

CHETA BALKANICA

A series by

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THE PAINTING

Webisode written by

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EXT. VINEYARDS - DAY

Three arrows, whizzing through the air, cut through the clear skies over the vineyards disturbing the postcard view of a rustic village by the hills, followed by the incomprehensible muffled sound of loud shouts.

TWO WOODEN LANCES holding some sort of a flag, emerge over the vineyard, slowly heading toward each other until they collide with a SLAM.

JAMES (45) [ARTIST'S ASSISTANT, 45, EXCITABLE] shouts.

JAMES (O.S)
Harder, Harder! And go a bit
faster.

But his voice is drowned out by the loud groaning coming from the vineyard.

The clash between the two wooden lances continues fiercely, as do the screaming and cries.

A COMFORTABLE DISTANCE AWAY, The hand of the famous painter **EDUARD K (50)**, full of his own importance) throws several quick and colorful brushes onto a canvas. Eduard K sports an impressive hat with feathers on top of his over-the-shoulder golden hair. He draws back, narrows his eyes taking, a good look at the unfinished masterpiece, glancing at times to the beautiful scene of the village beyond the vineyards - all while the wooden lances smash onto each other.

Nearby stands James, holding his masters paints and brushes, as he directs the staged battle. Out of the vineyard appears **MARKO (55)**, blindly clutching his mace, followed by the head of his **HORSE**.

HORSE
Heyyy...

MARKO
What? What did I do wrong this
time.

HORSE
Gohohocee...

Barely standing on his dirty feet, blood-covered **GOCE (35)** pokes his head out, looking for approval?

James steps in.

JAMES
Why did you stop?

GOCE
(barely breathing)
Because... I...

JAMES
(dismissing it all)
You got to be tougher. Fiercer.

James throws some brown paint on Goce's shirt, and spreads it by hand.

GOCE
The blood is real... Marko did...

JAMES
(interrupting him)
Come on! We are talking art here.
Realism. Eternity... Our great
artist here, the honorable Sir.
Eduard K, can not even bother to
continue this painting, if you are
complaining like babies. Great art
takes sacrifices, commitment.
(louder)
All of you there....

MIRZO (19) and **GJERGJ (50)** pop their heads out of the vine trees.

JAMES (CONT'D)
You, You and You too... Get back to
your first positions. Let's pick up
again from the beginning.

James looks to Edward K for approval... Eduard K doesn't even raise his eyes, but approves with his brushes, while whistling a local marching tune, spreading a bunch of colours on the canvas.

EDUARD K
Hum, absolutely!

Marko pulls back into the vineyard dragging Goce with him.

STANA (30), dressed in cheery boys' clothes, suddenly appears out of nowhere, ruining the scene.

James, furious, rushes towards her, throws dark paint on her face and shoves her towards the vineyard to join the battle with her friends.

JAMES
There you go, join the cheta
there...
(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

All you got to do is keep running
left to right, and then right to
left, swinging your arm with
whatever you get your hands on. And
keep yelling loud. As loud as your
lungs can hold so we can really
feel the pain. Go now!

(louder)

Hey you guys! New meat here to go
after!

Goce, Mirzo, Marko, Gjergj stick their bloodied heads out of
vineyard like the beaten dogs.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Quick. In two groups! You two here
and you two there. Get going!

James signals for Marko and Goce to go into one group and in
the other group Mirzo and Gjergj whose chest is dripping
blood..

MIRZO

(Holding Gjergj)

(He) can't make a step more... (he)
has lost a lot of blood!

JAMES

Almost done here guys! Hang on a
little longer! It is the last
sacrifice the master expects from
you...

GJERGJI

(covered in blood)

A hero never dies. Not me for sure!
The master demands...

His voice fades. Goce holds him by his arms trying to calm
him down.

GOCE

Water. Please some water.

A stoic Marko with blood dripping from his helmet pulls his
leather water bag and tenderly pours the last drop on the
Gjergj's dried lips while talking to his horse...

MARKO

I can no longer hold such confusing
thoughts on my head. I do not know
if it has shrunk or if my head is
swollen beyond recognition

HORSE
It's the heaaaad.

As soon as water dries out Marko picks up his chained mace and hits Mirzo in the abdomen. Gjergj gasps in shock.

STANA
(pops up fresh and energetic)
It's getting late, got to speed it up guys.

Goce tempts to raise his wooden lance, but almost collapses on the process.

MIRZO
I can't do this any more!

GOCE
(barely breathing while kicking at the vineyards leaves)
Die you, barbarian! There you go!
Down with your mace and horse.

Mirzo raises his fist to punch and makes a second attempt to but fails again and falls on the mud.

The painter Eduard K wanders around, all absorbed by the surrounding scenery, totally ignoring the battle in front of him.

EDUARD K.
What a wonderful light. Absolutely splendid!

Assistant James, though is immersing himself in his master's creation. Deep in the mud, he is issuing orders like a demanding conductor in front of his orchestra. He gets closer and demonstrates the moves in slow motion signaling for Marko and Gjergj to go at each other and clash.

JAMES
Like this. Yes! Go! Fire!

The men replicate James's moves. Gjergj deep in the mud, starts in slow motion. Gradually they speed up until they going at it full force. The get covered in mud and blood.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Smoke! Smoke! We need a little smoke here. That's what's missing from the painting
(yells at Mirzo)
(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

Hey you, get up and go get some smoke. Come on, quick wherever you can get hold of some smoke bring it here right away.

(louder to Stana)

And you, yes you - you need to blow the smoke this way.

Stana runs from left to right and right to left waving her arms and pretending to push the smoke towards the of the fighting.

MOMENTS LATER, thick layers of smoke fill the battlefield and loud war cries can be heard, followed by the clash of weapons. Whenever the smoke clears up we can see splatters of blood on the trampled down vineyard.

Gjergj's head is just above the ground, as his body and limbs are being sucked into the mud of the swamp.

GJERGJ

(meek voice)

Help! Heeeelp!

James turns to Gjergj.

JAMES

There you go! Perfect! Hold on in that position! That's what I am talking about... Freeze there!.

Further away Marko's also sinking into the mud.

MARKO

Long live my country!
Saaaave me!

JAMES

(excited)

Bravo, bravooo! That's it my heroes! That's it. Easy peasy! Now you are giving your soul to the painting. And it shows.

The battle has become very fierce. Everyone is in the last throes. Even though they are lying on the ground they still hit each other mercilessly.

MIRZO

(gets hit on the neck from behind and collapses)

Ouch! Shit... what are you thinking, hitting like that. There you go, back at you!

A loud scream follows, and Goce falls on top of him. Mirzo grabs him by the neck and sticks his head into a puddle of mud.

GOCE

Let go! Let go! You Idiot, idiot!

The fights continue, each one more furious than the other.

Finally content, James nods his head in satisfaction at the realistic catastrophe unfolding in the battlefield where our heroes lay flat on the ground. The picturesque village in the background is engulfed by flames, while the sharp screams of children can be heard.

Painter Eduard K has turned his back on the war completely and has moved away, leaving the painting unattended

James is entangled between Goce and Mirzo and can not get out of the mud.

JAMES

Hey, hey, hold on you guys. I'm stuck here!

That's when a wooden lance thrusts him in the back.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Now...I cant move.

Drops of rain make everything even more slippery.

Stana, still running and blowing smoke, slips and falls over him breathless.

A light breeze grows into a full wind, and it throws the stylish hat off the painter's head, revealing his baldness, while the decorative golden hair is glued onto the hat that the wind is blowing towards the fallen heroes.

The painter Eduard K covering his bald head with his palms returns quickly and collect his things, while the wind throws the painting to the ground, revealing for the first time: AN CHEERFUL ABSTRACT PAINTING, that has nothing in common with the bloodbath in vineyards.

Running after his painting, the painter ends up in the mud puddle while Gjergj raises his victory fist up in the air and it tears through the canvas of the tableau.

Marko's horse shakes his head after peeking at the battle-scene, and grazes in peace where the painting once stood.

FADE OUT