift?

VIC

I mean, that's what makes the most sense, right? In order to shift, there are certain human instincts that have to be sacrificed. A human brain in a wolf's body doesn't quite fit. So some things have to be cut away.

KALILA

But don't those things come back?

VIC

Come back?

KALILA

When you have to come back to the human part of you, don't those human instincts have to come back, too? Sorry, like I said, I'm not super familiar with your experience.

VIC

So, for most of us it's like...It's as if each shift we undergo changes a part of the self that goes away. When the wolf is asleep, and the human is awake, the wolf changes. The wolf gets a lot smarter at hunting the next time it's out. And vice versa, when the human is back, maybe they find themselves a good singer when they sucked before. Javier--

KALILA

Javi, right?

VIC

Yeah, you know him? I guess you've been over to the house to see Desiree plenty of times now. Anyway, yeah. Javi says it's what all living things experience, that slow but constant change. It just takes a werewolf to realize how much change that process actually causes. Just because we're human doesn't mean the wolf in us stops living.

Though I don't know what this has to do with my shoulder. Or heart, I guess. Everyone knows about that loss. Why should I be any different?

KALILA

That's...a good point. How do you normally deal with that loss?

VIC

Sometimes the pack gets together on new moons and talk it out. It helps get things in perspective.

KALILA

It's interesting that your block happens in your heart, because it means that this pain isn't out of a problem in understanding. It's a problem in relating to the world around you. You told me the pain started after the new year. Did something happen then with other people, with any friends or family or coworkers?

VIC thinks for a moment, tapping his finger on the chair.

MUSIC FADES IN: ILLUMINATION - KAI ENGEL

KALILA

Ah. Yep. I see it.

VIC

See...what?

SHADOW

Something that you were not ready to face...until now.

KALILA

Tell me about which memory just came up for you.

VIC

Um, that's weird because I wouldn't think it has anything to do with this.

KALILA

You would be surprised about how much our mind and body are connected, and what connects them.

VIC

Don't I know it. Well. Okay, so this wasn't really a werewolf thing, though. (waits, sees that Kalila is waiting for him to continue) Um, I told you how I work for an educational nonprofit downtown? Right. So we had our final evaluation before the end of the year. I primarily help with the program planning, and I've been trying to get more responsibilities, head up more of the programs, right? So I know I have some issues with feedback. It's hard. Rejection sensitivity is a bitch. OH, sorry, can I swear on your recordings?

KALILA

(smile in her voice) Yeah, no worries.

VIC

Right, right. So I do the evaluation, right? You self evaluate and then your supervisor

evaluates you. I think I know my strengths and areas of improvement pretty well.

KALILA searches through her notes.

But then I'm told in my supervisor's eval that I need to stop bringing on other coworkers to help finish the projects I'm assigned to do. That I need to apply the skills I already have to finish the project.

KALILA

Have you told them you have ADHD?

VIC

No, didn't think I needed to. Like I wrote on your intake form, I manage it pretty well. But yes, with the ADHD, finishing projects is the hardest part. But it's not like I'm making them do my job for me. It's just...there are some parts that I'm still not comfortable with. Those things where I could probably should use a second pair of eyes until I get more confident about my work? (laughs) I guess I'm still bitter about it.

KALILA

Your heart hurts with it, that's for sure. Did you have a good relationship with your supervisor before?

VIC

I thought I did. I hoped I did. I mean, it's been fine since then. I just...I don't know, it's silly.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

Beat.

KALILA

You don't ask your coworkers to help you anymore, do you?

VIC

(defeated) No. And, well, now that you mention it, I don't share as much as I used to at the new moon fire pits either.

KALILA

Your body is trying to process change, and yet you were given feedback that told you to not change, to not reach out and get outside information. That's how we change, right? We get more information, we learn. We learn from the outside world, from each other. We need other people, you know? I think people don't realize just how much we need each other.

VIC

But what do I do about it? And why is the pain only in my shoulder?

KALILA

I mean. To...well, to use an apt turn of phrase...you're trying to *shoulder* your way through this.

VIC

Oh. Well. Yeah, that sounds like me.

KALILA

You've been trying to shove your way through the change, while you have been giving the message "don't change, don't ask for help, don't seek more information than you already know". Granted, I don't think that's what your supervisor was suggesting, but it's what you internalized. You're already sensitive to criticism, it's really easy to twist it when it's not communicated well.

VIC

Do you...read all your clients
like this?

KALILA
(sheepish) Occupational hazard.

VIC
I guess we should be lucky you
keep Shadow in check, huh? She'd
read all of us to shreds.

KALILA
Don't encourage her. Let's try to
open up that openness to change
again. How does a short meditation
sound?

VIC
Yeah, that sounds good.

KALILA
Join me and sit, here in the
center of the room.

VIC
Yeah, that sounds good. Okay.

VIC gets up and sits down on the ground.
KALILA gets up, picks up a glass-encased
candle, and sets it on the ground. She hands
VIC a lighter.

KALILA
Good. Here, light this for me?

VIC lights the candle. KALILA sits across
from VIC.

KALILA
Thank you. I cast this circle,
asking the--

SHADOW
Aren't you forgetting something?
Something a certain love goddess
said about who makes a stronger
circle?

KALILA
Hmm? Oh. Right. Go ahead.

FADE IN MUSIC: MULTIVERSE BY KETSA

SHADOW

I cast this circle, asking the
guardians to awake and watch the
gates, the elements of air, fire,
earth, and water to bless this
space, and for the gods to be with
us as we open this space for
healing.

Light wind blows.

VIC

Do I...?

SHADOW

Just sit, Vic, and enjoy the
experience. Openness requires
stillness. The circle is cast. We
are between the worlds.

KALILA

And what happens between the
worlds affects all the worlds.

Alright. Take three slow, deep
breaths for me.

VIC breathes.

Good. When you're comfortable,
take my hands, and just focus on
the touch.

VIC takes KALILA's hands, slight jingle of a
bracelet.

Criticism should be appreciative
and constructive, you know? It
seems like you didn't get enough
appreciative criticism, either. So
I'm going to try to add that bit
that was missing.

Vic, you not only have the porous
body that allows you to move
between vast states of being, your
personality is expansive through

others. You have the urge to connect and understand and appreciate other people, other experiences. That's beautiful and it's valuable. You should feel comfortable to do that work and grow at the same time.

Okay. Now take that in, inhale and hold your breath.

VIC breathes in.

Take the appreciation, feel gratitude and more importantly...feel the truth within it. Exhale.

VIC breathes out.

Let the truth fall into the mesh between your states of being. We aren't just one state, or even two, we are so many and so often and that keeps us free. You live that reality all the time. Pay attention to it and appreciate it.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

Here, take this.

VIC

What kind of stone is it?

KALILA

It's a piece of marble. The stuff of art. Keep it with you, or in a safe space. Let it be a reminder of both the Truth about yourself and the way the Truth shapes you.

VIC

Thank you.

KALILA

Of course. How do you feel?

VIC

Less stiff. Less pain, for sure.

KALILA

Good. Here, let me take down the circle and we can wind down the session.

Shifting as SHADOW whispers a prayer and shuts down the circle. She claps three times.

The circle is open but unbroken.

Go ahead and sit back on the couch when you're ready.

BOTH take their places again, VIC on the couch, KALILA in her armchair.

VIC

Kalila...can I ask a weird question?

KALILA

Um. Sure?

VIC

Does it...hurt? Does Shadow hurt when she comes forward I mean? It's you, right?

KALILA

Um. Well, I...okay. Vic, I'm speaking to you as an acquaintance now instead of a witch. Just so we're clear.

VIC

Yeah.

KALILA

It does hurt. In a way. It's kinda like your issue with your carpal tunnel. There's pain there from repeated misuse of my body, my soul too. I'm trying to reconcile that, heal it. But who knows? I might never heal. Many people with injuries worse than mine never heal. They learn to live with it

without letting it define who they are.

SHADOW

Sound familiar, werewolf?

KALILA

(sighs) Like I'm trying to not let Shadow define me as an insensitive jerk.

SHADOW

We contain multitudes.

KALILA

Does that make sense?

VIC

(uncertain) I think so.
(apologetic) I'm so sorry, I shouldn't have pried. I was just...okay, maybe this is a bit out of line too, but I've heard about shadowdancing lately. In the were' community. And it seems like your name came up a lot? I think some of them know you and some of the work you're doing with Janelle. I have to say...I'm curious. I've been waiting for something like this to come up for a long time. But, they say it's just for changelings and humans.

KALILA

No, no. Everyone is welcome it's...there is a vetting system in place. Shadowdancing is difficult work, and we want to make sure everyone is physically, psychologically, and spiritually safe going into it. I can't speak much to the community level, um, Janelle is the one you should talk to. Or Desiree.

VIC

Oh, yeah, I mean Desiree talks about it all the time at home.

Some of the others have already
joined up. It's just...(trails off)

SHADOW

You saw an opportunity to get some
inside advice on what
Shadowdancing actually looks like.
In the flesh.

KALILA

Is that...why you came to me?
Because you wanted to know about
the shadowdancing sessions?

VIC

No! No, I mean, I was curious
about that too but I really am
having issues with my writing.
And. Well, considering
Shadow...you seemed like the
closest witch outside of a
werewolf healer who could
understand what it's like to not
be fully in control of your own
body. And werewolf healers are not
common in this part of the world.

KALILA

Ah. Oh. Right. Sorry I assumed,
that's a perfectly valid concern.
I'm glad you came. I hope this
helped.

VIC

(sincere) It did. Thank you. So,
is this it?

KALILA

Unless you had anything else?

VIC

Nope, this was great. We
werewolves don't say this
often...(laughs) but I feel like
myself again.

KALILA

Excellent. Let me switch off the
recording and we can--Eldritch!
No, get off the--

FADE IN: Phone ringing.

KALILA

Hello, this is Kalila Stormfire's Economical Magick Services. I'm sorry I missed your call. Please leave a message with your name, ailment, and astrological sun sign and I will get back to you as soon as I can. Thanks!

BEEP of recording.

CLIENT

Hello, Miss Stormfire. I'm afraid I'll have to cancel our appointment. I also have a recommendation for you going forward to avoid these kinds of cancellations--put the fact that you are uninitiated on your website. I don't like having to be unpleasantly surprised when my friend at the Coven tells me my new tarot reader could very well be violating a statute on restricted substances and practices. Good bye.

BEEP.

VIC

Oh. Wow.

KALILA

I'm sorry, you shouldn't have had to hear that--

VIC

No. No, no, no. Screw that guy. That's all coven propaganda.

KALILA

(laughs weakly) Well, it's not the first time. I'm sure Desiree's shared some of this with you, but I'm not exactly popular in

more...established magick
traditions.

VIC

That shouldn't matter! You are completely professional, more than some of the Coven's snobbish potion dealers I've seen at the farmers markets. If people can't see that this...this gatekeeping is exactly what's tearing at our reality, then they don't deserve your help.

KALILA

I...um...uh...that's...

SHADOW

What Kal's *trying* to say is...couldn't have said it better myself.

Let's wrap this up, shall we, Vic? Now, the community shadow dancing meeting starts tomorrow night at 6, you should probably make sure you eat--

RECORDING SHUTS OFF.

FADE IN: INT. GRIMMER MEETING ROOM. People are chatting amicably, VIC and DESIREE's conversation comes into focus.

VIC

Yeah, I asked Kalila about it too, after our session last week.

DESIREE

(joking) Oh, and I wasn't convincing enough?

VIC

Oh, you are anything but unpersuasive, my dear roomie.

NADIA PILLAI walks over to where they are standing.

NADIA

Vic? Victor Kumari, is that you?

VIC

Nadia! Yeah, it's me! Holy...wow.
Good to see you again. Man, it's
been a while.

DESIREE

Oh hey, you know each other?

NADIA

Yeah, since middle school. We
volunteered together at the fall
cultural festival in like eighth
grade.

VIC

Oh gods, that was so awkward.

NADIA

(to Desiree) I tried to tell the
organizers that Holi is celebrated
in, like, March. But you try
convincing suburban white kids
that they can't include throwing
water balloons filled with colored
powder in their festival.

DESIREE

Reminds me of the time I had to
tell my old college roommate that
no...no, you cannot touch my hair.
Not now, not ever.

NADIA

(playing along, mocking) Oh, but
it's sooooo cool!

DESIREE

No, I don't care if you are
fascinated by it. Entitlement is a
helluva drug. She was a changeling
too, but I guess whiteness can get
in the way of any kind of
solidarity.

NADIA

(slightly quiet because of the
changeling comment) Yeah.

KALILA approaches.

DESIREE

Hey Kal! Vic said your session went well?

KALILA

You know I don't disclose my clients, Des. Even when you are the one that refers them to me.

SHADOW

What Kal's trying to say is you should know better than to think she isn't still frazzled every time you talk her business up.

DESIREE

Cute. Well, I'm glad you're able to see clients in the midst of all this. How hard is Aphrodite driving you these days?

SHADOW

You'll get a taste of it today, I'm sure.

KALILA

Honestly? My former patron was hiding in plain sight right in the middle of my life for months and now I not only have her poking and prodding at my most sensitive spots privately--(begins to cough) and no, you know I don't mean it that way, Shadow! Not the time. Ugh. Look what she's done to me. Us. So. Yeah. Not only do I have to work with her one-on-one, I'm also expected to have her around in the group so we can stop the shadow of the city we live in from putting more lives at risk.

DESIREE

Still feeling some sort of way about her then?

KALILA

(PAUSE) It's been twelve months
and I still don't know how to even
begin to answer that question.

JANELLE claps her hands three times.

JANELLE

Alright everyone! If you can
please take your seats in the
circle, we may begin.

People settle into their seats.

Aphrodite.

APHRODITE

Good evening, my dears.

JANELLE

We welcome you once again into our
circle, for this sacred act of
community shadow work. We have a
new member of the community who
has committed to doing the work,
Victor Kumari.

APHRODITE

Welcome, Vic. I see you and hold
your commitment as valuable as you
are.

VIC

Um. Thank you, goddess.

APHRODITE

New members to any group may
invite new perspectives, but also
new conflicts. I want all of you
to try to hold that contradiction
consciously as we move forward. Be
aware of the emotions you feel at
his arrival. Try not to turn away
at the seemingly negative
emotions. It is part of our work
to better understand what those
feelings actually are and how they
feed the Shadow of Brushland.

Tonight we are going to focus on
the fear of what is new, what is

added, and what is different. It is an ancient fear, one your biology has used to protect your survival but also one that you humans often refuse to shape. You all are so much more malleable than you think.

Let us begin.

Water trickles, growing and growing until it sounds like they are all underwater. Only Aphrodite's voice is clear.

You are suspended. Still. You feel nothing, see nothing, hear nothing. There is no future. There is no present, there is no past. I want you to feel the silence so deeply that you feel yourself completely dissolve. You are no longer yourself. You are no longer anything at all. All is simply...nothing.

Underwater shifting subsides to a sort of hollow, static silence for 7 whole seconds. Then a sound like something shifting once through water.

FADE IN MUSIC: AQUA BY ROD HAMILTON

Something bumps you. Lightly, at first. You feel something. Maybe the slightest irritation. Being suspended, being nothing, is so much better. You settle back into that state of nothing.

Silence, then another shift in the water, louder this time.

It bumps you again. You are definitely irritated now, but you go back into that state of nothing.

Shorter silence, than three bumps. As the monologue continues, the water shifts into a

regular sound of waves, amping up in frequency.

It does not last. You keep being jostled, lightly and then harder, then light again. Every time you try to find that complete peace but no, you get no rest. Things keep bumping into you, you start to bump back. At some point, you realize there's both chaos and a rhythm to the thrashing under the water. There's something...invigorating about it. Something alive.

You are alive.

The water drains out, like the tide going out rapidly. Multiple people in the room exhale.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

APHRODITE

Tell me, beloveds...how did that feel?

MURMURS from the group. NADIA raises her hand.

Yes...Nadia?

NADIA

I...it was weird, I actually got angry. I liked the meditation part, dissolving.

APHRODITE

Good. Anyone else feel anger?

MURMURS of assent. Multiple people's hands raise.

Everyone. Yes, so you are starting to understand.

DESIREE

It's a visceral sense of...of violation.

APHRODITE

Precisely. But...I am interested.
You use trauma language.

DESIREE

Yes...

APHRODITE

Why? You were in no physical
danger. I didn't even imply pain
in the trance. Why do you feel
violated?

Silence.

MUSIC FADES IN: PICTURES OF THE FLOATING
WORLD BY BUMBLING

Others here share your feelings.
It is like your boundaries are
being violated when you imagine
that place of peace and then
something comes in and changes it.
It was the change that brought the
fear. And think about it. It's so
interesting. If you were truly
dissolved, you technically don't
have any boundaries at all, right?

KALILA

(quietly) Change creates the
boundaries.

APHRODITE

What is that, Kalila?

KALILA

Change creates the boundaries.
Change...changes boundaries, too.
That's why all change is traumatic
if the only change we notice is
from trauma.

APHRODITE

Beautifully put. Yes. Kalila is
right. You feel anger because you
all have yet to internalize the
idea that change, and more
importantly conflict, is not

inherently traumatic. Conflict creates new things. Conflict is part of being alive.

In many ways, conflict manifests a new kind of life.

That is all, I think, for tonight.

End session.

MUSIC FADES OUT. OUTRO FADES IN.

Kalila Stormfire's Economical Magick Services is written and produced by Lisette Alvarez. The script was edited by Gabriel Urbina. Kalila and her shadow are played by Lisette Alvarez. Victor Kumari is played by Ian DePriest. Desiree Onasis is played by Zayn Thiam. Nadia Pillai is played by Anjali Kunapaneni. Janelle Grimmer is played by Anairis Quinones. Aphrodite is played by Sena Bryer. This episode was edited by Sarah Buchynski.

Welcome to the third and final season of Kalila Stormfire's Economical Magick Services. Thank you for listening.