

Vladimir Blaževski:  
**YEAR OF THE MONKEY**  
*Working title: FREEDOM OR DIE*

Treatment

Cobe is zookeeper. He is 53 and looks worn-out. Poor salary, barely surviving, wrinkles around his eyes... He is divorced, no kids, lives with his 90 years old aunt Blagunja, in a rumbled house with a small shabby little backyard. The circumstances have made him a melancholic.

The chimpanzee Coco (children's favorite) is Cobe's *buddy* from the zoo.

The story begins in the Zoo, with an apocalyptic night view of derelict and devastated animal dwellings. We follow the sights from the perspective of Coco. He spots a zoo keeper called Lyatif (27, Albanian), who retrieves a dead eagle from the vultures' cage and carries the bird to the other end. Then he throws it on a pile of animal skeletons - most likely to be eaten as food by the zoo animals. Lyatif approaches Coco and tries to cheer Coco up, but the monkey seems to be out of tune and tired.

Next morning Coco perks up when Cobe arrives with the food. He tries to give Cobe a hug but Cobe teases him by avoiding a direct contact. One can see they are good fellows.

Cobe breaks an egg using a special procedure. He separates the white and the yoke into the two different halves of the shell. Coco devours the egg-white together with the shell. He gives the yoke to Cobe to eat. Cobe does not want to take it and retreats. Coco is persistent and pushy. A short ritual of offering and refusing ensues. Coco spits on Cobe, precisely as a man. Cobe avoids him, but Coco is persistent. When he finally manages to hug the guard, he is delighted.

Cobe and Lyatif are in the guardhouse; they casually go through the refrigerators where the stale meat for the animals is kept. Eventually, they find something that more or less looks like meat (of unknown origin) and a little bit of bananas. They share the bananas and hide the plastic bags under their working clothes.

Cobe's hovel is small and almost ruined. In a larger room, which serves as a kitchen, dining-room and living-room all in one, Cobe stews the meat he stole with some potatoes and parsley. Cobe's aunt, Blagunja (90, holding on to life by a thread), sits on an ottoman in the same room. She has dozed off. They eat. Cobe finally has to feed her. There are only potatoes and a banana on Cobe's plate and Blagunja scolds him. He pretends he is trying to become a vegetarian, but she is aware that Cobe is not a fag, and only fags are vegetarians. They both laugh. She chokes on her food and begins coughing. Cobe has difficulties helping her pull herself together.

The same night Blagunja croaks, gasping for air. Cobe rushes to help her. She is unable to speak. One of the neighbors, Ace (45, a puny, wretched-looking man), comes with a plastic-bag in his hands and slippers on his feet. Ace has brought an asthma-pump and sprays it violently into the old woman's mouth. She gurgles, suffocating. Cobe assists. Cobe secretly wipes his tears and Ace comforts him. Cobe feels uncomfortable; he goes in the bathroom and starts weeping. But he quickly pulls himself together. He comes back with red eyes. They sit in silence. The neighbor watches him sympathetically.

Next day at work Cobe is out of tune. He and Lyatif are loading some dry hay in a wheelbarrow. Lyatif notices Cobe is lagging. He takes over Cobe's share of the job. They are approached by one of the clerks from the zoo. He is bringing Cobe a demission from the zoo's director. Cobe goes to the main office, but director is already away. The secretary explains Cobe that demission is because of his reputation of a kicker and even an anarchist.

Cobe gets out and finds the Director (40, a greasy businessman) hurrying to get into his black limo. Cobe tries to catch up with him. The director does not stop and promises Cobe to get some small severance pay, but even in three months. The limo starts to leave. Cobe bangs on the trunk.

Cobe goes to say goodbye with Coco. The chimp feels that something has happened, and he refuses to play their usual egg-ritual-game.

Back home, Cobe tries to get some comfort from Blagunja, but she is too ill and sleepy to understand he's got fired.

The same evening, Coco hangs off the bars, pulling and yanking them with all his might. His whole cage is shaking. Lyatif and another guard are unsuccessfully trying to calm him down. The vet comes and gives him a syringe.

Blagunja gets better and the first thing she asks Cobe is to help her taking a bath. Cobe obediently rubs her back with a sponge. She enjoys.

Next day Lyatif is delivering two plastic bags to Cobe. One contains meat, the other bananas. Cobe checks them, especially the one with the meat.

It is Blagunja's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and about 15 people are gathered in the larger room of Cobe's hovel. Blagunja is wearing her best dress and make-up. She is lively and joyous but exhausted. The effect of her appearance is almost grotesque. An eighty-year-old woman with a hand tremor sits next to her. The other guests are a very old couple, another eighty-year-old woman, Ace, his wife, Roze, Lyatif, Ace's two children, Milanco (9) and Lydia (7, a fat child) and some other neighbors. The table is laden with unnaturally large pieces of meat. There is a pile of rotten bananas too and some bread. The guests scoff the weird-looking meat.

The child Lydia stands in front of Blagunja. She is expected to recite a birthday poem but she is shy and scared of all the senile faces around her. Her mother Roze gets mad when the girl covers her face with the hands, choking with tears. Blagunja decides to comfort the girl. She takes three huge albums with the weirdest types of buttons lined up orderly, from gigantic to miniature. Lydia stares at variegated buttons and touches some. Blagunja is proud to announce that she was the champion of Yugoslavia in button collecting. From one of the albums she takes some funny plaque with drawn female figures and her name on it. She has more than 300.000 pieces of buttons. Lydia is fascinated by a big garish button shaped as a flower and Blagunja gives it to her.

The guests take advantage of the pause to help themselves to more meat and brandy. One of the neighbors is devouring greedily a huge slice of meat. He chokes and causes panics in the room. Males are striking his back and females are bringing water. His eyes are spreading increasingly and he is struggling for breath.

Blagunja orders Cobe to start an old cassette player. Domenico Modugno's song *Ciao Bambina* plays very loud. Some neighbors provoke Blagunja to sing. She starts timidly and then louder and louder. Only in certain places does she sing out of tune. Her voice is weak but almost acceptable. The audience asks for more. Blagunja shakes her head. She is trying to catch her breath. She nods her head with the rhythm. She only hums with the tune. Two greedy neighbors jointly run upon the meat. At the last words 'Ma piovè, piovè sul nostro amor', tears start streaming down Blagunja's face.

The morbid atmosphere is interrupted by the sound of glass being scratched, followed by a strange throaty voice. All turn towards the window and see Coco. He is overjoyed at finding Cobe; he grimaces and screeches. Ace is terrified. Coco looks curiously at the shocked faces of the oldies. The song finishes. Cobe, Lyatif and Ace go to the yard. They have difficulties handling the chimp. Ace asks if there is some type of food that Coco prefers, so they can trick him with it. Cobe knows that Coco loves fresh eggs, but unfortunately today he has none. Ace goes to his place to get some eggs.

Cobe has managed to get Coco seated on the chair in the small hall. Coco stares at the people gathered in the room. They stare back at him. The situation is like in the theater. If not for Modugno's singing, the silence would be complete. Some of the oldies smile and wave at Coco. The rest seem terrified. Blagunja finds Coco's charming; she calls him "auntie's lovely boy".

Ace arrives with two eggs. Thrilled, Coco hops in the air. They give him one right away. Cobe enters the room. Coco follows. The guests move aside, trying to avoid the chimp. Coco is fond of the oldies. Cobe offers the yolks and several of the guests refuse. Neighbor, who earlier scoffed the meat, takes a yoke and sucks it all up in one go. Cobe comes close to Blagunja. Coco follows him. The music reaches its pathetic crescendo. Cobe hands Blagunja the egg-shell. She dunks her finger in the yoke and licks it. Coco helps her. Love at first sight, comments Ace. Coco and Blagunja watch each other tenderly. Cobe stops their play. Coco does not resist this time, but Blagunja has to join the crew, because Coco insists. Ace and Lyatif assist Cobe. They all go out. The song finishes.

They struggle to shove Coco in a rickety old Ace's *Yugo*. Ace can't start the car. Cobe, Blagunja and Coco sit in the back, Lyatif in the front. Cobe is annoyed but Coco is amused, trying to imitate the sounds of the spluttering car. Finally, the rickety car starts.

The crew with the chimp go past several of the newly erected kitsch monuments and buildings in the city. Coco is astounded, peering at the statues of horses and lions.

They arrive in front of the zoo. Coco realizes where he has been taken and starts protesting and screaming. Cobe gets back angry at Ace because he didn't try to calm Coco down. They argue, so Coco takes advantage of the situation and manages to escape from the car. In a few jumps he gets up trees and away, disappearing from sight. Blagunja seems to be happy about that. All three men start to gape around. They amble aimlessly around the zoo.

The same night Coco has climbed on top of the Ferris wheel in an amusement park. From up there he spots a hobo staggering towards the bumper cars. The hobo is terribly drunk but manages to squeeze himself into one of the bumper cars. Coco descends and approaches him. The hobo looks at the chimp unperturbed, no sign of puzzlement. Coco watches him with interest. They "get along" very fine, they even drink together.

The next day Ace is riveted to live TV footage of an attempt to recapture Coco somewhere in the poor suburbs of the city. The zoo's director is pacing up and down the tin roof, where Coco is excitedly running around, and screams and screeches whenever the director gets too close. Down on the ground, TV-crews and reporters have gathered joined by a crowd of idle people supporting Coco's bid for freedom. The crowds are shouting "*Freedom or Death!*" and "*Long live Macedonia, long live Coco!*"... A TV Journalist (40-year-old woman, ambitious) is talking about the media buzz that this unusual event aroused.

Ace runs to Cobe's hovel. Later they both rush out and the first thing they see when they get on the spot is a gypsy band, playing under the roof. Cobe and Ace reach the ladder in front of the house. The director is thrilled to see Cobe. Cobe climbs up the wobbling ladder. The director grabs Cobe's sleeve; as though Cobe is his last chance. Cobe asks the director if he will take him back to work if he manages to catch Coco. The director exaggeratedly grabs for his heart.

Cobe approaches Coco. The monkey is friendly, he is happy to see his *buddy*. He grins when Cobe gives him the egg. The crowd is shouting: *Buuu, traitor!* They start shyly, becoming louder and louder. They are cheering for Coco and hate Cobe, who came to trick the monkey and take him back to captivity. Cobe reluctantly drags Coco to the edge of the roof and the ladder. They descend together. The director follows. The police clear the way for them until they reach a black limo. The shouts from the crowd are now enraged. By the open door of the limo, Coco releases a sad howl when he realizes where they are taking him. He stares at Cobe, who bows his head. Then he pushes Cobe aside and jumps up the nearest tree. Hanging from one branch and then swinging to another tree he soon disappears. The crowds applaud, entranced. An explosion of noise, the gypsy band plays the Macedonian national anthem. Pervasive rejoicing, followed by singing.

In the next street, Coco bravely jumps on a slow-moving *ancient* little truck.

Cobe and Ace are approached by the journalist we've been seen, accompanied by her cameraman. She offers Cobe cooperation: she wants to be the one who covers Coco being recaptured and Cobe is the one who can make him come round and calm him down.

Coco is in the back of the truck, scoffing apples. He takes them out the crams, has two or three bites and throws them away. The truck gets off the main road and drives along the narrow country lanes. Coco grabs the crams and throws apples down the road. He enjoys watching them fly and then roll down the lane. He is thrilled. Somewhere, on a far-flung uphill place, the truck stops. The driver gets out and is astonished when he sees the monkey, still feasting on the apples. He turns and fled. Coco is watching him puzzled and carries on his "apple-game".

The night falls. Coco is hidden in the forest by the road.

It's early in the morning and Coco moves stealthily on the edge of a decrepit and almost deserted village. We can see heaps of rubbish. He notices something, rummages through the rubbish, and finds frames for glasses with their lenses missing. He continues his stroll with more pride and approaches an old barn.

Inside the barn, an old peasant woman is milking a cow. There is another cow in the stable, both are very upset and look like they want to run away. The old woman is puzzled; she can't calm them down. When the animals have almost driven wild, the old woman turns and spots Coco at the door, with his phantom glasses, fascinated with the site. The old woman is petrified. She tries to get up but she can't. She presses her forehead against the cow. Coco approaches. He is joyful. He wants to milk the cow too. The old woman overturns the eyes and faints.

A female TV-reporter is interviewing the same old peasant woman and her husband in front of their house. They are carried away in their fantasy, it turns out that they were even talking with the chimpanzee. Eventually, the journalist concludes that the aroused public opinion is completely on Coco's side and has proclaimed him a freedom fighter and some sort of a modern Robin Hood, but there are also others who wonder what kind of a country struggles over capturing a monkey.

Later that afternoon, Cobe and Ace arrive in the same village. The Granny weeps as she chops wood behind the house. She then takes the logs in front of the house and tells them her story about her husband who left her and went to his mistress in the neighboring village. He took the cow with him, the one that produces more milk. And all this happened while she was having her short nap, whorishly and sneaky. The one to blame for everything is the monkey, whom they are looking for. He has put a spell on everybody. The old woman thinks that he has gone up in the mountains, in the Albanian villages, but she didn't want to say that for the cameras.

Cobe and Ace merge with the Journalist and her cameraman in front of some deserted mill in the mountains. All together they climb up the mountain.

A big dog and Genti (an Albanian shepherd boy, mute, a bit retarded) guard a flock of sheep. Coco assists them, happy to be free. He wears new brand-name sunglasses. He chases the straggling sheep and returns them to the fold as though he was an old herdsman. Cobe, Ace, the journalist and the cameraman spy Coco from their hiding place. The cameraman films. They try to proceed towards the meadow but a giant Albanian man gets in their way. He recognizes Cobe from the TV; but he warns him not to get carried away; Coco belongs to them now. He says, "*We are not giving Coco away, he is Robin Hood*". Cobe tries to convince him that the monkey can be dangerous, and might do harm also. The guy is determined; Albanian people love the monkey.

A very large Albanian family sits eating dinner. Coco is with them. They all eat from the same pan. The children feed Coco, each competing to give him more food. Coco is in a great mood. Over-excited by his game with the children, Coco throws rice at them. The children all laugh and one of them throws some rice back at Coco. The boy is immediately slapped on the back of his head by Fatmir, a mountain of a man.

Behind the sleeping sheep, Fatmir and his wife make love noisily in a corner of a sheepfold by their house. Hidden at a distance of two meters, Coco lies in wait. The wife sees him and stops suddenly. Fatmir wants to proceed with the intercourse but the woman pushes him away. He turns towards Coco and tries to chase him away, but Coco doesn't budge. Fatmir will have to stand up after all. He takes a sleeping lamb. With the lamb as bait, he leads Coco outside.

Fatmir leaves the two animals in a small shed filled with piled up throwaways. He gives Coco some pieces of metal to play with. Coco and the lamb study each other. He is trying to cuddle it. The lamb recoils at first, but Coco is very gentle and the lamb settles with him and even starts bleating. Coco finds some old huge welding glasses. He is excited about this discovery and wants to put them on the lamb's head. The lamb moves backwards. Coco is persistent. The lamb bleats loudly. Coco gives up and puts the welding glasses on his head. He looks like a zombie. The lamb stares at him in astonishment. The door opens to reveal Cobe, Ace and Lyatif. Behind them are the journalist and the cameraman. They are all tense as if on a detective's mission. Coco takes a while to recognize Cobe. Eventually he jumps into his hands and almost knocks him to the ground. Cobe grins too. Cobe picks up Coco to take him out, but Coco escapes and hides behind the lamb. Cobe realizes what the problem is. The journalist has to carry the lamb and Cobe has a hold of Coco. The rest move behind them. They creep quietly towards the gate. Fatmir stops them severely. Some other Albanians get out of the house too. Lyatif tries to persuade Fatmir but he is determined. One of the Albanians puts some damp cloths on Coco's mouth. Coco looks at Cobe and the journalist again and then at the lamb and the house. His view becomes turbid, even the lamb disappears from the sight. He falls asleep. Fatmir grabs him and takes him away.

After being thrown away, the journalist is showing some letters on the internet to Cobe, Ace, Lyatif and the cameraman. She explains that they've received hundreds of these. The text is like this one: *Coco has done what none of us dared to. Coco is like Spartacus and we are all cunts...* She demands they'll have to come up with something, in order to get Coco from Albanians.

Cobe is in his tiny room. He stares at the moon through his window. Modugno's *Ciao Bambina* plays from the larger room. Cobe is engrossed in his daydreaming. The song ends and no more sounds come from there.

Cobe enters the larger room and sees Blagunja sitting motionless on the ottoman. After a while, she asks Cobe to play the song again. Then she wants to dance with Cobe. He resists, but she is determined. Cobe sighs, takes her armpits and pulls her up. They play quite decently. Blagunja's face is shining.

In a meadow above the mountain village, the large dog and the young shepherd are out with the sheep again. Coco assists but is engrossed in caressing the lamb. He does not leave it alone. At some distance from the flock, Fatmir sits trimming a piece of wood with his knife.

A police jeep climbs up the dusty village road. Its rotating lights are on. Behind it follows a bus and an old yellow pickup truck, official vehicle of the Zoo, over which tarpaulin some wild animals are drawn. Lyatif is at the wheel, jolly as sand boy. He is on a special mission, sent by the Zoo manager and he even got some pocket money for travel expenses. Cobe is a front seat passenger and Ace is between them. Blagunja is sitting back, excited by their enterprise. They are all watching Coco on the meadow and get out of the truck in a hurry, squashed and creased.

Some 30 small-time bullies come out of the bus armed with banners. The dominant slogan is "Coco is Macedonian, not Albanian". The hooligans are drunk. They shout, the policemen help them to move toward Coco. Five more Albanians appear as if from nowhere. They also yell and run towards the flock in panic. A total chaos. Fatmir is the loudest. He rushes towards Coco and his huge figure scares the chimp. Coco notices the jeep with the rotating lights and wild "protesters", but it seems he fails to see Cobe waving to attract his attention. He looks at the lamb and then at Fatmir's looming body again. Fatmir is still yelling. Eventually, Coco takes flight.

Cobe and his team follow Coco towards the coppice. Even Blagunja is trying to keep connected. They call after Coco, but he does not hear anything.

In a mountain forest, Coco jumps from one branch to another, his speed is astonishing. The yelling and noise slowly subside. The forest is thicker and the silence becomes complete. Coco slows down.

He sits on a promontory in a wild landscape breathing heavily. He is still scared and looks wretched all alone in the wilderness.

One journalist interviews Fatmir, a mountain of a man. Behind him are some ten of his Albanian relatives and this group of Macedonian hooligans with raised banners. Fatmir emphasizes that they don't want to surrender Coco to the police because Coco is Albanian, not Macedonian and because Coco is Robin Hood as well. A stir among bullies begins. They yell "He is not Albo, he's ours". Albanian peasants also start to play tough, the situation becomes tight. The police have to intervene.

Albanian mute shepherd boy, Genti, Coco's best "friend", is willing to help Cobe and his crew to find Coco. They leave together the meadow above mountain village.

They find Coco sitting in a mountain knap in some wasteland, eating walnuts and enjoying under a walnut tree. He uses a stone to break the shells. After few moments of viewing and hesitation, Coco runs to hug Cobe. He shrieks of joy and Cobe laughs. Encounter with Blagunja is also touching. Aunt cries and Coco "comforts" her.

They drive along country roads in a Zoo truck, listening the radio and enjoying the reunion. Radio presenter announces that the management of Skopje Zoo decided to award the discoverer of Coco the chimp with 300 Euros. Lyatif is counting how much would each of them get.

The truck is stalled on a bridge over some deep canyon. Cobe trips and spectacularly falls into the river. Everybody run to the fence, consternated. The last to come is Blagunja, holding on to the heart. The bravest is Coco, he easily skips the fence and throws down. Cobe swims out to surface half-dazed, struggling for air. He spots Coco drowning and yelling deathly screams. Cobe manages to catch Coco and pulls him shoreward. He is also beginning to drown but doesn't give up.

Lyatif is amazed by Coco's bravery – he jumped into the water and he can't swim. Blagunja decides they should go home first, to feed the poor hero and give him some hot tea, bringing him back to the Zoo could wait.

In Cobe's hovel Coco enjoys while Blagunja feeds and waters him. Ace enters inside without knocking and switches on the X-L TV channel where the journalist Ana has a special broadcast about "the case of a rebel chimp". So we watch a reportage made in order to see how people would react if Coco were to be nominated for a state medal. We see people giving some silly and absurd answers, all of them approving the lunatic idea. Ana has just received the news that Government decided to raise the award for finding Coco up to 1000 Euro. Everybody is excited, even Coco. Lyatif is sure that where there is a thousand, should be more. They decide to wait until tomorrow. Cobe assures them it is impossible to stay in the house overnight, because Coco would scream and disclose their hideaway.

The same night, yellow pickup truck is slowly approaching a big apocalyptic ruin of some ghostly deserted factory in the outskirts. Passing the decrepit gate, truck stops near the gatekeepers lodge. Lyatif moves to the lodge, while Cobe, Blagunja, Genti and Coco wait by the truck. Suddenly someone shoots a bullet. Cobe deftly falls on the ground. From the lodge runs Hashim (70, frantic and weird) in a camouflage uniform and with a shotgun. He rejoices recognizing Lyatif, his cousin. Hashim appears to be a big fan of Coco – "Robin Hood" and an old acquaintance of Blagunja, so they are all happy to find a safe shelter.

Our "refugees" built a camp in the middle of a huge hall amongst gigantic concrete supports that seem to have withstood heavy bombing. We see decay and rubbish everywhere around and mattresses and sleeping bags by the flickering fire. Cobe reads parts from Darwin's "Origin of species" to Coco. Hashim is fascinated, he finds Coco to be "an intellectual", a person who had hit the system as no one else before.

Next morning Cobe announces that he had an unusual dream, a vision of Goce Delcev, the greatest Macedonian freedom fighter from the past. He advised Cobe not to give up Coco. Lyatif protests, saying it's a bullshit talk, but Hashim and Blagunja are happy not to put Coco back to slavery. Lyatif is angry and leaves the group.

Coco is enjoying his freedom and everybody is pampering him. They all play the game of pantomime. Unexpectedly Lyatif gets back with a huge bag and without his Zoo truck. Everybody is happy Lyatif didn't betray them. He informs the group he managed not to be fired from the Zoo, but also that there is a "big

shit" now, media uproar is huge and even the government interfered. The whole country gets mad about the "Coco case".

The group is in administrative building of deserted factory. We partially saw the space previously: devastated offices, hallways, toilets, conference halls... traces of disappeared administration. They realize that further on they would be treated as some "terrorist" group and jokingly they call themselves "Freedom or Die" organization.

Cobe and Lyatif came to Ace's place to take his ruined car, Yugo 45, and some food and supplies. They carry few big boxes and bags. We hear the radio from inside the car. Some journalist informs about a rally of support for Coco, held at the Central Square, on which the opposition followers are starting to gather. Cobe is making jokes about their revolutionary organization Freedom or Die, about "confiscation" of Ace's car, about his own reincarnation after his fall from the bridge and Coco's brave attempt to save him... Ace is confused. After they left, Ace says to his wife that since the whole country went mad, how can Cobe stay normal?

Cobe and Lyatif came in front of X-L TV station. Cobe waits for journalist Ana who comes down with her cameraman. Cobe is hiding from Ana the fact that they keep Coco in deserted factory, but he is still very much intrigued by her as a woman. Ana informs Cobe and Lyatif her TV just received the news that Greek Secret Service is behind all this and manipulate with Coco. It's said they keep him hidden somewhere by the border. Cobe hesitates, he is about to tell her the truth, but he manages to restrain. Ana kisses him gently and he gets dizzy.

In a deserted factory, little company is making a party, with some food they've got from Ace and drink. Even Coco gets some beer. Everybody is happy. They stay till very late in the night.

Next day they bring Genti, the Albanian mute boy, back to Albanian village. He is not happy to leave Coco, but Lyatif succeeds to persuade him with some promises. Cobe is a bit afraid the boy could betray them. Lyatif is sure he won't.

The crew, together with Coco, is watching a small TV in a deserted factory hall. Journalist Ana has two guests in the studio: manager of the Zoo and some foolish history professor. They both speak about people's spirit of freedom and Coco as a symbol of rebellion and revolution. Ana interrupts them because they have just received an exclusive video from Bulgarian television, proving that Coco is found in Bulgaria, so the mystery of his disappearing is solved.

Coco laughs, as if he quite understands. Blagunja fondles him. On TV we see a chimp, obviously smaller than Coco, playing with a clown in front of a poor circus tent, somewhere in deep province. Then a few more circus artists appear and wave to the camera. This fake Coco giggles at the camera as well, as if he salutes the audience. Then we hear that this discovery was made through the synchronized action of Macedonian and Bulgarian secret services, with a support from Interpol and NATO pact's special Department for Wild Animals... It's what in this report is stated, Ana says.

Cobe gets really mad and orders Lyatif to start the engine. Then they leave.

Cobe and Lyatif manage to enter furtively into the TV studio. Ana gets the information that Cobe is here and she decides to use him as a joker in her live program. A big scandal is arising, Cobe quarrels with the Zoo manager, who accuses Cobe being a hardcore oppositionist and non-patriot and that he has been brought in studio to spread lies and falsehood. Cobe gets incautious and declares that he knows where the real Coco is. Then the Zoo manager rips off the bug microphone and angrily leaves the studio, followed by the big stir inside.

Coming back to deserted factory, Cobe admits Lyatif that he felt in love with Ana. She is the right woman for him, he knows.

In a godforsaken part of the factory, on a pile, Coco, Hashim and Blagunja discover about hundred thrown mannequin-dummies. Coco goes to them, delighted. He throws them thrilled, plucks their hair, pulls their

arms off, dances with them... Hashim and Blagunja hardly succeed to stop him goes wild. They allow him to pick just one of the dolls.

A bit later, everybody is helping Coco to get dressed with some funny female dresses taken out from the model dolls. In the same time, they “make up” the doll Coco has picked, to look like a chimp. They are having a lot of fun.

In the middle of the night, some skinny and tall guy, wearing a bonnet and holding a blanket in his arms, looking like an executioner from “The Godfather”, dangles around the factory gate and observes Hashim as he naps in the gatekeepers lodge. Hidden in the shadows, the guy muddles through the back side of the lodge and gets inside the yard.

In the administrative building, the guy walks the hallways, offices and rooms. Finally, he approaches his *prey*. His flashlight discovers a “person” wrapped in bed sheets. He tightens the blanket he holds, then he aims and shoots. Fire flashes four times, but hardly any sound. The guy takes a look around and flees.

Next morning, Coco's savage scream wakes up Cobe and Lyatif. They run and find Hashim and Coco beside Coco's model doll, riddled down and disfigured of bullets. The chimp holds her hand, howls and strongly hits his own chest with the other hand. Hashim holds a bullet. Cobe kneels down, raises the model doll and embraces her. They get Blagunja to comfort the chimp. Of course, they are aware the bullets were aimed to Coco.

Tsobe and Blagunja recuperate the wounded doll in a “taxidermy” manner. Lyatif and Hashim are finishing the packing. Coco is calm, he endears to everyone.

They all move to an abandoned construction in some outback. Hashim is struggling to break off a big door padlock of administrative building. He pulls, draws, impacts, no effect. Coco is the first one to take an iron stick and crush the padlock easily. The others watch him, elated. Blagunja taps his shoulder, Coco is proud. Blagunja calls him “auntie's smartass”.

The crew arranges the space of abandoned construction to look like a home. Coco brooms an area for his wounded dummy. Blagunja is up on a footstool, to wipe some window. The stool cracks, Cobe goes to help, but it's too late, Blagunja falls hard. Everyone is upset, especially Coco. Blagunja lies immovable and gurgles, talking nonsense.

The whole crew, including Coco, is packed in the narrow vehicle again, taking Blagunja to the hospital.

In a hospital hallway Cobe and Lyatif wait for hours with injured semi-conscious Blagunja, some doctor to take care of her. Heaps of wretched ill people are all around the corridors and waiting rooms. Cobe tries to intervene, but personnel ignore his entreaty. Blagunja demands to take her home, with the barely audible voice, but decidedly. Cobe has to obey her despairing demand.

The crew brings aunt back to the hovel. Hashim thinks it is too dangerous for Coco to stay there, even for this one night. So Lyatif and Hashim are giving a pot with some narcotic liquid to Coco. Cobe helps them, trying to calm Coco down.

Later this night, Cobe is asleep in his room. Some quietly gasping comes from the bigger room. Cobe shifts, changes the position and continues sleeping. Still sleepy he enters the bigger room and sees Blagunja's motionless body lying on the ottoman.

Cobe goes to Ace's place searching some help, because he knows nothing about funeral procedures. Ace comes to Cobe's hovel and they both get drunk, babbling some wacky theories about the “meaning of life” beside Blagunja's dead body.

Blagunja's burial is poor event with very few people gathered. An old friend is giving a speech. He reads it with difficulty and it sounds silly. He speaks phrases about Macedonian history instead of deceased woman. Cobe sends Lyatif to interrupt the enthralled old man. But the speaker is not giving up, so Lyatif



has to take his papers away and they almost start to fight. Ana, who came to the funeral with her cameraman, takes a nugget of a ground and throws it on the coffin which the undertakers started to bury. Cobe and Ana look at each other.

Followers of the opposition are having meeting at the main city square. "Death to Bulgarian Coco" is written on one of the banners. Speakers talk *about the importance of Coco for development of modern democratic society*. Cobe and Ana stand beside the beer tank. They drink beer from plastic cups. Ana is giggling, she is relaxed and tipsy. Cobe gazes at her infatuated. She tells Cobe that she has husband and two kids at home, but she also likes Cobe, very much. He is confused. She takes two beers more and forces him to mix up with crowd and feel the pulse. Cobe follows her.

Hashim and Lyatif are "babysitting" Coco in the construction shelter. Coco is occupied with his recovered model dummy. Lyatif is worried Cobe would betray their "cause" because of this woman, Ana. He "philosophises" about men's weakness in front of a woman. He even thinks about talking to the Zoo manager, hinting that they could probably get 3000 Euros for Coco. Hashim is against such an idea, but he also admits that it is serious money.

In this very moment, Ana and Cobe enter the construction site. Coco runs to them, screaming. Cobe introduces Ana to the chimp. Ana is excited, Coco is happy. Lyatif and Hashim watch each other. Ana gets phone call with the information that this Bulgarian "Coco" just landed at the airport.

Next day, in the Zoo, the entire staff is hurried, cleaning and arranging the area. Coco's cage is covered with white cloth, prepared for Coco's festive return. The manager is nervous. Lyatif is very busy.

It is very crowdie by the reception booth: a lot of people and children with their parents, politician's limousines, TV crews, ENG vehicles, journalists... Police officers secure the entrance, a doorman checks the accreditations. Cobe, disguised as an assistant, tries to enter inside, together with Ana and her cameraman. However, the doorman recognizes him, but Cobe has a valid accreditation and Ana decisively demands he should be passed in. In a short debate with the doorman, Cobe realizes that cameraman has the same last name as Ana and that he is actually her husband. Cobe becomes sad and Ana is trying to comfort him. She even hugs him, tenderly, in front of a camerman who seems to remain unconcerned.

Gala press conference is going on in front of Coco's cage. The manager sits at the table, an older and younger man beside her, both of them in formal suits. There are also several politicians around. Journalists and cameras are ahead of them. Young man in a suit appears to be the Government representative. He says that with this act the country proved its seriousness and maturity for the long time wish – accession in European Union and NATO. Then the manager announces the Bulgarian Government representative. The older man in a suit addresses in Bulgarian. Cobe whispers to Ana that it is another fake – he knows the guy, he used to be an amateur actor and they went to school together. The false Bulgarian notices Cobe has recognized him so he speeds up and shorten his *expose*. The manager and both the suits are shaking hands. Flash units are on. Then the manager takes off the cloth and reveals a cage. Journalists run towards, a real mess is going on. The chimp in the cage just resembles Coco. Cobe and Ana stand up and trigger the scandal. They show some big photos of the real Coco. Some of the journalists also dare to protest, they shout: "We don't want Bulgarian chimps, boo!" The manager points at Cobe and Ana to two guys, undercover cops. The guys grab Cobe and roughly drag him to the exit. Ana tries to stop them and screams. Another two dudes take care of Ana.

Later, after the ceremony, in front of Coco's cage, Lyatif persuades Ace and his children that one should believe the chimp in the cage is a real Coco. Some other children also protest, claiming that truth is more important than belief. The children are taking sides; they start to quarrel and even fight. Lyatif and Ace have problems to calm them down.

Two uniformed guards bring cuffed Cobe through the long, ruined and dark corridor in a remand prison. Jail bars opens and closes, echoes of the footsteps, abrupt sounds... Cobe is resigned, but obedient.

Guards are throwing him into the scruffy and tight cell. Cobe is sitting on a narrow bench motionless. He looks around, researching the depressive environment. He hears the steps of guards leaving. After a while, he hears nothing.

The night had fallen. Moonlight barely gets through the small window. Cobe is still sitting on a same place. He closes his eyes, as if falling asleep.

Both texture and coloring of a picture are slightly changing, from now on. Lyatif, Hashim, Ace, mute boy Genti, Ana and Coco are marching down the prison corridor, resembling the William Holden's crew in "The Wild Bunch". Along the way, they overcome all the obstacles. Coco is specially featured in those *martial arts*. Sometimes he uses his dummy as an ally weapon. Policemen and guards fall down around them like dominoes. They reach Cobe's cell and unlock it.

The crew enters inside and wake up sleeping Cobe. He hugs Coco first, then Ana and after that the others. Everyone is happy. Coco pees at the spot firstly, and then he screams in exaltation. They go out. We hear the echoes of steps from the corridor.

They leave the prison altogether and walk down the deserted street. They are jolly and tease each other as they walk. Coco kisses the dummy. At the first corner, they split. Lyatif, Hashim, Ace and Genti move in one direction and Cobe, Ana and Coco in another.

Coco walks in the middle, between Cobe and Ana. They are embraced. In some small park Cobe stops and points at the sky. Coco stares upwards. There are two moons on the sky. One is larger. "You see? Everything is OK... two moons." Cobe says to Coco. Coco watches intently indeed. Ana joins him. She is also happy seeing two separate moons. "Fuck! A real mystery", says Cobe.

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