

K A R P O S H

By

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APPEARING ON THE SCREEN

Fire appears on the entire screen. Karposh with his ajduts band appear through the fire charging forward. Karposh is in the middle, holding sward in his hand, while his band is armed with axes, pitchforks, swords, pickaxes... The following narration appears on the screen:

NARRATOR'S VOICE

"Rebels army - lumberjacks, diggers, villagers, miners, horsemen and footmen - It was an enormous polyp.... Unreal creature, giant or dragon of the Macedonian mountains with thousand mouths, ears, arms and legs, with single thought and one heart to expel the Turks or die."

FADE OUT

FADE IN

APPEARING ON THE SCREEN:

VOJNIK VILLAGE, MACEDONIA - OTTOMAN EMPIRE

ST. PETER'S DAY, 12 JULY 1664

EXT. VOJNIK VILLAGE - DAY - NOON

A view of the village of Vojnik from the mountain is presented. Hot July midday. The field cricket chirps - chirp-chirp-chirp, announcing the heat in the course of the day. The village is agile.

All VILLAGERS are busy with their chores working in the field, grazing the cattle, harvesting the crops etc. There are around one hundred houses in Vojnik village, mostly wooden cottages with sheepfolds and goat folds.

The house of KODJABASHIS STRAHIL, at the end of the village, is most agile. The road entering to the village passes along the house.

EXT. - YARD OF A HOUSE - DAY

There are comitadji tables and chairs set in the yard for the guests - VILLAGERS from the neighbouring houses. Village kmet Strahil is celebrating the patron saint of his house St. Peter. WOMEN are nimble bringing food and drink to the guests. Villagers are cheerful and talk with each other.

Children's noise is heard in the yard. CHILDREN run, chase each other, rolling on the grass, they play. The son of Kodjabashis Strahil, the nine-year old PETRUSH, is among the children. He seems physically strong and though for his age, has brown hair, big blue eyes and rosy cheeks on his face.

Sitting on one of the tables, Strahil raises from the chair to deliver a toast. He is very big man, around 50 years of age, real giant with huge belly, long black moustaches, black curly hair, big green eyes and rose cheeks.

STRAHIL

(to the guests)

Welcome my dear guests! May you all be live and well, in good health for ages. And may we all celebrate the name day of my Petrush for many years to come!!!

(beat)

May God give you and your children good health!!!

Villagers shout in unison:

VILLAGERS

AMIN!!!

Strahil salutes with wine. Villagers do the same. There is a man, around 60 years of age, with white eyebrows and white hair sitting at the end of a table.

That is Krstan, Strahil's next-door neighbour. His house is just opposite of Strahil's house. His son NEVEN is friend with Petrush, Strahil's son. Strahil notices Krstan is sitting absent-minded. Other guests are noticing the same. Silence occurs.

(CONTINUED)

STRAHIL

(to KRSTAN)

What's wrong blood brother of mine?
What's on your mind? This is a
celebration!!! Today we celebrate.

(beat)

What is bothering you?

KRSTAN

(absent-minded)

Strange.... Very strange Strahil.

Villagers look at each other with questions in their eyes.

STRAHIL

What is strange, blood brother of
mine?

KRSTAN

The unfaithful didn't come for
child levy this year.

Unpleasant silence occurs among the guests. Strahil silently
looks at Krstan and smiles unwillingly.

STRAHIL

Let's not think about that now
Krstan. Maybe this time they won't
come....

KRSTAN

Blood brother of mine, I'm afraid.
Very much afraid for Neven. What if
they take him from me?

(beat)

I don't know what I would do
without him. I would give my life
for my child.

STRAHIL

(brave)

Come on, come on Krstan! Don't
worry. We are not giving our
children away. Neither you your
Neven, nor I my Petrush.

Krstan smiles and nods his head. Strahil smiles also and the
celebration continues. Krstan turns his head looking at
Neven playing with Petrush and other children.

STRAHIL (CONT'D)

(to his wife)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STRAHIL (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Woman!!! Oh woman!!!! Bring us the
 he-goat to eat!!! Are we
 celebrating or what!!??
 (beat)
 And bring more wine!!! Our throats
 are dry, woman!!!

THE WIFE shouts from the house threshold.

THE WIFE
 Right away my husband, I'm coming!

EXT. TSAR'S ROAD - DAY

Tsar's Road, Skopje-Kjustendil direction. Up-close presentation of a dusty road. Horses' hooves clatter on the road. It is the Turkish CAVALRY approaching Vojnik village. The cavalry is headed by OSMAN BEY, bald, with red fez on his head, has a skull tattoo on the right arm and wears colourfull shalwars. He looks cruel and unscrupulous.

His big yataghan and the pistol can be seen crossed on the shalwars. Osman Bey leads a cavalry of 30 people, all armed to the teeth with sabers and pistols. They are on the Tsar's Road when Osman Bey raises his hand and the cavalry stops.

They are at the entrance of Vojnik village. Osman Bey turns to his group, nods the head, gives a sign with his hand and the cavalry starts moving again. They enter the village.

EXT. - THE YARD OF THE HOUSE - DAY

Celebration and feast at Kodjabashis Strahil continue. Children play, women bring meat and wine at the tables. Suddenly, Osman Bey stops at the gate with his cavalry.

Villagers become speechless all of a sudden. Strahil's blood freezes in his veins when he sees Osman Bey with his blood-thirsty soldiers.

Osman Bey enters the yard with the entourage. Remaining Turks wait in front of the house. Guests slowly get off the tables and withdraw.

STRAHIL
 (submissively)
 Bujrum Effendi, be my guest. Please
 be seated on the sofa. Today we

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STRAHIL (cont'd)
celebrate the Patron of my house.
We are all gathered together here.

Osman Bey looks at him slowly from head to toe.

OSMAN BEY
Giaours, you are not inviting us to
eat, ha?? We've had a long trip, we
are hungry as wolfs, and you are
feasting here, oh
you-good-for-nothing?

STRAHIL
Please Effendi, have a seat. There
is food for you as well.

OSMAN BEY
(to Strahil's wife)
Bring the lamb, you Giaour, we need
to eat. My stomach growls as if
cats are fighting inside.

Strahil nods to his wife. She immediately runs to bring the meat. She comes back with tray full of meat. She passes the tray to Strahil and he places it in front of Osman Bey, who is sitting at a comitadji table.

Osman Bey wildly sticks his fingers into the roasted lamb, tears off pieces of meat and starts eating uncontrollably. With face smeared in grease, he turns to Strahil.

OSMAN BEY
And, where is the wine?

STRAHIL
Right away, Effendi, right away.
Strahil turns to his wife and she
brings wine.

STRAHIL
Here you are, Effendi.

Osman Bey grabs the wine from Strahil's hands and starts drinking. He wipes his mouth with the sleeve and turns to his people.

He gives them sign to surround the men, along with the women and children. They obey. A moment of panic occurs among the villagers. Children's cry is heard.

(CONTINUED)

OSMAN BEY
 (to Strahil)
 Are you the Kodjabashis of the
 village?

STRAHIL
 I am, Effendi.

OSMAN BEY
 Then, you know why are we here,
 right?

STRAHIL
 No, Effendi. I don't know.

OSMAN BEY
 Are you trying to be clever, you
 giaour?

STRAHIL
 No, Effendi. I really don't know.

Osman Bey turns to his entourage.

OSMAN BEY
 (to his people) (Turkish)
 Tie them up!!!!

They immediately grab the children and start tying their hands and legs with ropes. Women scream for their children, begging Turks on their knees to not take their children away, in vain. One of the women runs up front and sticks her nails into the eyes of one of the TURKS.

He helplessly cries and falls down. Another TURK pulls out knife and stabs it deep into the women's stomach. She falls on the ground immediately. Cries of desperation are heard by other WOMEN.

THE WOMEN
 Damn you men!!!! You sit and watch
 how your sons are being taken
 away!!!! O, dear God!!!! Do
 something!!!

Men stand speechless and can't believe that they see, what is happening. Turks take away the children in front of their eyes. One of the Turks grabs Neven, Krstan's son, ties up his hands and legs and puts him in the basket on the horse saddle.

(CONTINUED)

Krstan, his father, pulls out a knife at that moment and runs towards the Turk. Krstan stabs the knife right into his heart. With lightning speed the other Turk next to him takes out his saber and cuts down Krstan's head. His head flies off and falls down on the ground.

Turks take Petrush, tie his hands and legs and put him in a basket on the horse saddle. Strahil sits calmly and watches how his son is being taken away. Villagers withdraw.

Turks load children on the horses and leave Strahil's house yard. As they leave, Turks grab the whole meat and take it with them for the road. Women's moans and wails for their children and killed villagers are heard in the background.

EXT. - TSAR'S ROAD - DUSK

Osman Bey cavalry walks along the Tsar's Road with the children forcibly taken from their parents, taking them away on horses. Petrush along with his friend Neven are put in a basket, in one of the horse saddles.

It is dark in the basket, and the air is dump. Petrush's hands are tied on his back to the irons on the horse saddle. Neven's crying voice is heard. Petrush is trying to console him.

INT - IN THE BASKET - DARKNESS

NEVEN

(crying)

Where is my father? What have they done to my father? (beat) Where is he? Where is he?

PETRUSH

Don't worry Neven. Your father is home. Don't cry. NEVEN What happened to him? He's gone...

(beat)

Where is he to take me? Where am I?

PETRUSH

He'll come. He is certainly looking for you already. He won't leave you. Don't worry.

Petrush doesn't know what else to tell to Neven. He has no courage to tell him about his father's death.

(CONTINUED)

PETRUSH (CONT'D)

(calmly)

He will come and save you....

NEVEN

He will come for sure?

PETRUSH

Yes, yes... Certainly...

Neven sighs. He is a bit calmer now. He stops crying.
Petrush hears clatter of horse hooves moving forward.

EXT. - TSAR'S ROAD - DUSK

That's IMER's horse, Osman Bey's aid. He wears red fez on his head, red shalwars and his face is tanned. The pistol and saber are placed on the side of his belt and can be easily seen.

Osman Bey is leading the cavalry and he approaches him. Storm is coming. Dark clouds are covering the sky. Lightning and thunder are starting. The air is becoming increasingly heavier.

IMER

(to Osman Bey) (Turkish)

Osman Effendi.... Storm is coming.

We've already passed a long way.

Let's find a shelter.

((beat))

People are hungry and tired.

Osman Bey looks at Imer.

OSMAN BEY (TURKISH)

Did you check the children?

IMER (TURKISH)

Yes Effendi, everything is under control. They are quiet and peaceful in the baskets.

OSMAN BEY (TURKISH)

Are they well tied?

IMER

(certain) (Turkish)

Of course Effendi. Only thunder can break the ropes they are tied with. And, when a thunder strikes, not a single soul remains alive.

(CONTINUED)

Osman Bey smiles.

OSMAN BEY

(proudly)

((Turkish))

They will become good janissaries.
Just to get to Kjustendil on time.
And then Bejazit Bey will take care
of them. He will take them to
Stamboul.

Osman Bey looks at the sky covered with clouds. It's
starting to rain.

OSMAN BEY (CONT'D)

(Turkish)

Storm is coming. Let's hurry up and
find shelter. Tell everyone.

IMER

(Turkish)

Peki, Effendi.

Imer mounts his horse, goes and tells other Turks. The rain
becomes heavier, with stronger and more frequent thunder and
lightning. Osman Bey sees an abandoned wooden cottage.

Raises his arm and gives sign for the cavalry to take
shelter there. Turks tie up their horses and horses carrying
the children and approach the cabin. The rain stops. The sky
has cleared already.

OSMAN BEY

(to his men)

(Turkish)

We'll sleep here tonight, and
tomorrow we'll continue.

Osman Bey looks around.

OSMAN BEY (CONT'D)

(Turkish)

Gather dry twigs, branches, wood
and make camp fire.

Turks immediately start gathering fire wood.

EXT. - IN FRONT OF THE CABIN - NIGHT

Turks sit by the camp fire and roast the meat they took from Petrush's village. They laugh and talk loud.

INT. - IN THE BASKET - DARKNESS

Petrush tries to free himself from the rope he is tied with. The skin on his elbow is hurt from the iron fixed on the horse saddle. He is trying to cut the rope with the iron. Succeeds, slowly raises his head and opens the basket.

He can see Turks feasting by the camp fire. He turns his head left and right to check if there is someone and comes out of the basket without being noticed. He feels the ground under his feet already.

EXT. - IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

He noiselessly moves away and disappears in the woods. Starts running without looking back. As Petrush runs faster and faster Turk's voices disappear in the distance.

Going through the deep woods he reaches the main Tsar's Road, the road taken by the Turks when taking the children loaded on horses.

EXT. - TSAR'S ROAD - NIGHT

Slowly, Petrush is overcome by tiredness. From time to time he looks back to check if any of the Turks are behind him. The dawn is coming slowly. To avoid being noticed, Petrush leaves the main road and goes into the woods.

He is so tired already that he comes back to the main road and lies on the ground. Overwhelmed, Petrush falls asleep.

EXT. TSAR'S ROAD - MORNING

Morning sun shines on Petrush's face. He slowly opens his eyes and jumps immediately. There is no one around him. Only birds tweeting on the trees. The road is empty. He continues walking on the road until he reaches the path that leads to his village Vojnik.

He hesitates whether to take that path. There is another curved path on the other side of the road, he notices. He decides to take the curved path. The path leads deep into the woods again.

EXT. - IN THE WOODS - DAY

Petrush slowly goes through the woods. His heart beats fast and his breathing is heavy. He hears sound of a river. He is thirsty, his mouth is dry and he starts running following the sound of the water. He leaves the woods, comes to the river, but hides behind a bushy shrub. He notices a man by the river wearing black cassock.

The man has white hair, white beard and big cross around his neck and is filling a jug with water from the river. That is FATHER GAVRIL, he lives in the cave near Kriva Reka river. Father Gavril hears a noise coming from the shrubs and raises his head. He looks towards the shrub.

FATHER GAVRIL

Who is there? Is anyone there? Show yourself....

Petrush fearfully comes out from behind the bushy shrubs. Father Gavril is surprised to see Petrush.

FATHER GAVRIL

Petrush!!!?? Is that you son?

((beat))

What are you doing here?

((beat))

How come you are here?

Petrush slowly goes to the monk.

PETRUSH

(scared)

I escaped from the Turks, Father Gavril. They took me away from the village.

Father Gavril takes the water jug and runs towards him.

FATHER GAVRIL

(worried)

Are you all right, son? Are you hurt?

(CONTINUED)

PETRUSH

No, Father. I'm good. I'm just exhausted.

Father Gavril passes him the water jug. Petrush is very thirsty and drinks a whole jug of water. The monk carefully looks around in the woods.

FATHER GAVRIL

Did anyone follow you?

PETRUSH

No, Father. No one is there. But, for sure Turks have found out by now that I have escaped.

FATHER GAVRIL

They will look for you everywhere, God damn, those bloody unfaithful will leave no stone unturned. You are not safe here.

(beat)

Come with me.

PETRUSH

Where are we going?

FATHER GAVRIL

You just come with me.

Petrush wipes his mouth with the sleeve and nods. They both disappear deep in the woods. Walking through the woods they come to a big magmatic rock full of carved caves. The rock is kept hidden by the dense foliage of the woods.

They enter through the dense foliage woods and reach the rock. Father Gavril looks towards the summit of the rock. From there one can see the entire Tsar's Road leading to Skopje.

Both climb up the outer part of the rock, reach small stairs carved in the rock which can hardly accommodate a single medium-sized human foot.

They go down the stairs and reach a narrow passing, bend down and support themselves with one hand on the opposite part of the rock.

INT. - IN THE CAVE

Both of them walk through a tunnel and reach an entrance of a stone cell. There is a wooden door at the entrance of the cell. The monk opens the door and they go inside. The monk supports the door with a wooden log. Petrush looks around.

He notices a copper pot in the corner next to the door filled with wheat, honey, cooking oil and wine. The fireplace is in the middle of the cell. There is a wooden table with old monastery books from Mount Atos on the other side of the fire. In the middle part of the wall there are wide carved wholes for storing food items. Across the table there is a bed made of oak logs and beech wood.

The bed is covered with dried grass and male fern for the bedding to be soft and scented, covered with dense hair fur from wild animal. Petrush is completely tired and looks exhausted. His clothes are soaked from the rain. Father Gavril notices that and starts the fire.

FATHER GAVRIL

Come son, you need to change. Let's put your clothes near the fire to get dry. You'll get cold.

The monk gives dry clothes to Petrush. He changes. The fire starts blazing slowly.

FATHER GAVRIL (CONT'D)

You must be hungry and thirsty. I'll bring you something to eat. I'll warm you up milk. To get your strength back.

((beat))

And now get some rest.

Petrush lies down on the wooden bed and stares at the ceiling. His thoughts go back to his parents in the village where he was born. He closes his eyes and falls asleep. Petrush has a dream of his parents arguing.

FLASHBACK shows up. Petrush sitting at his parents' house, in the corner next to the stove, listening them arguing.

PETRUSH'S MOTHER

(crying)

Oh my husband, I've told you, we should have cut a finger of child's hand or foot. I've told you hundred times.

((beat))

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PETRUSH'S MOTHER (cont'd)
 They will take away my lion. Why
 are you so stubborn? Don't you
 understand?

STRAHIL
 You woman, why don't you
 understand? Life does not
 recognizes half man.
 (beat)
 I want strong and healthy son, a
 hero of mine.
 (beat)
 Are we going to cripple him and he
 hasn't even started his life?

PETRUSH'S MOTHER
 You are responsible for your own
 son.... It's your fault. Oh, what
 will happen to us?

The mother sits on a small chair and starts crying. Angry,
 Strahil leaves through the door. FLASHBACK ends. Petrush
 awakes covered in sweat and disturbed.

PETRUSH
 (aloud))
 Moooom, daaaaad!!!.....

Father Gavril stands above him and calms him down.

FATHER GAVRIL
 Calm down son!!! You had a bad
 dream. Everything is going to be
 alright. Come, have something to
 eat.

The monk gives him piece of pork. He passes him the milk
 too. Petrush eats meat and drinks milk at the same time. He
 stares into the fire absent-minded. The monk sits by the
 fire.

FATHER GAVRIL (CONT'D)
 Come now, tell me everything. What
 happened?

PETRUSH
 (chewing)
 Turks came at our house when we
 were celebrating our patron saint,
 Father. They took away all the
 children.

His eyes are filled with tears.

(CONTINUED)

PETRUSH (CONT'D)

(crying)

They killed uncle Krstan and one woman from the village. They took away Neven too. I've managed to escape, but Neven didn't. What will happen to him, Father Gavril?

Listening to Petrush, Father Gavril lowers his head.

FATHER GAVRIL

(thinking)

They will take him to Stamboul my son. They will make him a janissary. He'll become Turk, he will slaughter and hang everybody standing on his way.

(beat)

God help him!!!

The monk crosses himself three times.

PETRUSH

Father, do you know something about my mother and father? Are they alive? Are they looking for me? I want to see them.

FATHER GAVRIL

Now it's not the time to go to the village. It's too dangerous. That is the first place where Turks are going to look for you. It's not safe for you to go.

(beat)

You better stay here with me some time. Stay for the winter, then we'll see.

Petrush accepts monk's answer, he has no other choice.

PETRUSH

Alright Father. I hope, some day I'll see mother and father again.

The father smiles and caresses Petrush's head.

FATHER GAVRIL

Don't worry son. You'll see them. As soon the spring comes, I'll go down to the village to look for them. Do you agree?

Calmed down, Petrush smiles and nods with his head.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER GAVRIL (CONT'D)

Now have a good rest and don't
think about anything. You are safe
here.

Petrush is too tired and sleepy. Slowly he falls into a deep
sleep.

FADE IN

FADE OUT

10 YEARS LATER

EXT. - THE WOODS - DAY

Father Gavril and Petrush, now a twenty years old colossus
young man, are bringing back goats and sheep from grazing to
the fold in the cave. Suddenly a tool, thin man with
fur-lined leather cap on his head, with moustaches and thick
woolen gunna up to his knees decorated with cords shows up.

It is JOAKIM, he is an ajdut from the neighbouring village
Konjuh. Joakim greets Father Gavril and Petrush.

JOAKIM

Good day Father Gavril!!! How are
you?

The monk looks at him, surprised.

FATHER GAVRIL

Thanks to God I'm good son. Who are
you, son? What trouble brought you
here?

JOAKIM

My name is Joakim. I've run away
from the mines. Turks are behind by
back.

(beat)

We were seven men... we dispersed
everywhere.

(beat)

I ended up here.

(CONTINUED)

Father Gavril and Petrush look at each other and then look at Joakim.

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

Can I spend the winter with you,
here in the cave, and then in the
spring I'll try to find help??!!

FATHER GAVRIL

Where there is a place for two,
there is a place for three as well.
Come son, you are welcomed with us.

JOAKIM

(satisfied)

Thank you, Father!!!

The three of them enter the cave where Father Gavril lives.

INT. - INTO FATHER GAVRIL'S HOME

Joakim carefully looks at the place where Father Gavril lives. Petrush follows this view. The three of them sit by the fireplace.

FATHER GAVRIL

Where are you from, my son? I see,
you know me.

JOAKIM

I know you both, you Father and
Petrush, but you don't know me.

(beat)

I'm from the neighbouring village
Konjuh.

(beat)

I've heard many good things about
you, and especially about Petrush.

Petrush looks at Joakim surprised.

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

(to Petrush)

I know Strahil, your father. We
worked together in the mine.

(beat)

We ran away together from that
dump.

Petrush's face became pale at that moment.

(CONTINUED)

PETRUSH

(disturbed)

My father is alive? Where is he now?

JOAKIM

In my village, in my father's house. He is safe.

(beat)

Only now he is old and exhausted. It's difficult for him to move. He limps. During the escape he hurt his leg.

Petrush is saddened. His eyes are filled with tears. He raises his head.

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

Your father opened my eyes. If it wasn't for him who knows if I would have ever run away from that hell.

PETRUSH

And my mother? What about my mother?

Joakim lowers his head, doesn't say a word for few seconds and looks at Petrush.

JOAKIM

Your mother didn't make it, Petrush. The disease killed her. The everyday hard work, the humid, the darkness and hunger took their toll.

(beat)

She never stopped mourning for you. Her body was taken outside the mine, it was Rizaj Zaifi Bey's order in front of the rocks to be picked by vultures and wild animals.

(beat)

Your father was not allowed to see her for the last time, nor to bury her as it should've done.

Petrush lowers his head and slowly sobs inside him. Father Gavril and Joakim just look at each other. Petrush raises his head proudly and clenches his palms into fists.

(CONTINUED)

PETRUSH

I will not sleep in peace until those nasty dogs pay for my parents. There is no force that will stop me from revenge.

Father Gavril consoles Petrush.

FATHER GAVRIL

It will happen, son. The time will come. Their end will come, too.

(beat)

Now, let's eat something. You must be hungry.

Petrush and Joakim nod. The monk brings goat meat, gives to both of them and they start eating.

JOAKIM

(chewing)

(to Petrush)

How long have you been here?

PETRUSH

Ten years. After I managed to run away from the Turks and not become janissary Father Gavril took me into his shelter.

(beat)

He taught me to read and write.

(beat)

I've learned a lot about the history of my people. About who we are and what we are.

Petrush points to the wooden table where Father Gavril's books are. Joakim carefully listens to Petrush.

PETRUSH (CONT'D)

This holly land of ours, Macedonia had its empire, our Macedonian, 600 years ago. We had our own Macedonian Tsar, Tsar Samuil.

(beat)

Why don't we Macedonians renew that empire again, where people will be free and will decide for its own destiny.

Joakim is astonished by the wise words of this young, but clever man.

(CONTINUED)

JOAKIM

(joyful)

Petrush, you could join my band. We need people like you.

PETRUSH

Band? What band?

JOAKIM

Ajduts' band. Rebels in the mountain. We are few for now. They are my friends.

PETRUSH

And, who are your friends?

JOAKIM

Villagers, former miners in the mine and mine shafts. Renegades not by own will. They all share our unfortunate destiny.

Petrush listens carefully.

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

But, that's not enough Petrush. People are blinded by the wish for revenge. They enter danger aware of that, sacrificing their life in the first clash. Those are wasted human lives.

PETRUSH

Then, how can we get rid of that?

JOAKIM

It is within ourselves. As long as we hang our heads and allow violence, the crime and injustice will continue.

PETRUSH

Unity is our strength.

JOAKIM

That is right. Strength that will be dangerous for all pashas and beys.

Father Gavril carefully listens to the conversation between the two of them

(CONTINUED)

FATHER GAVRIL

My children, nothing lasts forever.
The world changes. We need strong
hand and clear thought that will
lead the people in organised
uprising.

Immersed in his thoughts, Petrush looks at the fire.

PETRUSH

(to Joakim)

I would like to see my father.

JOAKIM

Don't worry..... if you want we can
go there tomorrow evening.

Smile appears on Petrush's face.

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

Sun will shine on Strahil's dark
soul when he'll see you. He will be
happy in his old days to see you
alive and healthy.

(beat)

Your father and I, we are relatives
of some kind, ninth generation
lineage. That means that you and I
are blood-brothers.

PETRUSH

If you say so my brother, then let
it be.

They both smile and hug. Father Gavril blesses their
brotherhood, and crosses himself three times.

PETRUSH (CONT'D)

I swear, I won't sleep peacefully
until Rizaj Zaifi Bey hangs on a
tree.

JOAKIM

Remember brother... They are many.

PETRUSH

(proudly)

And, I am not alone.

All three smile at Petrush's words.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER GAVRIL

Come children, it's time for bed.
The morning is smarter than the
night. What the day brings, the
year doesn't.

JOAKIM

You are right Father.

The three of them prepare for sleep. Father Gavril puts out the petroleum lamp above the fireplace. They lay down and fall asleep.

EXT. - IN THE WOODS - DUSK

Petrush and Joakim move through misty oak woods towards the village of Konjuh. Sounds of birds singing are heard in the woods and some wolf howl as well. It's getting dark slowly.

Petrush and Joakim are hurrying to the village. They leave the oak woods and the village is lying in front of them. The smoke from the chimneys slowly floats to the sky. In the winter villagers heat their houses with wood-burning tin heaters.

Both stand by an oak tree and observe the surrounding area. There is an old dusty road that leads to the village. Joakim is careful, he hasn't decided yet if they should immediately take the road to the village.

JOAKIM

(to Petrush)

Petrush look!!! This is my village.

Joakim points at the village with his finger.

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

Third house on the right is our
house.

(beat)

The main road leads to the village.
We must be very careful. Turkish
patrol passes here.

Petrush nods his head.

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

Before entering a settlement ajduts
always check the terrain first.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOAKIM (CONT'D) (cont'd)
You have to be sure. You stay here
while I check if everything is
clear.

PETRUSH
All right.

Silent and careful Joakim goes to the valley leading to the main village road. He kneels down in order to have a better view of the road, checking both sides of the road to see if anyone is there.

Once convinced the road is clear, he gives sign to Petrush to come down the valley. Petrush comes down and reaches Joakim. Both quickly cross the dusty road and enter the village.

EXT. - THE VILLAGE - NIGHT

It's quiet in the village. Distant dog barking from the neighbouring houses is heard. There is no one outside. They both start walking faster and from time to time turn back to check if someone's following them.

They reach the house of Joakim's father. It's an old dilapidated house with small yard. There is a small tap in front of the house. They come near the wooden gate at entrance of the house.

Joakim turns around and quietly knocks three times at the gate. Petrush is next to him. An old woman shows up at the gate. She is slouched, wears black scarf on her head, her face is filled with wrinkles, and her eyes are hollow. That is Joakim's MOTHER.

The mother keeps her eyes at her son. She looks at Petrush, too.

MOTHER
(surprised)
Is that you my son?

JOAKIM
Yes mother, it's me. I'm bringing
guest.

MOTHER
Come, get in quickly.

The mother checks if there is someone at the entrance and closes the gate. Petrush and Joakim enter.

INT. - IN THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Joakim and Petrush enter the main room with the fireplace. Two old men sit by the fire one across the other. One wears wolf clothing with wolf fur-lined leather cap on his head. His hands are coarse, his face is dilapidated and exhausted.

That is Joakim's FATHER. The other one sitting across him also wears wolf clothing with goat fur-lined leather cap on the head. He has scar on the face under the right eye, his hands are scabby like frog skin, has white hair and eyes almost covered by the white eyebrows above them.

That is Strahil, father of Petrush.. Petrush doesn't recognize his father. The old men slowly looks at Joakim and Petrush.

STRAHIL

Who is your friend Joakim?

(beat)

I haven't seen him working in the mine with us.

Petrush trembles. His hands are shaking, he is excited. Joakim smiles and pats Petrush on the shoulder.

JOAKIM

(joyful)

This is Petrush uncle Strahil, your son!!!!

Strahil freezes. He looks at his son and stands up slowly.

STRAHIL

Petrush!!!??? Come closer son so I can see you.

Petrush runs to him. Strahil stands up but his leg fails him, he bends down, clenching his teeth. Both hug each other strongly.

STRAHIL (CONT'D)

(joyful)

My son, you are alive!!! My Petrush!!!

PETRUSH

It's me father!!!

STRAHIL

At old age the sun shines upon me.

(beat)

I see my child again.

(CONTINUED)

Strahil slowly sits on the chair. Petrush is next to him.

PETRUSH

Mother?

Strahil looks at his son. His eyes are sad and filled with tears.

STRAHIL

She didn't make it, son. I didn't see her for last time.

Petrush's eyes are filled with tears, he hugs his father strongly. Strahil shows his hurt leg to Petrush.

STRAHIL (CONT'D)

The leg is destroyed son. From the ankle to the knee. My time has gone son.

(beat)

That train has left the station.

(beat)

It's your turn now.

(beat)

I see you are among good and smart people.

PETRUSH

Father Gavril gave me shelter, father. All these years.

STRAHIL

Ahaaa..... God's servant Gavril....

(beat)

Real martyr. Damned destiny has got him, same as ours. A man with honest and just soul.

PETRUSH

I've learned many things from him, father.

STRAHIL

Yeah..... You learned from him more than than I have known for all my life.

Strahil coughs strongly, covering his mouth with his right hand. He catches his breath and continues to talk.

STRAHIL (CONT'D)

Not all Turks are enemies. There are innocent souls among them suffering like we do.

(CONTINUED)

(beat)
 Fight for the good of the people!!!
 For freedom and justice!!!

Petrush looks at his father and nods. In the meantime Joakim's mother enters the room with her daughter NEVENA, his sister. Petrush's and Nevena's eyes meet.

Nevena is a young girl (18) with expressive facial traits, beautiful blue eyes, curly hair, red cheeks and meek slim figure. She looks exhilarating. They look at each other shyly. Nevena bows her head. Her mother turns to her.

MOTHER
 Come daughter pour some fresh milk
 for the guest.

Nevena takes the copper jug with freshly boiled goat milk. She passes wooden cup to Petrush and pours him milk. Petrush looks at Nevena from head to toes and she gives him a shy smiles.

The moment is disrupted by Strahil's strong cough. He touches Petrush on the arm and Petrush turns to him. Nevena leaves the room with her mother.

STRAHIL
 Son, I know we have many unresolved
 debts with these unfaithful.

Strahil loses his breath. He catches his breath and continues. Petrush carefully listens to his father.

STRAHIL (CONT'D)
 They are many. We are few. Dirty
 unfaithful will never want to
 deprive themselves from the
 pleasure of enjoying our
 difficulties and misfortune.

(beat)
 Our hope is our fight, but when the
 time comes, because everything that
 comes at bad time is destined to
 failure, my son.

PETRUSH
 I understand father.

Joakim approaches Petrush and takes his arm.

JOAKIM
 Brother, it's time to go. The
 Father is waiting for us. It's dark
 already. Let's go while it's safe.

(CONTINUED)

Petrush nods his head.

PETRUSH

I have to go father, we'll see each other again.

STRAHIL

Take care, son!!! I'll wait for you.

Both hug. As he is leaving the room, Petrush meets Nevena again. They exchange shy looks and Petrush leaves. Joakim and Petrush exit the house and disappear in the darkness of the night.

EXT. - THE CAVE - DAY

Deep in the oak woods ten AJDUTS are gathered in front of the cave. They all have long beards and hair, they are armed with bows and arrows and axes, wearing fur-lined leather caps on their heads from wolf, goat and lamb skin.

Only one of them singles out, instead of a fur-lined leather cap, he wears helmet, has a bent saber on his belt and European medieval knight clothing. He has red hair, long nose and big blue eyes.

That is HANS RICHTER (30), a German working in the Kratovo mine as professional miner. Joakim and Petrush show up down the road. The band is ready. Joakim gives sign that everything is all right.

They approach the ajduts. Joakim greets all of them. Hans looks at Petrush.

HANS

(to Joakim)

Hey you comitadji leader, who is the boy with you? He is big and strong like a rock. Karposh.

JOAKIM

(smiles)

This is Petrush, my brother by blood. He is new in the band.

Joakim looks at Petrush and pats him on the shoulder.

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

Karposh, you say? Well Petrush I congratulate you on your new moniker.

(CONTINUED)

Petrush, now already Karposh, just smiles and nods his head. Hans shakes his hand.

HANS

Welcome Karposh Karposh greets Hans
and the other ajduts.

JOAKIM

(to Karposh)

We expect few more to join us.

Five ajduts come out of the dense woods bringing food for the band. Venison prepared by STOJMIR, the cook, short and fat man wearing wolf clothing and fur-lined leather cap bigger than his head. It's getting dark already.

INT. - IN THE CAVE - NIGHT

The band sits by the fire eating venison hunted in the woods. They all gormandize. Karposh eats slowly and observes other ajduts. Hans notices that.

MOMIR, one of the ajduts licks his fingers from the meat and turns to Karposh. He looks at Karposh with disregard.

MOMIR

(ironically)

And, boy..... What difficulty made
you to come here?

KARPOSH

(to Joakim)

Most probably because of my brother
by blood.

(he laughs)

A problem is a problem for
everyone, and for me as well.

MOMIR

Difficulties will be gone once we
revenge our suffering and
misfortune and take what's ours.

KARPOSH

People's sufferings and tragedy are
more important than any personal
misfortune.

Momir cuts the venison and points the knife to Karposh.

(CONTINUED)

MOMIR

You are being smart, boy, ha. Once you personally face with death you won't talk like this.

Joakim stops Momir. Karposh looks at Momir.

JOAKIM

Momir stop.....!!! Now it's not the time nor the place for this.

((beat))

Calm down!!!

MOMIR

You calm down your brother, Joakim...

((beat))

His tongue works faster than his mind.

Momir is nervous, he smiles ironically, throws away piece of meat and leaves the fireplace. He goes outside. Other ajduts silently observe the situation.

JOAKIM

(to Karposh)

I'm sorry for his behaviour.

((beat))

Recently Turks burned his house, raped his wife and killed his son, his only child.

((beat))

He is filled with resentment and hatred.

KARPOSH

I understand brother He is embittered. But resentment and anger in our fight are poison for our cause.

Joakim just nods his head.

EXT. - IN FRONT OF THE CAVE IN THE WOODS - DAY

Ajduts band sits by the fire in front of the cave and loudly talk among each other. Karposh, Joakim and Hans the German are among them. Joakim tries to calm down the ajduts who fiercely discuss.

One of the AJDUTS, visibly nervous raises his tone of voice.

(CONTINUED)

AJDUT 1

People, I think we should take the head of that villain Rizaj Zaifi Bey. He has done many evil things to us.

(beat)

What do you say, ha?

Another AJDUT joins the discussion.

AJDUT 2

It's too dangerous to go for that dog. I suggest we rob a trade caravan passing by the Kriva Reka river.

(laughs)

To get some money. Enough of this misery and penury.

Karposh carefully listens to what other ajduts say. Suddenly two other ajduts show up from the woods. They hurry towards the band. One of them almost breathless speaks to Joakim.

AJDUT 3

Comitagji leader, caravan from Kumanovo to Kriva Palanka approaches and is accompanied by a small armed entourage.

(beat)

What should we do?

Listening to the news, second ajdut is rubbing his hands.

AJDUT 2

(to Joakim)

Now is our chance Vojvodo Hit and run... Let's not waste time.

Other ajduts nod their heads, agreeing with his suggestion. Joakim thinks for a moment. Looks at Karposh.

KARPOSH

(to Joakim)

Is this how you envision our fight for freedom, brother? The victim becoming same as its hangman?

(beat)

Is this what we are fighting for? Is this our cause? Robbery and greed ?

(beat)

The little freedom we have, we don't know what to do with it. We

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH (cont'd)

don't appreciate freedom enough and
that will backfire on us.

(beat)

Think about it, brother.

For a moment Joakim stops and thinks.

JOAKIM

For now that is our only choice,
brother.

KARPOSH

There are always other solutions.

Hans the German interferes in the discussion.

HANS

(aloud)

Easy, people. Come down. Let's
think with calm heads. You don't
know what are you entering into.

Majority of the band disapproves.

HANS (CONT'D)

Caravan robbery is pure suicide.
Trust me!!! The small armed
entourage is just a trick. Have you
heard of HASAN AGA?

Ajduts look at each other questioningly.

HANS (CONT'D)

He is martolozbashija, commander of
punishment expedition who hunts
ajduts and renegades in the
mountains. He is ruthless and cruel
hangman. Heads of many of our
friends were cut by his saber and
impaled on a stake.

((beat))

Is a handful of gold coins worth of
putting our heads in lion's mouth?

Ajduts disapprove.

AJDUT 2

Are we supposed to just sit and
wait in the woods and go for a
picnic?

The band agrees with the ajdut.

(CONTINUED)

BAND

Yes, that's right..... Let's attack
them!!!! Let's kill them...

Joakim stands up and raises his arm as a sign for attention.

[PLEASEINSERT\PRERENDERUNICODE{ĐL}INTOPREAMBLE][PLEASEINSERT\PRERENDER
Easy brothers!!!! Calm down!!!
(beat)
This is what we're going to do...
Carefully we will set an ambush.

Karposh disapproves shaking his head.

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

One group will be positioned on one
side, and another group on the
other side of the road. We'll get
them into a fix.

(beat)

Everyone take good position. On my
sign we attack. Clear?

BAND

(in unison)

CLEEEEAR!!!!

Karposh and Hans just look at each other. Ajduts band
disperses in the woods immediately, going towards the main
road to meet the caravan.

EXT. - MAIN COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Ajduts are already positioned on both sides of the road
waiting for the caravan to pass. Hidden behind an oak tree
in the woodland Joakim, Karposh and Hans observe the entire
situation together.

A caravan accompanied by a small armed group of ten people
shows up on the road. The caravan is headed by two beautiful
black Lipizzaners with colourful decorations around their
heads.

Ajduts charge at the cavalry, guards try to grab their
weapons, but they are immediately overpowered by several
ajduts. Ajduts slaughter them ruthlessly.

At the same moment punishment EXPEDITION OF AROUND ONE
HUNDRED MEN lead by HASAN AGA from the direction of Kriva
Palanka arrives on the road. They notice the ajduts and move
towards them with lightning speed.

EXT. - ON THE ROAD - DAY

Ajduts are surprised by the punishment expedition and prepare for fight. But the cavalry furiously passes through the ajduts and cuts them with their sabers killing four ajduts. Remaining part of the band start running in panic and disperse in the woods.

Hasan Aga comes down from the horse and looks at the dead bodies of killed ajduts. He takes his curved saber of the belt and cuts off the head of one of the ajduts. Ne turns to his people and gives them sign to the same with the remaining ajduts.

They cut their heads off and put them all in one big cloth bag. Cavalry expedition with the cut off ajdut heads returns to town.

EXT. - FORTRESS - DUSK

There is a big fortress with high tower before the entrance of Kriva Palanka town. Defense trenches from the external enemy are dug in front of the fortress entrance, and there are about ten canons located on the ramparts.

Hasan Aga cavalry returns to the fortress. Two GUARDS meet them at the gate. They open the gate and the cavalry enters. Several stakes are placed one next to the other at the fortress tower.

Two of the fortress guards bring the four heads cut off from the ajduts with them. They impale them on the stakes so everyone outside the fortress can see.

EXT. - IN THE WOODS - DAY

Ajduts sit on a meadow in the forest together with Joakim and Karposh. They are silent. Their faces are sad and disappointed by the fiasco they suffered with the attack on the caravan on the road.

Joakim is absorbed in his thoughts, while Karposh is disappointed.

KARPOSH

(to Joakim)

(disappointed)

Brother, why did you allow for this to happen?

(CONTINUED)

(beat)
Four lives lost for nothing. Why?

JOAKIM
They knew what they were entering
into. We were all aware of the risk
of the attack.

KARPOSH
Don't you feel responsible for the
lost lives of our friends?

JOAKIM
(brazenly)
Responsible? Well brother, they
were not children.

KARPOSH
What's happening with you, Joakim?
This is not how I imagined our
fight. We are lost, we're only
cannon fodder for the tyrant.

For a moment Karposh looks at Joakim. He stands up and
leaves.

EXT. - FORTRESS BEFORE KRIVA PALANKA - DAY

Surrounded by his armed guards, HASAN AGA, the Commander of
the PUNISHMENT EXPEDITION sits in his tent in the fortress.
One town tower GUARD comes to Aga's tent. He brings letter
for him.

INT. - IN THE TENT - DAY

The guard bows to the Aga and delivers the letter to him.
Hasan Aga gives sign the guard is released to go. The Aga
opens the letter and reads. He finishes reading the letter
furious and starts calling one of the GUARDS standing in
front of his tent.

HASAN AGA
(Turkish)
Guard!!!!!!

GUARD
(Turkish)
At your service Aga Effendi!!

(CONTINUED)

HASAN AGA
 (Turkish)
 Gather my troops for inspection.
 Immediately!!!!

GUARD
 (Turkish)
 Understood Aga Effendi!!

The guard leaves the tent.

EXT. - THE FORTRESS - DAY

Aga's punishment expedition is ready for inspection. Riding his horse Hasan Aga arrives in front of his detachment.

HASAN AGA
 (Turkish)
 I have just received an order from the High Gate and His Highness the Sultan. He is not satisfied at all how we are dealing with the ajdut giaurs.
 (beat)
 He is asking from us to take more cruel measures to completely destroy those giaour idiots. Otherwise, our heads will fly.

Hasan Aga gallops on his horse in front of the detachment, moving back and forth.

HASAN AGA (CONT'D)
 (Turkish)
 We'll plough up all villages to find those giaours once and for all. Slaughter, hang, plunder, burn....
 (beat)
 I want the heads of those giaour dogs!!! CLEAR???!!!

The detachment shouts in unison:

THE DETACHMENT
 (Turkish)
 CLEAR!!!!!!

The punishment expedition leaves the fortress and departs to the closest village of Psacha.

EXT. - PSACHA VILLAGE - DAY

A beautiful village church in the middle of a village is presented. Village priest JOASAV and two AJDUTS wearing bags are leaving the church.

The priest Joasav sends the ajduts across the country road immediately to the woods. At that moment, Hasan Aga'a punishment expedition shows up on the road. Ajduts quickly run to the woods.

The detachment arrives at the village and meets Father Joasav.

HASAN AGA

Where are the Giaours, Father?

FATHER JOASAV

What Giaours, Aga Effendi?

HASAN AGA

Don't mock me Father... Where are you hiding the Ajduts?

FATHER JOASAV

I don't know what are you talking, Effendi. There are no Ajduts here.

Hasan Aga comes down of the horse. He goes towards the priest, grabs his white beard and pulls him towards himself.

HASAN AGA

Aaaa...Anasana...Listen you-good-for-nothing!! Last time I'm asking you. Are there giaours in the church? Speak or I will scratch your eyes out.

Hasan Aga takes out his knife from the belt and points to Father's eye.

FATHER JOASAV

But Effendi.... Effendi.... Don't Effendi... I haven't done anything wrong.

HASAN AGA

Ajduts..... Where are they?

The priest doesn't says a word, just points to the woods with his eyes. Hasan Aga looks at the woods across the road. Grabbing his beard, the Aga pulls the priest and they go to the woods.

(CONTINUED)

HASAN AGA (CONT'D)
 Tell them to surrender....
 Immediately!!!!

FATHER JOASAV
 But Effendi....

HASAN AGA
 I said NOW!!!!

Father Joasav nods his head and goes into the woods. Hasan Aga orders his people to burn the woods.

HASAN AGA (CONT'D)
 (Turkish)
 Burn the woods!!!! May the dogs
 burn. And the priest with them....

Hasan Aga's people set the woods on fire. Dried tree branches and leafs start burning. The entire forest is caught by the blaze in just a few minutes. Hasan Aga laughs and watches the forest burning.

EXT. - THE WOODS - DAY

Karposh's ajduts band is safe. They are in a dark valley near the village, out of the reach of the fire. They silently watch the woods burning. Hasan Aga mounts his horse.

HASAN AGA
 (Turkish)
 (to the detachment)
 Disperse in several groups!!! Go
 through the surrounding villages.
 Plunder, kill, burn....
 (beat)
 I want you to bring me the heads of
 those giaour shaytan.

Hasan Aga's deatchment divides into three groups and heads to the neighbouring villages. The Aga decides to stay in Psacha village with twenty of his people. They go in the village.

EXT. - VILLAGE PSACHA - NIGHT

In the middle of the village, Hasan Aga and his people sit by the fire and torture the inhabitants from the surrounding houses. His people torment the villagers, beat them and make them bring something to eat and drink.

HASAN AGA

(laughing aloud)

Come, you shaytans!!!! Bring the lamb.

(points to his stomach)

This tsar's belly needs to be filled. Hurry up or your heads will fly!!!

Villagers frantically run to their houses. In the meantime, Karposh's band slowly moves down to the valley towards the village in order to attack Hasan Aga's people.

Slowly, quietly and unnoticed, ajduts lead by Karposh, surround the Turks and tighten the encirclement. Preoccupied with food and drink, Hasan Aga and his people are not aware of the danger expecting them.

Karposh gives sign to attack. At lightening speed rebels throw themselves on the Turks and slaughter them all. Hasan Aga is the only one remaining alive. The Aga is shocked by the view. He faces Karposh directly. He looks Aga in the eyes.

KARPOSH

Where are you going to run now, Aga? You ill-bread dog!!!

Hasan Aga gets on his knees in front of Karposh.

HASAN AGA

Mercy, Effendi.... Mercy.....

(beat)

I was just doing my job, Effendi...

Karposh hits Hasan Aga on his face and he falls down bleeding. Karposh grabs his hair and points his head to the burning fire.

KARPOSH

It's time for you to burn in your own fire. To see the hell personally!

(CONTINUED)

HASAN AGA

Please don't, Effendi... Don't....
Don't Effendi.... I'll do anything
you want....

KARPOSH

You can't do anything for me but
die, you dog!!!

Karposh grabs Hasan Aga and throws him alive in the fire. He calmly and peacefully watches the Aga burning alive.

EXT. - THE FAIR - DAY

In a place called Trgovishte, in the field on both sides of the road, as on a chess board, a fair is held. The entire area around the fair is fenced. The fair offers everything one's heart desires.

Sheep, goat, pureblood Arabian horses, small mountain loading horses to carry wood, charcoal, grains and potatoes. Karposh enters the fenced fair area and looks at a stand with Venetian mirrors.

He stands up in front of one mirror noticing his colossus appearance. He continues to walk by the stands full of jewelry and precious stones, all kinds of gold and silver necklaces and chains, emerald, ruby, diamond and pearl rings.

He puts his hand into the pocket and takes out only few silver groschen. It's getting dark and Karposh is already tired.

EXT. - THE FAIR - NIGHT

Karposh silently withdraws to a climb and decides to rest there. He spots a tent. A Tatar with slanted eyes, long black moustaches, bald with long ponytail up to his bottom stands there. A beautiful, half naked girl is holding on his right leg.

Her leg is naked above the knee and one of her breasts is sticking out uncovered. Various customers and clients come and offer money to the Tatar to buy the girl. Karposh feels sick, throws up on the ground and decides to go to the closest river to refresh himself.

(CONTINUED)

Refreshed he comes back to the fair. Suddenly he stumbles upon two bloody corpses lying on the ground stabbed by knife. He just spits on them and passes. He mingles among the people in the fair again.

Someone takes him by the shoulder from behind. Karposh turns around and sees Hans. Hans smiles.

KARPOSH

(surprised)

Hans, what are you doing here?

HANS

I follow you, I watch over you.

KARPOSH

(laughing)

Me?!!! I don't need a guardian angel. I can take care of myself.

Hans smiles and takes Karposh under the arm.

HANS

Come with me...

Both head to the fenced area of the fair where tents of RIZAJ ZAIFI BEY, the man who tortured and killed Karposh's parents, are located.

Guards in front of the tent go in and out of the tent with full bags bringing profit collected by the tsar's tithe from the trade. Wearing blue woolen broadcloth and red fez on his head with long thin stripes to the back of his neck, Rizaj Zaifi Bey leaves the tent and orders something to the guards.

HANS

This is Rizaj Zaifi Bey.... Just so you know what he looks like.

Suddenly Karposh's face clouds, his neck muscles tighten, blood freezes in his veins, his palms clench into fists. The butcher guilty for his mother's death and his father's suffering is in front of him.

Hans immediately notices his reaction and takes him by hand. He approaches and whispers.

HANS (CONT'D)

Easy.... Stay calm... This is not the time, nor the place... Soon, his number will come up.

(CONTINUED)

Karposh can hardly restrain himself. He calms down. They turn around and slowly leave. Hans takes Karposh to a stand selling pistols. Ten types of pistols are displayed on the stand.

HANS
(calmly)
Choose one for you.

Karposh takes one pistol with gold-like colour, carefully examines it and puts it in the belt. Hans takes out his money pouch and pays the seller.

The seller smiles satisfied, shaking the pouch. On the stand next to the pistols, Karposh notices several silk women scarfs. He chooses one silk scarf. He smells it.

HANS
(laughing)
For your future bride, maybe...

KARPOSH
Maybe.....

Karposh and Hans withdraw to a quieter place further from the fair and sit on a lawn. Hans takes out white round loaf of bread and smoked venison. Both eat from the round loaf of bread and the meat.

HANS
Once the fair is over, I'm going home, to Austria. To my family.
(beat)
You know, I've grown accustomed here. Macedonia became close to my heart. I've made many friends, and enemies, too.
(beat)
I could've fought for the Austrian Tsar. But, I don't want to. Where there is army, there is no bread.
(beat)
I have nothing against the Turks, but I don't like them as well. They pay me good, but I can't stand how people suffer here. The injustice it suffers.

KARPOSH
Will I see you again?

(CONTINUED)

HANS

In spring, I hope.

For a moment Karposh is lost in his thoughts. Hans taps him on his shoulder and brings him back to reality.

HANS

Well, my friend it's time to say good bye.

KARPOSH

(confused)

Yes, yes... It's time....

HANS

I'll stay a little bit longer here.

KARPOSH

I'll go to Konjuh, to see my father.

HANS

Then, stay well in good health and see you in spring.

KARPOSH

See you, my friend.

They shake hands strongly, hug and depart. Hans stays at the fair, while Karposh leaves for Konjuh.

INT. - THE CAVE - DAY

Karposh and Nevena are at Father Gavril's home as bride and groom. Ajduts and Joakim are standing around them, they are wedding guests. They hold burning candles in their hands.

Father Gavril stands in front of them performing the wedding ceremony. Karposh stands in front of him with his head bowed, while Nevena wears a garland of mountain flowers on her head. Both of them wear simple peasant clothes.

FATHER GAVRIL

God's child Petrush alias Karposh
is wedded with God's child
Nevena!!! God, bless this marriage
and give them children to fill
their home. In the name of the
Father, the Son and the Holy
Spirit, AMEN!!!!

Father Gavril crosses himself. Newlyweds do the same, as well as the ajduts and Joakim. The formal act ends and the entire band congratulates Karposh and Nevena. They all go outside the cave.

EXT. - IN FRONT OF THE CAVE - DAY

At the entrance of the cave everything is prepared for celebration. A ram and a billy goat are prepared on the skewer. Joakim approaches to Karposh.

JOAKIM

May you live long and healthy life
with the bride, brother..... May
many children bring you joy in your
life.

Karposh smiles and they both hug each other. Other members of the band give their blessings too.

THE BAND

May you be live and well and God
bless you with many children!!!

They all salute with wine from the jug. Suddenly, a sound of church bells is heard from Konjuh village church. A VILLAGER visibly panting comes running from the woods. People present there greet him.

THE VILLAGER

(out of breath)
Brothers, Kodjabashis Strahil from
Vojnik village died....
(beat)
God rest his soul.

Unpleasant silence sets in. Hearing the news about his father's death, Karposh gets the fright of his life. His eyes are filled with tears.

All present take down their fur-lined leather caps from the head as a sign of respect.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. - IN THE WOODS - DAY

Karposh moves through thick oak forest. He is going to visit Father Gavril in the cave. A pleasant surprise is waiting for him there. Joakim is there sitting with Father Gavril together.

EXT. - THE CAVE - DAY

Karposh and Joakim hug. Karposh kisses Father Gavril's hand.

KARPOSH

How are you, brother? I'm glad to see you live and well.

JOAKIM

So am I brother. I see, you haven't changed a bit, most likely. Long time has passed. Life took us to different directions.

KARPOSH

Yes, brother you are right.

Once again they hug and enter the cave together.

INT. - IN THE CAVE-

The three of them sit by the burning fire in Father Gavril's home made of stone.

KARPOSH

How is in the mountains, brother?

JOAKIM

Difficult, very difficult. Hunts for us intensified. We are forced to split in smaller groups to cover the traces. The mountain is our second home, but in winter we lack food and clothes. Dissatisfaction among the people grows.

Karposh listens carefully.

(CONTINUED)

JOAKIM (CONT'D)

Blacksmiths in the villages with full speed ahead forge axes, sickles, knives, spears.. People's doom is sealed, brother.

FATHER GAVRIL

(to Karposh)

Watch out from the Turks son. Now you are in the beast's jaws. If they learn about you, you know what's waiting for you. There is no trial with them, punishment is their right. And, their punishment brings only fear, suffering and death.

KARPOSH

Death is a price that each living human has to pay at some moment, father.

The priest just nods.

JOAKIM

(to Karposh)

I'd like to suggest you to be the comitadji leader of the band. To lead the band where they can't and maybe even don't know how to get there.

(beat)

What do you say about this?

KARPOSH

It's a great honour you're giving me, brother.

Karposh smiles and gives hand to his blood-brother. They hug each other.

JOAKIM

Just be careful, your name is great, they'll like to get it.

KARPOSH

Don't worry about it. There is no Karposh for the Turks.

FATHER GAVRIL

Only in harmony and unity there is strength, children.

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH

That is right father. That is why the people should be well prepared for an organized uprising against the tyrant. And the people is still not ready for the right moment.

Sitting by the extinguished fire, they all agree with Karposh.

INT. - IN THE MINES - DARKNESS

Mining copper and silver, the rayah is exposed to unseen difficulties and pressure. Guards yell at the villagers to work harder and dig out more ore.

When guards see exhausted miner who cannot dig more ore, they lash their whips on them. Some of the villagers crush on the ground and can't continue. As they collapse, guards take them out of the mine.

EXT. - ABOVE THE MINES - NIGHT

They leave them to die on the rocks above the mines. Rizaj Zaifi Bey visits the mines all the time and controls the operation process through regular reports by his people in charge for securing the mines. After finishing the visit of the mines, Rizaj Zaifi Bey mounts his horse and leaves for the seraglio.

EXT. - ON THE ROAD - NIGHT

Ajduts dressed in Turkish army uniforms show up on the road and move towards the mines. One of the GUARDS notices their movement.

Ajduts come closer to the guard. He suspiciously looks at them. They appear strange, different, they have long hair and beard. The other part of the band is above the mines waiting order to attack. The guard looks at the disguised ajduts confused.

THE GUARD

(confused)

(Turkish)

You are the reinforcements?

(CONTINUED)

Karposh dressed in Turkish army uniform smiles. He gives sign to attack and ajduts immediately appear from the surrounding forest above the mines and kill all Turkish guards. They don't have time to even take their weapons out.

Karposh overpowers the guard in front of him and hits him in the head with his fist. JURUM, the man guilty of torturing Karposh's father Strahil, is among the guards. Karposh recognizes Jurum.

He comes closer to him and looks his directly in the eyes. FLASHBACK shows up, Jurum is laughing while Karposh's father is being tortured and flogged hanging on an oak tree. FLASHBACK ends. Jurum is frightened. Karposh separates him from the other guards and hands him over to the band.

KARPOSH

(to the band)

Take the people outside the mines.
All of them.

Ajduts immediately enter the mines and carry exhausted miners outside. They are so exhausted and weak they can hardly walk. Their faces are drawn, they have aged early, their hands are covered with festering wounds, their body mutilated from countless hits by bullwhips.

But once they see captured guards as if they receive vitality and energy and immediately run to lynch them with shovels and pickaxes. Karposh stands in front of them and stops them.

KARPOSH

(to the villagers)

People stop!!!! Easy!!!!

One of the MINERS turns to Karposh.

THE MINER

Let me be the judge of those
butchers!!!!

KARPOSH

Calm, just easy. Focus your anger
on Rizaj Zaifi Bey. He brought you
here. This filth is merely cat's
paw in his hands.

THE MINER

I'll strangle them with these two
hands...

He runs towards the guards, but Karposh stops him.

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH

(to the band)

Take their clothes off, tie them
and send them to Rizaj Zaifi
Bey!!!!

(beat)

(he turns to Jurum)

Ha, where is he now? He was
supposed to be here tonight.

Villager and miners react disapproving of Karposh's
decision. He looks at Jurum.

JURUM

(stammering)

He was here.....

Eeeeeffffendiii... Buuuut

lllleeft....

(beat)

Ttthhheeyy hhhaaad gggguuuueessts
from SSSSkkkkoopje....

KARPOSH

So, tonight that dog was lucky.
But, not for long.

Ajduts take the clothes off the guards, tie their hands,
legs with ropes, cover their eyes and load them on horses.
Everybody except Jurum.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)

Tell the bey KARPOSH Vojvoda sends
his greetings!!!! He'd better go
back to Anatolia and dig his ore
there. Only its real master is
entitled to dig this ore here and
that is the Macedonian people!!!

JURUM

(stuttering)

I wwwiiiiilll ttteeellll

hhhiiiiimm,Eeeeeffffeeeendiii....

A shot is heard and horses start running towards the woods
deep in the night. Karposh grabs Jurum's throat.

KARPOSH

You will stay here.

Karposh looks at the same oak tree his father Strahil was
hanged.

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH (CONT'D)
 (points to the tree)
 Does this tree look familiar to
 you...?

Jurum just gulps. Karposh comes closer to him.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 My day has come.... What goes
 around, comes around... Destiny is
 cruel. She toys with people.

JURUM
 (stuttering)
 Nnnnooooo Effffffendiiii....
 Pppplllleeeaaaassee...
 MMMMeeerrrci, Effffffendiiii.....

KARPOSH
 (to the band)
 Hang him!!!! With his head
 downwards!!!

JURUM
 Nooo..... Noooooo.... Noooooo.....

Karposh takes on of the bullwhips captured by the guards.
 Ajduts hang Jurum with a rope on the tree, with the head
 downwards. Karposh gives the bullwhip to one of the ajduts.

KARPOSH
 (to the ajdut)
 Snap the whip ten times, and count
 one.
 (beat)
 May the justice be satisfied.

The ajdut nods his head. He starts ruthlessly whipping Jurum
 to death. Karposh turns to the villagers and miners.

KARPOSH
 You are free now, brothers!!! If
 you want, you can join our band. If
 not, good luck on your journey!!!

Some villagers decide to join the ajduts band, while other
 decide to go back to their homes or look for shelter in
 neighbouring villages or lodgings at Lesnovo Monastery.

INT. - TRAVELER'S INN - NIGHT

Karposh is resting in the lodgings of a travelers inn in Kratovo. He hears noise outside, horses' clatter and people talking, and goes out to see what is happening in front of the lodgings.

A caravan with silver loaded on horses and mules has just arrived from Skopje. People accompanying the caravan start unloading the silver from the horses and mules.

EXT. - IN FRONT OF THE LODGING - NIGHT

Karposh moves down to the caravan. Suddenly someone touches his shoulder. Karposh turns sharply. It is BOZIN, a childhood friend of Karposh who works for Rizaj Zaifi Bey accompanying trade caravans. Bozin is middle-aged man (45), wearing white double-breasted waistcoat and black breeches.

BOZIN

(silently)

Hello Karposh. I bring news from Peshter.

KARPOSH

How are you Bozin? What's happening?

BOZIN

People are on the alert, Karposh. More and more people go to the mountains. But, there is one problem.

Bozin turns around checking if someone else is listening.

BOZIN (CONT'D)

Simple and ignorant is our people. They need someone to lead them. Someone with a strong hand to show them the real direction.)

(beat)

And, you can do that. You are the chosen one, Karposh. If you lead the people, they will follow you faithfully.

KARPOSH

The right time hasn't come yet, Bozin.

(CONTINUED)

BOZIN

Yes, but the people can't wait anymore. Now or never. If you go to the mountain now, we are coming with you.

Karposh takes Bozin aside and tells him something. Bozin agrees and nods his head.

INT. - RIZAJ ZAIFI BEY SERAGLIO - NIGHT

Karposh and Bozin disguised as Turkish zaptieh enter Rizaj Zaifi Bey's seraglio. Nobody from the guards is there, only personal service and females accompanying the Bey.

Two female dancers are performing for the Bey and he enjoys their dance, while oriental music can be heard in the background. Karposh and Bozin show up in front of him. The Bey is startled and stands up.

RIZAJ ZAIFI BEY

What is it, you rascals?!?!?? What do you want? Maybe some of the Giaours have escaped the mines, ha?!?!

KARPOSH

No, Bey... We've only come to see how you are being entertained.

RIZAJ ZAIFI BEY

(aloud)

Shh you rascals!!! Get out of here! Now!!!

The music suddenly stops playing and dancers stop moving their beautiful slender bodies. Karposh approaches the Bey and grabs his neck.

KARPOSH

(strict)

(to the Bey)

Give me all you weapons.

The Bey is surprised by this action.

RIZAJ ZAIFI BEY

(surprised)

But, what is this now?

(CONTINUED)

Pointing with his head to the Bay, Karposh gives sign to Bozin. Bozin jumps on the Bey tying his arms and legs behind his back, stuffing his mouth with a cloth so he won't yell. Dancers are disturbed and Karposh points with his head for them to leave silently.

KARPOSH

(to Bozin)

The weapons are down in the
basement. Everything is there.
Guns, sabers, gun powder, bullets.

(beat)

Let's load them quickly and
disappear.

Bozin agrees and immediately goes to the basement. Karposh turns to Rizaj Zaifi Bey. With his arms and legs tied, and mouth stuffed with a piece of cloth, he can't say a word. He is pale, has no air, his eyes are wide open and he articulates some sounds through the cloth piece.

KARPOSH

(to the Bey)

We'll see again, Bey. These are
greetings to you from me, Karposh
Vojvoda!!!

The Bey raises his eyebrows when he hears the name Karposh. Karposh takes out his knife from the belt and carves a cross on Bey's forehead. The Bey screams out of pain, while blood slowly flows on his forehead. Karposh stands up and goes, leaving the Bey helplessly lying on the ground.

EXT. - IN FRONT OF THE CAVE - DAY

Ajduts are spread out on the meadow in front of the cave. Karposh and Bozin come out of the oak forest with the weapons taken from Rizaj Zaifi Bey's seraglio, loaded on horses and mules.

Ajduts stop to see who is coming. They see Karposh approaching them. They welcome him with open arms.

Ajduts speak all at once:

AJDUTS

Long live the Vojvoda!!!! Down with
the tyranny !!!! Death to the
enemies!!!!

(CONTINUED)

Karposh greets them all and sits on the meadow with them. The band looks at him interested what their Vojvoda has to say.

KARPOSH

Brothers of mine!!! The Turks will come back stronger after this serious attack. That is why I suggest we divide into groups, so they won't find us easily. That way we can easily cover our traces.

The band accepts Karposh suggestion.

YEAR 1689

EXT. - SOFIA VALLEY - DAY

In the eve of the new military campaign towards Austria, the new sultan SULEIMAN II changes his location from Stamboul to Sofia, in Sofia Valley. He is commanding the military operations from his tent.

ARAP REDZEP PASHA, decorated officer with great military experience, is appointed chief military commander of the operations. He has strict expression on his face and sharp eyebrows above his eyes. The Pasha enters Sultan's tent.

INT. - THE TENT - DAY

ARAP REDZEP PASHA

(Turkish)

At your service, Your Excellency!!

SULEIMAN II

(Turkish)

As you know, Austrian army is in front of Belgrade rampart. Your task is to take over Belgrade and expel the enemy deeper into his territory.

(beat)

Everything you need is at your disposal. Gold, food, equipment, arms for the army and horses.

The Pasha bows to the sultan.

(CONTINUED)

ARAP REDZEP PASHA
(Turkish)
I understand, Your Excellency!!!

The Pasha turns around and leaves the tent marching.

EXT. - MILITARY CAMP OF THE AUSTRIAN ARMY - NIGHT

Austrian army is stationed in a military camp near Belgrade. The army is accommodated in military tents set in the camp. THE AUSTRIAN TSAR LEOPOLD I is in one of those tents as well.

INT. - TSAR'S TENT - NIGHT

The Tsar is making the last preparations before the deciding military campaign for liberation of the Balkan countries from the Ottoman slavery. Margrave LUDWIG BADENSKI, Commander-in-Chief of Austrian forces for the Balkan front, experienced military officer, distinguished personality with epaulets on his clear and shiny uniform enters the tent.

His long saber shines of pure gold across his belt. He wears big black military hat on the head, he takes it off and bows to the Tsar.

LUDWIG BADENSKI
(German)
You asked for me, Your Highness!!!!

LEOPOLD I
(German)
Margrave, an extremely difficult
tasks arises in front of you. I
hope you'll execute impeccably.
(beat)
As you know, there are ajdut bands
in Macedonia and Serbia which can
be very useful in our further
progress in these two countries.

Tsar Leopold I stands up from the Tsar's chair he was sitting on and continues.

LEOPOLD I (CONT'D)
(German)
Do you have enough soldiers at your
disposal, Margrave?

(CONTINUED)

LUDWIG BADENSKI

(German)

Of course, Your Highness!!!! The
army is ready at any moment!!!

LEOPOLD I

(German)

Excellent!!! Your mission is to
take Belgrade than via Nish and
Kosovo enter Macedonia and contact
the leader of ajduts movement
Karposh Vojvoda.

(beat)

Remember Margrave every assistance
from outside is more than welcomed.
Is that clear?

LUDWIG BADENSKI

(German)

Clear, Your Highness!!!!

LEOPOLD I

(German)

You depart tomorrow morning.

LUDWIG BADENSKI

(German)

I understand, Your Highness!!!!

The Tsar leans on the chair and gives sign with the hand for
the Margrave to leave. Margrave bows and leaves the tent.

KACHANICHKA KLISURA CANYON

EXT. - MONASTERY - DAY - MORNING

A monastery with wonderful lodging is presented. Church
bells ring. Monks gather for morning service in the
cloister. Suddenly shots are heard from outside the
monastery and the main gate is forcefully opened.

A group of renegades riding horses enter the monastery and
start slaughtering monks. With Molotov cocktails renegades
set the monastery on fire.

Huge tongues of fire show up above the monastery lodgings.
In a short time the blaze spreads throughout the entire
monastery.

EXT. - MONASTERY - DAY - MORNING

While the monastery is burning, an athletically built man with black scarf on his head and an eyepatch on one eye enters through the gate riding a horse. He has tattoo of a saber on his left arm and big earrings on both ears.

That is the Rumelian renegade Beylerbey OSMAN JEGEN PASHA. He looks at the burning monastery and laughs. He gives sign to his bandits and they leave the cloister.

EXT. - MEADOW IN FRONT OF THE CAVE - DAY

Karposh and his ajduts sit on a meadow and talk. Two MESSENGERS on horses show up from a far and ride towards them. The band welcomes them. They come down of their horses.

MESSENGER 1
(out of breath)
Is Karposh Vojvoda here?

KARPOSH
I am Karposh Vojvoda.

The messenger passes a letter to the Vojvoda. Karposh opens the letter.

MESSENGER 1
I'm bringing letter to you from
Patriarch Arsenie....
(beat)
For you, Vojvodo...

Karposh reads the letter.

KARPOSH
The Patriarch is asking for help
from me.

MESSENGER 1
Yes, Vojvodo.
(beat)
Jegen Pasha, that bloodsucker will
pass from here, through Macedonia.
His reign of terror has no ending.

Patriarch's messenger catches his breath and continues to talk.

(CONTINUED)

MESSENGER 1 (CONT'D)

Jegen Pasha does not recognise Sultan's power, he became a renegade from the tsardom and created his own state in a state. That bloody unfaithful dared to burn churches and monasteries throughout Kosovo.

(beat)

To go against the Will of God's. Patriarch Arsenie offers a bag full of gold for his head.

Karposh listens carefully.

KARPOSH

Why am I not surprised? He has brought more terror to us than to you.

(beat)

And, where is he now?

MESSENGER 1

Our people are following his movement. He is in front of Tetovo, visiting a friend of his in the town.

KARPOSH

Convey my words to the Patrijarch, Jegen Pasha will be sorry he met me.

The messenger nods his head.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)

Boziiiiin!!!

Bozin arrives.

BOZIN

At your service, Vojvodo!!!

KARPOSH

We are going in a hunt!!! Inform the others and saddle up the horses.

BOZIN

I understand, Vojvodo!!!

Bozin leaves immediately to inform the others. Both messengers mount their horses and leave.

EXT. - THE ROAD - DAY

Ajduts lead by Karposh arrive at the road and position themselves behind the dense and high poplar trees on both sides of the road. They are expecting the arrival of Jegen pasha. Jegen Pasha moves along the road in a carriage with four women - his slaves.

The carriage is accompanied by twenty armed TURKS. The clatter of the horses can be heard from a far on the hot summer sun. Flies crawl on horses' bodies causing them to snort.

INT. - THE CARRIAGE - DAY

Jegen Pasha enjoys his female company as women's gentle faces are covered with white veils.

EXT. - THE ROAD - DAY

The carriage comes closer to the dense high poplar trees area. Ajduts are hidden behind these trees. Five-six ajduts with long hair and beards show up on both sides of the road. Horses drawing the carriage get disturbed. Turks attack the ajduts, but are being slaughtered in the clash.

In panic, Jegen Pasha leaves the carriage with the women. Women scream and take shelter by the road. One of the ajduts shoots Jegen Pasha in the shoulder. Wounded, he mounts a horse trying to escape.

Soon he is overpowered by other ajduts and thrown out from the horse. Ajduts tie wounded Jegen Pasha up and take him to their shelter in the cave.

INT. - THE CAVE - NIGHT

Jegen Pasha is sitting on his knees, tied. His shirt is ripped and bloody. Karposh is in front of him. Joakim, Bozin, Father Gavril and other ajduts are behind him. Father Gavril wants to dress the wound on his shoulder, but Pasha moves away.

KARPOSH

(to the priest)

If he offers resistance to dressing his wound again, we'll tie him on a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH (cont'd)
rope with his head downwards to
bleed.

Father Gavril approaches Jegen Pasha to dress his wound.
This time the Pasha doesn't oppose it.

JEGEN PASHA
(cynical)
End me once and for all, now that
my life is already in the hands of
Alah.

KARPOSH
(laughing)
Is that so? And, how many human
lives were in your hands? You've
come to this suffering country to
torment the peaceful and suffering
Macedonian people.

(beat)
Now it will seal your doom. You
think the powerful one is allowed
to do everything he wants. And,
when your rules are applied on you,
then you call on your god.

JEGEN PASHA
No use of banging your head against
the brick wall of tsardom. You
cannot escape destiny. We are your
masters and you are our slaves.

Karposh becomes nervous, but then slowly calms down.

KARPOSH
Ahaaaaaa..... If you think that
destiny has something to do with
this, you are deceiving yourself
Pasha.
(beat)
This is slavery, tyranny. No one is
invincible. Every empire ends, so
will yours, too. It's already eaten
from inside, rotting like carcass.

Karposh sternly looks at Jegen Pasha. Silence appears for a
moment. This words of Karposh Vojvoda put Jegen Pasha in a
deeply pensive mood, but he seemingly does not allow to be
psychically broken.

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH (CONT'D)

Tyranny is part of our daily life.
Isn't that a punishment too severe
for the honest and peaceful
Macedonian people? But, you don't
have a home of your own, so you
cannot understand that.

Jegen Pasha now acts very nervously.

JEGEN PASHA

Come on, finish up already. My time
has passed.

Karposh turns to other ajduts in the cave. They discuss
something. Jegen Pasha starts sweating. His fear becomes
already visible. The discussion ends.

Karposh turns to the Pasha. He takes out his sword. Jegen
Pasha swallows. Karposh swings strongly with his sword and
cuts Jegen Pasha's head off.

Blood is gushing everywhere. The head flies aside. Bozin
takes a cloth bag and puts the head inside.

KARPOSH

(cold-bladed)

Throw the body outside, so the wild
beasts can savage it. And, send the
head as a gift to the sultan.

EXT. - SOFIA VALLEY - DAY

TURKISH CAVALRYMAN arrives in the tent of Suleiman II. He is
received by the guards in front of the tent. The cavalryman
has a cloth bag in his hands. Blood is dripping from the
bag.

CAVALRYMAN

(Turkish)

I bring message for His
Highness!!!!

The cavalryman hands the bag over to the guards. He leaves.
THE GUARD enters Sultan's tent.

INT. - IN THE TENT - DAY

The Sultan is sitting pensive on his chair. The guard enters and interrupts Sultan's thoughts. The guard bows to the Sultan.

GUARD
(Turkish)
Your Highness, message for you!!!

The Sultan looks at the cloth bag surprised.

SULEIMAN II
(Turkish)
What wonder is this? Open the
bag!!!

The guard opens the bag. The Sultan is disgusted by the view. It is Jegen Pasha's head cut off and with an arrow stuck in the forehead, smeared with pitch. The sultan is visibly disturbed.

SULEIMAN II
(Turkish)
Guaaaaaaaards!!!!
Guaaaaards!!!!!!

EXT. - IN THE MOUNTAIN - DAY

Villagers from the surrounding villages massively run away into the mountains with their families from the Ottoman bashibazouk that is massively plundering and burning the villages.

People take with them the entire household furnishings and food loaded on horses, donkeys, bovines, mules and head to the mountain massif.

INT. - IN THE CAVE - NIGHT

Karposh's band is gathered by the fire. Karposh pensively looks at the fire.

FATHER GAVRIL
(to Karposh)
Something is bothering you, son?

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH

I'm thinking father are we ready enough? We don't have enough people and weapons. All we have is wish and desire.

A voice is heard from the darkness. That is Joakim.

JOAKIM

Brother, this is our land. We decide our destiny. We are the judges and the hangmen.

KARPOSH

I know, brother. The choice is ours. Either we fight or we die.

JOAKIM

If people are afraid to fight for their own freedom, then people admit defeat in advance. That is unacceptable to me.

KARPOSH

You are forgetting one very important thing, Joakim. Protection of our families. They are our top priority in our fight. Nobody is stupid enough to put its own head in front of the saber blade just to show that he is brave enough. I don't know such man here. But, in this fight our prospects for victory are very small.

Darkness and silence appear. Another voice comes out of the darkness. That is Bozin.

BOZIN

Should we surrender in advance to the hangmen Vojvodo? Without fight? Without resistance?

KARPOSH

I did not say that, Bozin.

BOZIN

There has to be another solution, Vojvodo.

FATHER GAVRIL

Maybe there is, my children Maybe the salvation lies in the Holly

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FATHER GAVRIL (cont'd)
union of fraternal Christian
countries Austria, Russia, Venice
and Poland. They are our brothers
by blood and faith.

KARPOSH
I don't believe in empty promises
Father Gavril. A country is
defended by its own forces.

JOAKIM
Are we by God cursed and
unfortunate people?

KARPOSH
Misfortune is never just towards
us.

FATHER GAVRIL
Patriarch Arsenie requested a
meeting with you, son. Maybe it
will be good for you to go and see
what he wants.

(beat)
Day after tomorrow he arrives at
Mount Atos.

KARPOSH
All right Father. I hope he brings
good tidings. To all of us.

The fire slowly goes out and ajduts slowly start preparing
for sleep.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

MOUNT ATOS

EXT. - THE MONASTERY - DAY

A monastery in Mount Atos is presented where Karposh Vojvoda is to meet the Pekj Patriarch ARSENIE III CHERNOEVIKJ.

INT. - THE MONASTERY LODGING - DAY

Karposh sits at the monastery lodging with his trusted entourage waiting for the Patriarch. Patriarch Arsenie arrives at the lodging and greets the Vojvoda.

The Patrijarch wears long black cassock and large cross on his chests. His beard is white. His hair is also white with a small tail in the back.

PATRIARCH ARSENIE
I'm glad to finally meet you
Vojvodo. I've heard many good
things about you from the Abbot
Makarie of the Lesnovo Monastery.
God rest his soul!!!

The Patriarch crosses himself three times.

PATRIARCH ARSENIE (CONT'D)
I was very happy when I heard the
news about the liquidation of that
butcher Jegen Pasha by you. God is
always merciful to the just.

Karposh is anxious to hear the reason why he is meeting Patriarch Arsenie..

KARPOSH
Tell me Holly Father, what is the
situation on the Balkan?

Patriarch coughs, surprised by the direct question of Karposh Vojvoda.

PATRIARCH ARSENIE
You see Vojvodo, I maintain
continuous contact with the
Austrian Tsar, His Highness Leopold
I. He has heard of your heroic
deeds in Macedonia and expresses
readiness to provide support to all
Christian peoples on the Balkan in
the fight against the Ottomans.
(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PATRIARCH ARSENIE (cont'd)

I will be direct, he expects from you to enable easier penetration of the Austrian army in Macedonia.

KARPOSH

I'll be even more direct with you, Holly Father. Our way of fighting is a guerrilla fight. Do you really think and you are deeply convinced that in such a way we would reach our so much desired freedom? If the Tsar is really determined in his decision to support our ajdut movement, then circumstances would significantly change in our favour.

Karposh takes deep breath.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)

For the time being I can't tell anything, Holly Father until I'm convinced that Tsar's intention to help is real.

PATRIARCH ARSENIE

Austrians are in front of ramparts of Nish. With God's help we'll come to the desired freedom.

KARPOSH

May God have mercy on the suffering rayah, Father.

Both stand up and greet each other. Karposh leaves the monastery with his entourage and goes back to his headquarters in the cave.

EXT. - IN FRONT OF THE CAVE - DAY

Karposh arrives in the cave with his detachment. Pleasant surprise awaits him in front of the cave. Hans Richter with ten other brothers-in-arms meet the Vojvoda. Karposh is overjoyed to see his friend. They both hug each other.

KARPOS

I didn't believe I would ever see you again.

(CONTINUED)

HANS

Can one forget an old friend?

KARPOSH

What trouble brought you here again?

HANS

Trouble? What trouble, man? I'm here to help. I heard many good things about you since the last time we saw each other.

KARPOSH

Haaaaa..... Trust your eyes, not someone else's words.

(beat)

But, speak now. Do you bring any good news?

HANS

I do, Vojvodo. I bring good news. Austrians are in front of Nish. They are waiting for the right moment to attack.

Karposh smiles at the news Hans just told him.

HANS (CONT'D)

They are waiting on us now....

KARPOSH

(happy)

Well, if that's the case, then let's go inside. We'll talk at ease.

All go inside the cave.

SEPTEMBER 1689

EXT. - TOWN FORTRESS IN KRIVA PALANKA - DAY

The fortress in Kriva Palanka is presented. Two TURKISH GUARDS stand in front of the gate. There are two other guards standing at the top of the fortress. Guards at the top of the fortress monitor the road in front of them.

Suddenly one of the guards is hit by an arrow in his chest. He falls on the ground in front of the fortress entrance. Other guards are surprised. They take down their rifles from the shoulder.

EXT. - THE ROAD - DAY

Riding his Tatar horse PLAMENKO on the road towards the entrance of the fortress, Vojvoda Karposh is charging with his rebels. The rebels are on horses and shooting at the guards in the fortress. They fall down dead.

EXT. - THE MOUNTAIN - DAY

Five thousand peasants army comes out of the mountain and charges towards the fortress shouting. Turks are in panic.

EXT. - THE ROAD - DAY

Karposh Vojvoda enters the fortress with the rebels.

INT. - THE FORTRESS - DAY

Rebels attack Turkish strongholds in the town fortress. Turks fall down wiped out by the rebels charge. Karposh's army takes over the fortress. They confiscate all weapons from the killed Turks. They also confiscate several cannons.

The town falls in the hands of the rebels. One of the rebel units stays to defend the fortress towards the town, while Karposh continues to Kratovo mines.

EXT. - THE MINES - DAY

Rebels' attack continues towards the mines in the surrounding area of Kratovo. They are assisted by the Saxon miners of Hans Richter from Zletovo I Probstip, who join Karposh's army.

MINERS from the surrounding mines are filling in the mine shafts, destroying all the tools and equipment and join Karposh's army. Rebels headed by Karposh Vojvoda continue marching towards the notorious mine Zlatica.

EXT. - ZLATICA MINE - DAY

Rebels are attacking the mine. Miners listen the rebels call from outside and leave the mine with pickaxes, hammers and shovels in their hands.

Hitting them ruthlessly with shovels and pickaxes miners kill the Turkish guards. They join Karposh's rebels. The army of Karposh continues its campaign to Kratovo.

EXT. - KRATOVO - DAY

Rebels arrive in front of Kratovo ramparts. Villagers and miners want to immediately go forward to the town, but Karposh stops. He gallops with his horse in front of the rebels.

KARPOSH

Brothers and sisters!!!! The time has finally come to go against the enemy!!! It's time to clash with the tyrant who brought misery to our souls. So, don't be afraid brothers, the freedom is at hand. DEATH OR FREEDOM!!!!

VILLAGERS and miners accept Karposh's speech with ovations in unison.

VILLAGERS AND MINERS

DEATH OR FREEDOM!!! Death with the enemies!!! Long live KARPOSH VOJVODA!!! KARPOSH, KARPOSH, KARPOSH!!!!

Karposh leads the people into fight. The attack on Kratovo begins.

EXT. - KRATOVO - DAY

Karposh's army attacks the public bath in the town. Turks fire back at the rebels and retrieve in the bath.

INT. - THE BATH - DAY

Rebels enter the bath through the roof. They kill all Turks inside and set the bath on fire. Public bath is burning in flames.

EXT. - STONE TOWER - DAY

Rebels attack the Stone Tower in the centre of the town. Turks fire back from the tower. Rebels fiercely return the fire and kill several Turks. Turks continue to staunchly defend themselves and shoot from the tower.

One rebels unit takes wood and beams from the mountain, starts fire and throw them into the tower. The tower is in flames. With the tower in flames, the Turks remaining inside burn as well.

EXT. - KRATOVO LANES - DAY

Karposh together with his blood-brother Joakim and several other rebels fight the Turks on the lanes of Kratovo. After killing the Turks on the streets, they continue towards Rizaj Zaifi Bey palace. They reach the palace.

EXT. - RIZAJ ZAIFI BEY PALACE - DAY

Turks return the fire fiercely from the palace. They provide strong armed response. A fierce battle develops. Karposh is organizing rebels to attack the palace. Suddenly, a bullet wheezes through the air and hits Joakim directly in the chest.

Karposh hides his blood brother in a safe place. oakim is covered with blood. Karposh tears down his shirt and tries to stop the bleeding.

KARPOSH

Hold on, brother.... Hold on...
Please... Hold on Everything
will be all right. Don't leave me
now.

With already half opened eyes, Joakim looks his blood brother and Vojvoda Karposh. He smiles and catches his lapel. Karposh comes closer to him.

(CONTINUED)

JOAKIM

(speaks slowly)

Catch Rizaj Bey, that angry dog and have no mercy for him. Do that for me and your family. Promise me... Promise me....

KARPOSH

I promise you brother. I promise. Stay with me. Stay with me.

Joakim smiles gently again, releases his grip on Karposh and slowly his head falls on the ground. He dies. The pain rips apart Karposh. He takes Joakim's head closely and hugs him strongly.

KARPOSH

(aloud)

Brother!!! Brother!!!! NOOOOOO!!!!
NOOOOOO!!!! NOOOOOOO!!!!

Karposh starts yelling out of pain and anger and looks at Bey's place.

KARPOSH

BEEYYYYY!!!!!! BEEYYYYY!!!

Karposh stands up and rushes into Rizaj Zaifi Bey's palace. Bullets fly around him, but he fearlessly overcomes all obstacles and reaches the entrance.

Rebels have already taken Bey's palace completely and killed the other Turks inside. Karposh enters the seraglios of the palace and goes to the main chamber belonging to the Bey.

INT. - BEY'S CHAMBER

Karposh runs at the chamber and sees Rizaj Zaifi Bey. The Bey is completely pale, his blood runs cold, staring goggle-eyed. Karposh attacks the Bey, but rebels arrive on time and prevent the Vojvoda from killing the Bey. Karposh calms down.

He approaches the Bey and looks him in the eyes. He issues order to the rebels. The rebels tie Bey's hands behind his back and take him outside. Kratovo is in the hands of Karposh REBELS.

EXT. - THE OAK TREE IN FRONT OF THE MINE - DAY

Rebels bring Rizaj Zaifi Bey in front of the oak tree, where many times he has whipped the miners for their disobedience.

KARPOSH

Take off his clothes up to his belt
and hang him with his head down!!!!

Rebels rip his clothes up to the belt and hang him with the head downwards. Karposh takes Bey's bullwhips. He starts whipping the Bey. The Bey screams out of pain. The whips become stronger and stronger. Karposh is whipping Bey's back even more harshly.

Bey's skin, soft and gentle, is completely bleeding now. One can see the tissue underneath. The Bey loses consciousness. Karposh's rebels resuscitate the Bey.

KARPOSH

Do you have something to say,
beast?

Rizaj Zaifi Bey slowly opens his eyes.

RIZAJ ZAIFI BEY

(mumbles)

Water.... Water.... Bread.....

(beat)

Please....

KARPOSH

Beg as much as you want, you dog
Arnaout. You want sweet death,
ha?!!. With bread and water.

(beat)

It's healthy to be someone else. To
feel what's it like for the other
one.

RIZAJ ZAIFI BEY

(repeating)

Water.... Water.... Bread

KARPOSH

Water won't clear your sins, you
dog.

(to the rebels)

Take him down!!!! And tie him on
the horses!!!

Rebels take down the Bey from the tree. They tie his hands and legs to the saddles on four horses.

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH (CONT'D)
 We'll judge you by your laws and
 customs, you filthy parasite!!!

Rebels harness horses and start running on the rough road.

EXT. - THE ROAD - DAY

Horses gallop on the rough road, while the Bey wails of pain. He feels how his bones in the arms and legs are breaking slowly.

Horses come out to a smooth and flat road. They stop. Karposh approaches the horses. He pets them gently. He looks at the Bey. He is in a half-conscious state.

KARPOSH
 (to the Bey)
 This is for all the pain and
 suffering inflicted to my people.
 (beat)
 For my mother and father. Even in
 the hour of your slow and painful
 death, you can't look me in the
 eyes.

Karposh stabs the horses coldblooded and they start running ahead. Two horses run upfront, while the other two in the opposite direction, back.

Rizaj Zaifi Bey is completely dismembered, his arms and legs fall apart from the body. There is nothing left of him.

EXT. - KUMANOVO - DAY

Karposh rebels enter Kumanovo and without major resistance from the Turks take over the town. NISH, October 1689

INT. - TENT OF MARGRAVE BADENSKI - NIGHT

Ludwig Badenski, Commander-in Chief of the Austrian army consults with his generals about the following military operations towards Macedonia.

General SILVIO PICCOLOMINI is among the more distinguished Austrian generals. Well-built officer with harsh facial features, thick eyebrows above the eyes and straight posture. His long saber is in full shine on his belt.

(CONTINUED)

MARGRAVE BADENSKI

(to Piccolomini)

(German)

General, I expect from You to go through Kosovo with your division and penetrate MACEDONIA and there to connect with ajduts movement of Karposh Vojvoda. His Highness the Tsar places great hopes in you. And, so do I.

PICCOLOMINI

(German)

I understand, Sir!!! Royal command is Holly for me.

A map with marked point of movement of the Austrian army is placed on the big table. General Piccolomini points to the map with his finger.

PICCOLOMINI (CONT'D)

(German)

Mr. Margrave, the plan is to enter Macedonia via Prishtina to take over Kachanichka Klisura Canyon and go to Skopje.

MARGRAVE BADENSKI

(German)

What is the army at your disposal, General?

PICCOLOMINI

(German)

8800 soldiers out of which 3200 are cavalry.

MARGRAVE BADENSKI

(German)

Excellent. Prepare the army immediately. We don't have time to lose.

General Piccolomini salutes the Margrave Badenski.

PICCOLOMINI

(German)

I understand, Sir!!!

General leaves the tent marching.

SKOPJE 1689

EXT. - SURROUNDING AREA OF SKOPJE - DAY

Massive outbreak of plague occurs in Skopje. Many people die of the contagious disease. Turkish janisseries and the police transfer dead bodies in the surrounding area of the town and bury them in ditches dug and filled with burnt lime.

EXT. - TOWN - DAY

TURKISH AGAS AND BEYS are preparing to flee with their families before the attack of the Austrian army and Karposh's rebels. They leave town with all the household items loaded on carriages and horses.

Karposh's rebels arrive in front of Skopje. One Turkish detachment stationed on a fortress before the town, in panic decides to run away and avoids armed conflict with the rebels.

Rebels take over the fortress without fight and enter Skopje. Part of the rebels move towards to Kachanichka Klisura Canyon.

EXT. - TOWN - DAY

In the meantime, Austrian army of General Piccolomini arrives in Skopje. Turkish and Jewish population (men, women and children) escape from the town. They are running away with all the wealth they have (gold and silver) loaded on horses. Austrian army enters Skopje Bazaar and robs and steals the shops, everything left not stolen by the Turks.

EXT. - ZAJCHEV RID HILL - DUSK

General Piccolomini is stationed at Zajchev Rid Hill where the tents are placed. The view over Skopje is beautiful and Piccolomini is admiring it.

INT. - THE TENT - NIGHT

General Piccolomini is sitting in the tent and writing letter to the Austrian Tsar Leopold I. Horses clatter is heard from outside the tent. A discussion in German is heard. GUARD enters the tent.

GUARD

(German)

Mr. General representatives of Karposh Vojvoda have arrived. They want to talk with you.

The General leaves the feather on the table. He turns to the guard.

PICCOLOMINI

(German)

Let them in.

The guard nods and leaves the tent. After a while Hans Richter and three rebels enter the tent.

INT. - TENT - NIGHT

General Piccolomini stands up. Hans Richter approaches forward.

HANS

(German)

General, Karposh Vojvoda sent us to talk with you. We convey to you his regards.

PICCOLOMINI

(German)

Thank you. Please have a seat!!!

Hans and rebels sit on the small chairs by the tent.

HANS

(German)

General, Karposh Vojvoda hopes to your honest support in the fight against Turkish tyranny.

General Piccolomini carefully listens to Hans.

HANS (CONT'D)

(German)

His request is for him to be declared a King of the enslaved

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HANS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Macedonian Christian people by His
 Highness Tsar Leopold I as proof of
 your help in the fight for
 liberation from the Turkish tyrant.

General Piccolomini smiles.

PICCOLOMINI
 (German)
 Yes, I am familiar with that. His
 Highness approval has already been
 issued.

General passes to Hans a special charter declaring Karposh
 King of Kumanovo in written.

PICCOLOMINI (CONT'D)
 (German)
 As you already know His Highness
 expressed His readiness to place
 Macedonian people under His
 protection in his persistence to
 free itself from the Turkish
 tyrant.
 (beat)
 As an expression of his heroism,
 His Highness sends this fur-lined
 leather cap as a gift to your
 Vojvoda Karposh.

General Piccolomini gives the fur-lined leather cap made of
 sheep skin to Hans. Tsar's initials are impregnated on the
 gift. The side of the hat is decorated with precious stones
 and pearls.

HANS
 (German)
 I will convey your greetings to
 Karposh Vojvoda.

General and Hans greet and Hans leaves the tent with his
 rebels.

EXT. - THE CAVE - DAY

Rebels lead by Karposh are resting in front of Father
 Gavril's cave. Hans Richter arrives with his entourage to
 announce the good news from the meeting held with General
 Piccolomini in Skopje. Hans Richter comes down from the
 horse.

(CONTINUED)

Karposh welcomes him. Hans joyfully hands over the fur-lined leather cap and the charter to the Vojvoda.

HANS
(to Karposh)
Finally, after many centuries
Macedonia has its king.

Karposh and Hans hug each other.

INT. -CHURCH ST. GJORGJI - DAY

Church St. Gjorgji in Nagorichane is full of people. Villagers from neighbouring villages, believers, ajduts and rebels are present for the coronation ceremony of Karposh for King of Macedonia.

The ceremony is lead by Father Gavril, now already an aged man. Karposh is standing proudly upright in front of the priest. He is delighted looking at the wonderful frescoes and icons in the centuries old church of St. Georgi. The ceremony commences.

His wife Nevena and their three children, twin boys and a daughter, are among the people present. Father Gavril puts the fur-lined leather cap on his head and places the charter around his belt.

FATHER GAVRIL
In Lord's name may our King son
Petrush alias Karposh lead its
peoples in righteous fight for
liberation from the confines and
slavery of our centuries long
tyrant.

(beat)
Our Father, protect our king and
give him strength to resist the
traps of the wily and show him
God's bright path to freedom. May
your name be celebrated and thy be
your will, as in heaven so on
earth. Amen!!!!

Father Gavril kisses Karposh on his forehead like his own son.

FATHER GAVRIL (CONT'D)
May God lead you and light up your
path towards your new challenges,
son!! May you be blessed by God and
myself!!!

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH

Thank you, Father!!! May you live
long and healthy life!!!

Karposh kisses priest's hand and bows to him. Once the ceremony is over, people present in the church congratulate their new king with ovations and joyful shouts. People greet and hug him.

Karposh goes through the crowd and reaches his wife Nevena and the children. He kisses his wife and children.

KARPOSH

(to Nevena)

Take care of my children, my bride.
You are the world to me.

NEVENA

Don't worry, husband. You just come
back to me live and well. I've lost
Joakim, my brother. I don't want to
lose you as well.

(beat)

I'll wait for you to the eternity
and back.

Karposh smiles and hugs his wife. 26 OCTOBER 1689

EXT. - ZAJCHEV RID HILL - DAY

General Piccolomini is standing on the hill and looking at the wonderful Skopje panorama. He's admiring the Old Skopje bazaar, grandiose palaces and seraglios, churches and mosques and beautiful houses with red roof tiles. This beautiful moment is disrupted by an Austrian OFFICER.

OFFICER

(German)

Mr. General, I bring bad news.

General turns to the officer.

PICCOLOMINI

(German)

What is it? Speak!!!

OFFICER

(German)

Plague showed up among our army.
Several soldiers died. Others are
ill. What should we do?

(CONTINUED)

General is pensive and serious. He decisively raises his head towards the officer.

PICCOLOMINI

(German)

Burn the entire town by tonight to stop further spreading of the plague. That's an order. Act immediately!!!

OFFICER

(German)

Understood, Sir General!!!

The officer turns and leaves. General Piccolomini turns to the beautiful Skopje panorama with sad eyes.

PICCOLOMINI

(German)

(to himself)

I haven't seen such a beautiful town so far. Just like Prague. Even more beautiful.

(beat)

Skopje, the European part of the Ottoman Empire will end up ingloriously in flames.

General sighs, than takes breath, turns and goes back to his tent.

EXT. - SKOPJE - NIGHT

Austrian soldiers are deployed at each corner of the town with torches in their hands, ready to burn down the town to the ground.

EXT. - ZAJCHEV RID HILL - NIGHT

General Piccolomini watches from the hill how Skopje is being burned.

EXT. - SKOPJE - NIGHT

Austrian soldiers start burning the buildings throughout the town. Shops in the bazaar, grandiose palaces and seraglios of Turkish notables are in flames, as well as the wonderful

(CONTINUED)

houses on town lanes. In a second Skopje turns into ashes. The blaze spreads throughout the town. The sky above Skopje turns black by the dark and dense smoke.

EXT. - ZAJCHEV RID HILL - NIGHT

Tears roll on General Piccolomini's face as he watches the town burning, town which for him had a completely different charm from all other European towns.

Following the order issued by the General Piccolomini, Austrian army collects the tents set up on the hill and withdraws from the town, leaving Skopje behind to go down deep into the darkness of the hell.

EXT. - SOFIA VALLEY - DAY

Sultan Suleiman II expects the arrival of TATAR ARMY from Caucasus. They are the reinforcement for the counteroffensive planned in Macedonia. Tatar horde lead by the Crimean Han SELIM GIRAJ arrives in Sofia Valley.

He appears as ruthless beast with athletic body, long black moustaches, scar on his face, slanted eyes, bald with a pony tail long all the way to the bottom.

Desire for revenge and blood is visible in his black eyes. He is welcomed by the Great Vizier KODZA MAHMUD PASHA, small slightly built man with flat face, crooked nose and short black moustaches. Vizier accompanies Han to Sultan's tent.

INT. - THE TENT - DAY

Han Selim Giraj bows deeply to Sultan Suleiman II. Sultan hugs the Han visibly joyful and both sit on a big table.

SULEIMAN II

(Turkish)

Finally you arrived Han. Welcome...

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

It is my honour to come, Your Highness. I am at your disposal.

(CONTINUED)

SULEIMAN II

(Turkish)

The right moment has come, Han.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

What can I do for you, Your Highness?

SULEIMAN II

(Turkish)

The infidels in Macedonia rise against the tsardom. The uprising is lead by some shaytan Karposh.

(beat)

The riot is supported by Austria, our enemy. Those Giaours call themselves rebels, they have taken a big part of our territory. I need you to stifle the uprising, to expel the Austrian army and return our territory.

Listening carefully Selim Giraj Han nods his head.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

Shaytans will pay dearly for rising against the almighty Empire, Your Highness.

SULEIMAN II

(Turkish)

Your are free to do what you want, Han.

The Sultan approaches the Han.

SULEIMAN II (CONT'D)

(Turkish)

I want the head of that Giaour Karposh impaled on a stake.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

(humble)

Your wish is my command, Your Highness. It will be as You wish.

The Han stands up, makes a deep bow to the Sultan, steps back and leaves.

NOVEMBER 1689

EXT. - PIRIN MOUNTAIN - DAY

TURKISH-TATAR ARMY of Selim Giraj Han is moving through the mountain area towards Kriva Palanka. The winter is cold and cruel, thus making army movement slow. Soldiers are hungry, they are freezing cold. One half of the soldiers cannot continue, they freeze to death.

They are followed by starving pack of wolfs, howling and waiting for the right moment to grab their prey. It snows heavily. Soldiers faces are frozen, the eyebrows above their eyes are covered with ice. Horses with ox carts are slowly moving through the snow.

EXT. - KRIVA PALANKA - DAY

Karposh's RECONNOITERS enter the town and go in the direction of their Vojvoda. Karposh meets them at the main gate in front of the fortress.

THE RECONNOITER

Vojvodo, large army is moving from Pirin towards us. It seems they are not Turks only.

Karposh realizes that there are Tatars as well. His face tightens. He comes to himself.

KARPOSH

Burn the town immediately!!!!
Evacuate the population in the neighbouring woods and caves. Don't leave any traces of us for the enemy!!!

Some of the rebels start to react. Bozin is the most vocal among them.

BOZIN

Are we going to leave the town defenseless Vojvodo? Just surrender it to this army?

KARPOSH

Bozin, this is not an ordinary army that we can deal with. These are Tatars!!! Ruthless beasts. They

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KARPOSH (cont'd)
don't have mercy!!!! They cut and
kill everything that comes their
way!!!

Karposh swipes his hand.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)
Come on people, hurry up!!!! What
are you waiting? We must leave as
soon as possible from here.

Karposh pulls Bozin away.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)
(to Bozin)
Tell our people to get ready for
battle. We'll meet them at the
fortress before Kumanovo.
(beat)
Come on, hurry up, we don't have
much time.

BOZIN
Understood, Vojvodo!!!

Bozin runs immediately to gather the rebels and prepare for
departure.

EXT. - THE TOWN - DAY

Massive evacuation of Kriva Palanka begins. Exhausted old
men, women and children mounted on horses, loaded oxcarts
leave town heading towards neighbouring caves and woods as
far as possible from the attack of the ruthless enemy.
Children cry while their mothers try to calm them down.

EXT. - THE TOWN - DUSK

Rebels with torches in their hands burn the houses and the
fortress, leaving nothing behind for the enemy. Karposh
rebels lead by the Vojvoda leave town and move towards
fortress before Kumanovo.

EXT. - KRIVA PALANKA - MORNING - DAY

After a long difficult journey filled with suffering, Turkish-Tatar army of Selim Giraj Han arrives in the town. He is accompanied by the Great Vezir Kodza Mahmud Pasha. The town is completely devastated. Dense clouds of smoke from the burning houses move towards the sky.

The fortress is fully destroyed and burning. Selim Giraj and Kodza Mahmud Pasha ride their horses through the destroyed town.

SELIM GIRAJ

(surprised)

(Turkish)

Where are those ajduts Pasha Effendi? It seems to me they have run away, ha?

(laughing)

So much of their uprising.

KODZA MAHMUD PASHA

(Turkish)

You are fooling yourself, Effendi. They are here, those Giaours. They are untouchable. They are hiding.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

Where are they are hiding, Pasha Effendi?

KODZA MAHMUD PASHA

(Turkish)

In the mountains. In the woods. That is their home. They are very difficult to catch.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

Pasha Effendi, why don't you put the woods on fire?

KODZA MAHMUD PASHA

(Turkish)

We do, Effendi.... we put them on fire, in vain. The more we burn them, the more they grow bigger, denser stronger. Giaours grow again. They are like couch grass.

The Han becomes pensive.

(CONTINUED)

SELIM GIRAJ
(Turkish)
Hey..... Ha, ha anasana!!!!

Both continue riding towards the exit of the already devastated town of Kriva Palanka along with the Turkish-Tatar army.

EXT. - KUMANOVO FORTRESS - DAY

Karposh rebels intensively prepare to defend the town from the attack of the Turkish-Tatar army. They are placing rocks and stones in front of the trenches dug to fortify the bulwark before Turks and Tatars attack.

EXT. - THE ROAD - DAY

Turkish-Tatar army arrives in front of the Kumanovo fortress. Han Selim Giraj gives sign to the army to stop. It is quiet and peaceful. There are no signs of movement. The Han looks towards the fortress. On his sign, the Army continues with movement.

EXT. - TRENCHES IN FRONT OF THE FORTRESS - DAY

Through the cracks of the stones and rocks Karposh Vojvoda observes the movement of Selim Giraj's army. The situation is tense. Rebels are anxious to enter into fight with the blood-thirsty enemy. Turkish-Tatar army comes closer to a decent distance. Karposh raises his arm and makes a sign ordering attack.

EXT. - BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Karposh raises his sword and shouts:

KARPOSH
Brothers, struck the enemy!!!!
Don't fell sorry for them!!!!
ATAAAAACK!!!! FOR
MACEDONIAAAAAA!!!!

Vojvoda with his fur-lined leather cap runs forward first. He is followed by the rebels. They shout and charge the Turkish-Tatar army ready for hand-to-hand fight. Karposh clashes with Trurkish-Tatar soldiers.

(CONTINUED)

He cuts off the head of the first one, second soldier attacks him. Karposh bends down and thrusts the sword into his chests. Rebels fight bravely as well. They kill many Turks and Tatars, but Turkish-Tatar army also kills many rebels.

Karposh directly attacks five soldiers. He defends himself skillfully from their attacks. He cuts the hand to two of them and stabs its yataghan in the stomach.

He cuts the throat to the other two with his sword, and he cuts off the head of the third one. Attack by another soldier follows. Karposh throws him over and stabs the sword into his head.

EXT. - BATTLEFIELD - DUSK

The battle lasts. Rebels shoot arrows and kill many Turkish and Tatar soldiers. But, Turks and Tatars are many, they attack strongly and slaughter some of the rebels. One Tatar soldier tries to attack Karposh from behind, but an arrow stabs the soldier directly in the eye.

It is BENDE'S arrow, he is the bodyguard of Karposh. Riding a horse, one Turkish soldier attacks Karposh, but the Vojvoda swings his sword into the horses legs. The soldier falls down and Karposh finishes him with the sword.

Turkish and Tatar soldiers surround Karposh. Karposh successfully defends himself from their first attacks and kills several soldiers. But, they are many and manage to overpower the Vojvoda. They capture Karposh alive.

EXT. - BATTLEFIELD - EVENING

Battle is over. Many dead soldiers, Turkish and Tatar, as well as rebels, lie on the battle field. Survived rebels are captured by the enemy. Horse carcasses are everywhere on battle field. They are taking Karposh to Kodza Mahmud Pasha. Two SOLDIERS on the sides are holding his arms tied on the back.

KODZA MAHMUD PASHA

(ironically)

So, you are that well known Karposh
Vojvoda. Saber won't cut you, they
say, nor a bullet will make hole
into you.

Karposh wisely keeps quiet. His face is bleeding.

(CONTINUED)

KODZA MAHMUD PASHA (CONT'D)
So, you decided to fight against
the tsardom, you devils?

Karposh calmly answers as if he has already accepted his grim destiny.

KARPOSH
We are raising our head out of
necessity. We decided to put an end
to the enslaving tyranny. We also
have right to free and dignified
life.

KODZA MANMUD PASHA
But, according to God's and human
law, you are our slaves and we are
your masters.

KARPOSH
You are fooling yourself Pasha.
You've never heard about Macedonia.
You don't know the history, you
don't know the people.

Vizier Kodza Mahmud Pasha becomes deeply pensive on those words of Karposh Vojvoda and King.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)
We have strong wish, but not enough
force to achieve more.
(beat)
However, generations after us will
continue our holly work until the
final freedom, when the sun will
shine upon us as well.

KODZA MAHMUD PASHA
But, the victory is ours.....

Karposh sighs, coughs and continues.

KARPOSH
Those defending themselves are the
winners, and not those attacking.

These wise words from Karposh stir Kodza Mahmud Pasha's emotions. A dose of nervousness becomes visible on his face.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)
Hating us Pasha, you hate yourself.
You are just an ordinary toy
remotely controlled, submitted to
his master.

(CONTINUED)

Kodza Mahmud Pasha is furious. He slaps Karposh twice. Karposh proudly stands up and raises his head.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)

This is proof of your weakness,
Pasha. You think you will be here
forever. You are fooling yourself.

(beat)

Only, you are forgetting one thing.
Blood asks for blood.

Kodza Mahmud Pasha just gulps. Karposh looks around.

KARPOSH (CONT'D)

Pasha, do you see this wonderful
land, Macedonia? This is where I
was born, the land of my
grandfathers, sons and
grandchildren. This is holly land
and you step on it and make it
filthy.

(beat)

Everything growing here is ours,
Macedonian.

Kodza Mahmud Pasha's face reddens out of embarrassment. The rage is visible on his face.

KODZA MAHMUD PASHA

(furious)

(Turkish)

Take this dog away from here. I
don't want to see him!!!!

Karposh is being taken away along with the other rebels.

EXT. - THE VILLAGE - DAY

Selim Giraj's TATAR CAVALRY DETACHMENT passes through a village in the surrounding area and carries out massive slaughter of innocent Macedonian population. They rape women, kill old people and in the end burn the village to the ground.

THE COMMANDER of one such Tatar detachment notices about ten geese in a puddle. His soldiers want to grab the geese, but he stops them. Geese run away and hide behind the green fir trees. TATARS go towards the fir trees.

EXT. - THE CAVE - DAY

They find a cave behind the fir trees. Women, children and old men from the villages in the surrounding area hide there.

INT. - THE CAVE -

Tatars enter the cave and massacre innocent women, children and old men. They slaughter everything that comes their way. Wail and cry is heard from women and children.

INT. - THE STONE ROOM

In one stone room a WOMAN is giving birth. An old GRANDMOTHER is there, she is delivering the baby. Tatars enter the room. Woman screams in labour.

Baby comes out of the womb. Grandmother gives Tatars a murderous look. The woman begs and beseeches them.

THE WOMAN

Please, kill me. Just leave my child alive. Please, if you are human beings.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Come on, you beasts.... Come on!!!! Butchers!!! What are you waiting for!!!!??? Kill the child while he hasn't sucked its first mother's milk. Come oooooon!!!! Come oooooon!!!!

Tatars are frightened by grandmother's beastly look. One of Tatars withdraws backwards and stumbles on a dead body of a slaughtered WOMAN. He stands up and starts running. Other Tatars leave after him.

EXT. - THE CAVE - DAY

THE TATAR goes out and calls the others waiting in front of the cave.

THE TATAR

(Turkish)

Run people... Run!!!! The devil is hidden inside!!!

Frightened, Tatars stab their horses and leave to an unknown direction.

SKOPJE, 29 NOVEMBER 1689

EXT. - SKOPJE - DAY

Karposh and other captured rebels are brought to Skopje, already burnt and devastated by the Austrians. Tatars plunder what has left of it after Austrian army left.

EXT. - THE TOWN SQUARE - DAY

Together with the captured rebels Karposh is brought to the central square before the Stone Bridge. He is met there by the Selim Giraj Han. Next to him stands the INTERPRETER who will interpret. The rayah is gathered on the square. Karposh, standing upright and proud, approaches the Han.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

So, you are the so called Karposh
Vojvoda who creates headaches to
the Tsardom and His Highness The
Sultan.

The interpreter speaks to Karposh.

SELIM GIRAJ (CONT'D)

(Turkish)

Why all this? What made you raise
hand against the Tsardom that feeds
you?

Karposh laughs ironically.

KARPOSH

Feeds us, you say? Pasha's and
Bey's pets are better fed here than
the enslaved Macedonian rayah has
its own human rights.

(beat)

We rise up against the oppression
and all the suffering this tsardom
inflicts upon us for centuries.
But, you cannot understand that,
Han.

(CONTINUED)

The interpreter speaks to the Han.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

The Sultan is merciful and He decided to forgive you everything if you lay down the weapons, go back to your homes and obey the tsardom.

The interpreter speaks to Karposh.

KARPOSH

(cynically)

Haha.... Hahaaaa... Since when the Sultan shows mercy to the enslaved Macedonian people?

(beat)

And, in which homes are we supposed to go back? In the homes that you put on fire, destroyed and devastated? We will never give up our weapon. It is the only thing that keeps us alive.

The interpreter interprets to the Han. The Han is furious.

SELIM GURAJ

(Turkish)

In that case, there is a punishment for disobedience.

He turns to the TWO EXECUTIONERS. Their faces are covered with black masks, one can only see their eyes though the holes made in the masks.

SELIM GIRAJ (CONT'D)

(Turkish)

Hang him in the middle of the bridge!!!

Executioners approach Karposh, take of his clothes and throw them in the muddy and foamy waters of Vardar. He is naked up to his belt. While they take down his belt, a document falls on the ground.

Executioners give it to the Han. The Han looks at the document, but he does not understand and passes it to the interpreter. The interpreter reads and interprets to the Han.

(CONTINUED)

INTERPRETER

(Turkish)

This is the edict from the Austrian
Tsar Leopold I, my Han. With this
edict Karposh is declared the King
of the entire enslaved Macedonian
Christian rayah.

The Han is surprised and bewildered.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

(cynically)

King you say, ha? Well then, the
King deserves a throne to sit on
forever and never leave it.

Selim Giraj cynically smiles aloud. The interpreter speaks
to Karposh. The Han gives sign to the executioners with his
head.

They bring a stake with white sharply pointed tip. Karposh
looks at the executioners and the Han coldblooded. He
doesn't show any fear of what's coming.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

(to Karposh)

Do you have something to say for
the last time, you king?!!!

The interpreter interprets to Karposh. Karposh is already
completely exhausted.

KARPOSH

I don't expect anything from you
Han. You will always remain my
shadow. I am dead, but I am dead in
my country where I was born.

(beat)

And you..... You are nowhere. You
are wanderer without a home and
without roots.

The interpreter interprets to the Han. Karposh's words drive
the Han completely mad. He orders executioners to take
Karposh on the bridge and execute him.

EXT. - STONE BRIDGE - DUSK

Executioners take Karposh to the Stone Bridge, tie his arms tightly behind his back, lay him down on the stomach and tie his legs to the lower end of the winch on the stake. Selim Giraj rises his arm and gives a sign to the executioners to stop for a moment. He approaches Karposh.

SELIM GIRAJ

(Turkish)

Don't torture your soul.... Beg for mercy and you will receive fast death. Otherwise, you will be purified through pain.

The interpreter interprets to Karposh. He just looks at the Han and shouts aloud with all his strength.

KARPOSH

MACEDONIAAAAAAAAAA!!!!!!!

Han understands it and signalizes to executioners to continue the procession of torture. With fine movements of their hands executioners thrust the tip of the stake in the bottom. One of the executioners hits the blunt end of the stake and the tip nails into the live human meat.

The rayah and rebels captured are silent witnesses of the execution of their Vojvoda and King. Their heads are down. They cannot watch the suffering of their leader. Out of pain Karposh clenches his teeth strongly and blood starts leaking from his mouth.

Blunt hits on the stake repeat several times until the bloody pick doesn't come out on the left side of Karposh's chests. Karposh's crushed body makes convulsive movements and calms down forever.

EXT. - STONE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Executioners cut off Karposh's head and impale it on a stake, tear to pieces his body with their sabers and throw it down under the bridge in the Vardar River. The stake with the head is left hanging as a warning to the rayah. T

ogether with the executioners and his entourage, Han Selim Giraj leaves the crime scene satisfied. The rayah silently disperses with heads bowed, horrified by the sight of execution of Karposh The King.

EXT. - STONE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Devastated Skopje and Stone Bridge are presented from above. It's cold November day. The moon is brightly shining. Dark sky above Skopje is presented. Narrators narration is heard in the background.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

The dream of victory didn't die
with Karposh's death. His work was
continued by many heroes and brave
men throughout the centuries.

Macedonian rebels in 1903 are presented charging at Krushevo during the Ilinden uprising.

Macedonian partizans are presented charging through the Stone Bridge during the liberation of Skopje in 1944. A partisan comes to the place where Karposh was impaled on a stake, removes German and Bulgarian fascist flags and puts the Macedonian flag.

The First Assembly of ASNOM in 1944 in the Monastery St. Prohor Pchinski is presented.

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Karposh's dream for free Macedonian
state finally became true.

Central Skopje square is filled with thousands of people. It is September 8th, 1991 and the independence of Republic of Macedonia is declared.

The monument of Karposh on the quay near Stone Bridge is presented.

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Macedonians won their freedom!!

FADE OUT

THE END