S2E7: PROJECTION

Intro: Kalila Stormfire's Economical Magick services. The following entry is for initiated ears only. Case Twenty: Projection.

FADE IN: A knock at the door.

KALILA
Remember what we agreed, do not screw this up for me. We might be able to get something good out of this.

SHADOW
Oh, sure, like maybe getting them to stop smearing you on social media. I bet that's priority numero uno on their list of things to appeal to Kalila for. You should just let me drive, you are such a push over when it comes to authority.

KALILA
Shadow!

SHADOW
Fine. Don't say I didn't warn you, though.

Kalila coughs, sighs, and then walks to the door. The sound of chimes that indicates the arrival that a visitor that is angry.

KALILA
High Priestess. Welcome.

GABRIELLE
Hmm. Thank you for meeting me.

KALILA
Of course. Um, please take a seat.

GABRIELLE and KALILA move to the living room. GABRIELLE sits on the couch, KALILA remains standing.

Would you like some tea?

GABRIELLE
I’m fine. I’m hoping this won’t take long.

KALILA
Oh. Okay. Well…(sits in a chair) What is it you needed to talk to me about?

GABRIELLE
I do hope I am talking to...you.

KALILA
I’m sorry?

GABRIELLE
You are Kalila, correct? Not the demon?

KALILA
(clears throat) Y-yes. I am Kalila. (laughs nervously)

GABRIELLE
Very well. If you have the thing under control, that will make it easier to convince the Elder Circle.

KALILA
About what?

GABRIELLE
I have a proposition for you. The Coven has been dealing with some very difficult situations lately, not the least of which your...situation. It isn’t pleasant to have ex-initiates, but you understand we have to protect the integrity of the institution, don’t you?

KALILA
What is this about, High Priestess?

GABRIELLE

We have felt that letting you go so abruptly might have led to your current...predicament. The Coven wishes to alleviate that. We know that Gloria has been working with you to deal with your Shadow, but we believe it is too dangerous to leave untreated for so long. You've been like this for over a year now, with little improvement from what I've been told.

KALILA
Wait...you've been keeping tabs on me?

GABRIELLE
We keep tabs on all initiates, excommunicated or not. It is a way to ensure the health of our community, you see. Oh, don't look at me like that. This was for your own good, Kalila. You have done something unprecedented. Dangerous. We wouldn't want other inexperienced witches try to do the same thing.

MUSIC FADE IN: COLD & HARD - BLUE DOT SESSIONS

KALILA
It's not like I'm out here advocating for everyone and their mother to split their soul.

GABRIELLE
We're getting off topic. The Coven would like to offer you a probationary period, a way for you to return to the Temple.

KALILA
What?

GABRIELLE
You will get additional assessment by our healers. You remember James Rainboon? He has been doing additional

research into your particular ailment. I think you'd appreciate some additional help. Also, we would be willing to hire you as a financial assistant. This comes with a healthy salary, of course. You won't have to survive off of selling tarot readings and spell bags. And you won't have to live in Southside anymore.

KALILA
I...this is...surprising. I thought excommunication was permanent?

GABRIELLE
You are a special case, Kalila. We'd be remiss if we didn't consider all the factors. So? When would you like to schedule some time with James?

KALILA
Oh...um. (gathers herself) This is a very generous offer, High Priestess. I think I will need some time to consider.

GABRIELLE
There's a lot the Coven is doing, Kalila. We won't wait around forever.

KALILA
I understand that. I just, this is a little sudden. I have clients I've already scheduled for. I can't exactly cancel on them just yet to immediately start a new job.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

GABRIELLE
Hmm. Very well. When you do make up your mind, send Gloria along with your decision. Sooner than later, I hope.

KALILA

Of course. I'll let you know.

GABRIELLE
I'll be on my way then. (stands up) I don't like to leave my car parked in this part of town for long.

SHADOW
We don't like you parked here either.

GABRIELLE
Excuse me?

KALILA
Are you sure you won't like some tea to go either?

GABRIELLE
(suspicious) No, thank you.

GABRIELLE walks to the door and opens it.

Goodbye, Kalila. I expect to hear from you soon.

KALILA
Drive safe, ma'am.

GABRIELLE leaves, and the door shuts. ELDRITCH meows.

SHADOW
Pushover.

KALILA
Oh, shut up.

SHADOW
You *are* considering her proposal though, right?

ELDRITCH meows.

KALILA
No! Are you kidding? They're just going to use me again.

SHADOW
It’s what you want, though. C’mon. You constantly complain about clients. Their particulars. Their demands...and for such low return on investment. And also your neighbors walk really loudly.

ELDRITCH meows.

Wouldn’t it be easier if you had some security?

KALILA
Yeah. It would. At the same time, I’m not going to go back to a coven that didn’t value me in the first place. You were to one to push me out. Why are you so eager I go back now?

ELDRITCH meows again and hisses.

Sorry, Eldritch, what was that?

ELDRITCH chirrups and the TV begins to sputter on, changing channels until it hits a news station.

COOKING CHANNEL. MUSIC - UKERIFF BY ASA

CHEF
If you don’t have troll flowers at home, store bought is fine--

CLIP CUTS. MUSIC CHANNEL: MUSIC - HOLLYWOOD TRASH by HIRO

CUT OUT HIRO MUSIC, CUT IN NEW STATION WITH MUSIC: WHITE FILAMENT BY BLUE DOT SESSIONS

REPORTER 1 (on site)
--(We are still) learning more from witnesses. A number of sirens have fled to the banks closest to the South, where this...this event seems to stop.

REPORTER 2 (in studio)
Again, we have Steve Romero on the scene of what appears to be a massive magickal event near the Brushland River. Steve, we know glamour is a strong suit of the Fae, but can you describe the suspected culprits of this unprecedented breach of border law?

REPORTER 1 (on site)
Well, Amy, it appears to have been the work of a small group of individuals. They were certainly hard to see, they fled the scene almost as soon as I arrived. But our sources have confirmed that a number of Fae and possibly changelings were in the area at the time. Witnesses who were at the park near the river say that there was a ripple starting from the Eastern riverline that moved southwards, towards Southside. Police and their witch attachment have been keeping people away from the new Fae border. We aren't sure how dangerous it is to go near, but there seems to be your standard enchantments woven into the land itself. We can still see beyond the event, much like we've been able to see the Fae hill on the other side of the river. But like many others have reported before me, the Fae magic makes the trees more reactive to human touch and time gets warped even from a short distance from the border. A few witnesses have said they were drawn to the border almost immediately. Police Chief Bruce Newton will be making a statement shortly, likely regarding the threat this new expanded border poses to the citizens of Brushland.

REPORTER 2 (in studio)
It's certainly a concerning development. Have you heard anything

from witnesses or police about a possible connection to the latest drama with the Coven and their support of the changeling repatriation initiative?

REPORTER 1 (on site)
Yes, Amy. A few of the witnesses I talked with were afraid that this is the next step in other Iron War. Now, there hasn't been any violence. Most of the people I talked with feel like this is more of a power move by the Fae to challenge the actions of the Coven. Their magick stopped at the river after all.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

REPORTER 2 (in studio)
Thank you, Steve. I've just been told we have High Priest Hector Ivory on the line. Good afternoon, Hector.

HECTOR
It's been an afternoon for sure, Amy.

REPORTER 2 (in studio)
It certainly has. Can you tell us more about the Coven's reaction to this event? Are you concerned that this is an escalation beyond rhetoric? Considering the already charged policy conversation between the leadership of Brushland and the fae, I mean?

HECTOR
Well, there is clearly a threat to the community here. This Underground, a group of fae and changeling extremists, they have stepped beyond their radical messaging to the people of this city and have now encroached on sovereign land. The Coven calls on the government to take immediate steps to push back this awful magickal attack on the city.

Brushland is already struggling with an influx of werewolves, immigrants, changelings, and under-qualified workers. Our resources are stretched thin. This is the straw that breaks the camel's back, if I can be so bold. It is unacceptable.

REPORTER 2 (in studio)
What about the Fae leadership? Have you received any communication from the King or Queen?

HECTOR
No. And we don't expect to, to be perfectly honest. They likely condone this act. The Coven would love to sit at a table and talk about their supposed grievances civilly. We made some progress last year, but I think we've passed that point now.

REPORTER 2 (in studio)
You mentioned immediate steps the government can take to address the situation. What is the Coven proposing, exactly?

HECTOR
Well, there are a number of options to consider. Securing the border, of course, is one option. The Coven is talking with Elders who have experience implementing high-level warding on the Arizona border. However, those were largely for human illegal immigrants--not fae and changelings. We would need additional support from witches who have experience with fae magick. Another option is legal. If changelings are so keen on being back with their people, we should make it easier for them instead of giving into rhetoric and dangerous acts like what we've seen today.

REPORTER 2 (in studio)
You're suggesting deportation.

HECTOR
No, no, no. Of course not. Simply put, our system for identifying and handling changelings is broken. For those who cannot assimilate and live according to our laws, yes. Deportation should absolutely be on the table. For those who are not comfortable here, they should have an easier time going to a place where they would be more comfortable instead of joining into groups like the Underground.

REPORTER 2 (in studio)
Thank you for your time, High Priest. We are now turning to our magick policy consultant, Dr. Harriet Foxglove…

KALILA shuts off the television, picks up her phone and starts dialing. She's breathing heavily.

SHADOW
What are you doing? You don't think Gloria isn't already all over this?

KALILA
If she knew about what the Coven wanted from me, and what the Coven was planning with the changelings, she should have told me.

SHADOW
Ah, an interrogation. This I can get behind.

KALILA
Gods, she's not answering her phone.

SHADOW
Try the library?

KALILA
Right.

KALILA dials again. The phone rings, and HEATHER LOVELY picks up.

HEATHER
Brushland Central Library. How can I help you?

KALILA
Oh! Heather, is Gloria around?

HEATHER
She went out for lunch, she'll be back soon but--are you okay? What's...oh. Oh wow, girl, you are a mess right now. Did Gabrielle really say that to you? Kalila, you know she's trying to use you. And this fae border thing is not your fault, don't blame yourself. Clarence is grown, he can make choices for himself. You can only be what you are, a loving friend.

KALILA
Heather!

HEATHER
You know I can't help it, sweetie. Psychic powers don't just turn off. My advice? Go find Desiree, gather up your friends. Especially Clarence, he's probably not in a good place right now. This storm is not going to pass any time soon. I'll let Gloria know you called if she hasn't seen your missed call already. And don't go blaming her for this either. You have no idea what she's been doing to protect you.

KALILA
I...um. Are things good over there?

HEATHER

It’s fine. And just a reminder, just in case...this is a safe zone, alright? We’ve got magick here stronger than you think.

KALILA
Oh. Okay. I’ll...I’ll let you go. Thanks for picking up.

HEATHER
Just doing my job. Answering the call to those who need it.

KALILA
Right...

HEATHER
And Kalila?

KALILA
Yeah?

HEATHER
You don’t need approval from anybody. You’re exactly where you need to be. Oh! Say hi to Shadow for me! Bye!

KALILA
Bye…(hangs up). Guess I should call Desiree.

SHADOW
(mostly to herself) You don’t talk with Heather much, do you?

KALILA
No. Why?

SHADOW
Hmm? Oh. No reason. Just think you should spend more time with people who can see right through you like that. Go ahead. Call Desiree. Actually...text her. She might be busy.

KALILA
Yeah...yeah, I should. (coughs as she types)

FADE IN: VEINS OF SILVER - BLUE DOT SESSIONS

SHADOW
(clears throat, testing) Okay. Are we good? Perfect. Just stay settled in the dark, my dear Kalila. I'll handle the rest. No need to get your hands dirty here. No need to seek out approval from some authority figure, be it Gloria or Gabrielle or even the gods. You may not want to get involved, but the storm is here. You can't do anything *but* be involved. So here we go. I'll be the brave one. I will take the first step. I don't need approval. I never have.

So.

Let's try something...new. (turns into Kalila's voice) Excellent. It's working. Okay. Let's learn something, hmm? And let's have some fun doing it.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

Outro: Kalila Stormfire's Economical Magick Services is written and produced by Lisette Alvarez. Kalila and her Shadow are both played by Lisette Alvarez. High Priestess Gabrielle Ravenwood is played by Whitney Johnson. High Priest Hector Ivory is played by Chris Magilton. Heather Lovely is played by Sena Bryer. This episode was edited by Sarah Buchynski.

We are halfway through the season. I know I am speaking on the behalf of everyone on the cast and crew when I say the support of this show has been invaluable. If you've been enjoying this story so far, consider sharing your thoughts on the season by leaving a review on iTunes or shoot us a message on Twitter!

Special thanks to phillippa.nairne
Laura White
Ella Watts
Kaleigh Sanio
and Red Lhota
 for supporting this season.

Thank you for listening.