

Manuscript

Rhapsody of Power

(A fairy tale of the antediluvian times)

A radio play in six scenes

Authors:

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Translation from Russian: Mikhail Kapustin, Yuriy Shvets

Music:

N. Simonyan Music to the picture “Old Hottabych” (USSR 1956)

M. Ravel “Bolero”

A. Chatchaturian “Sword Dance” from the ballet “Gaiana”

Characters/Heroes

Wind – speaks in the tender creamy voice of a young man, sounding like a tenor, one can clearly hear the sugary tinges of a “tender rascal”.

Eunuch – speaking in a kind of pleasant soprano (the tone is lucid and silvery). His voice is full of emotions, one can constantly feel commanding intonations; his tone is quite often ironic. At the beginning of the fourth scene his voice loses the emotional coloring. In the fifth scene Eunuch’s emotions completely disappear, his voice becomes icy and indifferent.

Sand-drift – has a deep baritone with a vivid hoarseness. His tone is always confident, assertive, dictatorial. Quite often it is colored with condescension and contempt, especially when the character is speaking with a question intonation.

Eunuch when he was young – utters the words in a raucous falsetto. His tone is very Pompous having a would-be for world mightiness and significance. Tone of voice - deliberate declamation.

Duplications:

Honourable Merchant/ The Mightiest/ Speaker – nasty “creaky” voice

Townsmen/ Honourable Officer – “full” basso or baritone.

Music: N.Simonyan Music to the picture “Old Hottabych” (USSR 1956) **M-1 in text**

M. Ravel “Bolero” **M-2 in text**

A. Katchaturian “Sword Dance” from the ballet “Gaiana” **M-3 in text**

Repeated complex sound effects in the third scene:

Motley hubbub of the crowd: yells, screams, mumble, laughs – they are closing to cacophony and at times seem to cover the listener, at times seem to dissolve, creating the single noisy background – **SFX-1 in text**

The thundering din of several hundreds people’s boots crashing against the stone while marching – **SFX-2 in text**

Avalanche, deafening, daunting clatter of horseshoes’ against the pebble pavement – **SFX-3 in text**

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SCENE ONE

Time – before the Great Flood. The place is not identified, but the action supposedly takes place somewhere in the East.

EXT – the upper atmosphere.

The sound of M-1.

Wind's Opening speech – the growing recitative.

Wind. It is windy and hot.

It is windy in the icy pinnacles and in the fragrant valleys,
It is windy on the mountain ways and on the labyrinthine paths,

(Pause filled with **M-1**)

it is windy in the sands.

(Pause filled with **M-1**)

I am not whirling and not churning,
With a springy wave I carry
The fragments of words,
Fragrances,
Someone's dreams
And wishes.

(Pause – filled with **M-1**)

I know fatigue, but I don't know the rest
I am occupied with myself only and I occasionally toy with the surrounding curiosities
I take off the domes of palaces,
But I am indifferent to the cunningness and slyness under them,
I chill the lovers' lips,
But why should I care about joy and happiness?

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I am clinging to the future,
But I remain in the past.

(Pause filled with *M-I*)

MAN! Can you feel my springy force?

MAN! Can you sense my touch?

MAAAN!!! Can you hear me?

No?! Then have enough of cold, sorrow and joy!

Eastern music ends with a loud noise of the broken string.

EXT – open desert, crumbing old sand-drift.

SFX – explosive noise of the wind and slight rustle of sand.

Wind. One brief instant, and my windy power pushes Eunuch's worn black and green-stripped dressing gown, ruffles his feelings and I flew further, leaving the relaxed glance of black eyes and his bloated body. And I, rolled up in a cocoon against his body, started listening and enjoying his human emotions.

(PAUSE)

Eunuch (*delighted*). Ooooh... how the sand is sweeping! How the wind is blowing, even my eyes are sore...nasty. And once upon a time my soul was open to him, and he called me his brother. Or no? Was it not so? Maybe it was me, who sang him songs, and called him my brother? Though, did it ever happen at all? Or, were they only thoughts of a young boy with a snivel who dreamt of freedom? Were they at all the dreams of freedom, or simply aspirations to permissiveness? Perhaps, they were simply teen-age fantasies. Indeed, why would wind care for me, and why would I care for wind? Especially after The Mightiest turned his

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heavy glance on me? And THAT happened? Since then there is nothing in common between wind and me. NOTHING. Zero. Absolute denial, longing for eternity and probably, now achieving the brink of eternal...

(Sad laughter)

No, it is indeed, boring. I didn't think living as a hermit at the moment of my highest glory would be really interesting, but at least it was supposed to be extravagant, exciting in a way. And it turned out to be the infant's bottom without excrements. It seems fine, and dry, without a smell, but on the whole, somehow wrong, insipid, poor. Why would anyone need it without the waste? Just for the sake of it? And I am ... sitting here, polishing the sand-drift, thinking this is a good place to be, comfortable.

Wind. And why is the old sand-drift comfortable in this dull place?

Eunuch. O... is it you, ancient vagabond with the ever young spirit?

Wind. Yes. It's been ages, my boy.

Eunuch. *(showing off and evidently wanting to be denied)*

Not a boy, but an old man, exhausted, what is more.

Wind. The sand you see now is moving and intervening in space in millions of conjugal unions, billions of sand-grains – they are exhausted. And you are simply tired. And are you old in comparison with one tiny sand-grain?

Eunuch. Ha-ha-ha! Windy chatterbox! You are difficult to contradict!

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Wind. Of course, as how can you conquer something that shows no signs of opposition? Something, which force you can feel, but are not able to hide in the most secure prison?

Something...

Eunuch. Well, enough, enough. Everyone knows you're a famous philosopher, but you do not really exist, thus it means, you can get out of here! It's my sand-drift.

Wind. How can I get out of here if there is no me? And the sand-drift is not yours at all.

Eunuch. (*Scenically*). Uuuh... my leech Agafreud told me to talk less with myself!
There is no you! I get it! You are my sick imagination! And, most likely, my teenage sick imagination.

Wind. Phew. How trivial. Almost as in a radio play.

(*To himself*). Though you do not know what a radio is but this fact is not significant.

(*Aloud*) I've heard it millions of times. But you will not deny that I am around you. Here, for example, have a parcel!

Eunuch. (*spitting*). How much sand in my mouth.

Wind. (*giggling nastily*).

Eunuch. (*irritated*). Hey you, sick adolescent!

Wind. Who? Who?

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Eunuch. If you are my imagination, sick, by the way, preserved since my adolescence, it seems proper to call you a sick teenager. Stop your experiments.

Wind. Of course, I will stop them, if you insist so. Though, consider it, it is boring not to have fun. And for me, an adolescent...

(giggling)

it is absolutely impossible. Let's play words then. It is the easiest and the most innocent game, but it brings so much joy, delight, and I will even be bold enough to say – happiness!

Eunuch. What do you mean, imagination? Aren't you too bold to say things your master has never uttered?

Wind. *(Exaggeratingly sorrowful, almost grotesque)*

You may think that there is no me, that this sky exists for eyes only, that you are the master of your own destiny, that this sand-drift is your liege, you may pamper your common sense. Still, can I not talk?
Or, in a florid style,

(obviously citing some text)

“to construe senses and to transfer thought forms by the easiest vibration of the air called sound”

(In a confidential tone)

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It is written in a very clever book. So clever, that all its words were cast to the wind, so difficult they were for the normal people without wind in their heads. And you should understand that what is given to the wind, is given to me. So I am tormenting myself with these easiest vibrations. I wish you knew how much people chatter in vain, how much they write and invent...

Eunuch. Listen, whoever you are. Speak clearly. Or do you take a special delight in speaking so that no one would understand you?

Wind. This is the manner of all phrase-mongers. I am what the people fill me with. Soon you will perfectly realize that, one can even say, feel this. I live with alien thoughts and emotions... Though, I can deal without them. ... still, it the most boring existence to be oneself and to take nothing from others. So, speaking clearly, let's have a chat, you with your tongue, I – with the clear air.

Eunuch. *(aloud peevishly, though obviously not thinking somebody would hear him)*

Well, what would we... “chat” about. There is no you, or, to be more exact, you are the other side of myself. Myself... I know myself too perfectly and how can one be interested in talking to himself, especially if one does that for 60 years?

Wind *(joyfully)*. Oh, there are subjects! Well, for example, I am greatly concerned about one tremendous problem you mentioned aloud recently. I surely, caught it and could not help admiring it.

Eunuch. What are you talking about?

Wind. *(with pathos)*. Why do you think this sand-drift is comfortable? It

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does not please the eye with its perfect shape, you cannot see a single oasis from here, and, what is more, it is going to exist for a couple more years until I sweep it to the desert. Why is it comfortable?

Eunuch.

Because if you put a platform here, and make a station, then the first step in securing the caravan track from my empire to the outer world is done. Then you can have a complex of such platforms with stations, and at least some kind of fortress, to see them form a donkey's head. And that is going to be profitable – for salesmen, for forces, and for me.

Wind.

And what about the local masters of the sands – Gi-y-rans, is it going to be profitable for them?

Eunuch.

Well, for the desert men it is some kind of profit, too. But one will have to explain it to them. Well, being in war with the sand predator tribes is not a glorious thing, though a troublesome one. One can show then the advantage of trade business in comparison to robbery. The smart ones will understand it is more profitable, while thieves will realize that trade is the same robbery, only slyer and craftier. So you do not have to give up your traditions of theft and honors... on the issue of the dumb ones... platforms, posts, and five thousand military force will quickly have them coming and going.

Wind.

(Delighted. Sneering).

Indeed. You have become a true sovereign. As far as I remember before the operation you were not like this... You kept on dreaming about happiness... for everybody... for free... so that no one would feel deprived...

Eunuch. *(Tense).*

Let's not talk about this time... It is in the past now.

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Wind. We can talk about another one. I've heard they had invented a name for you, just like for the previous sovereign with a vivid soprano, loud "the Mightiest of the Great and the Master of the Mightiest, Emperor of the Great Palin, Master of 99 valleys and 80 rivers". Even my windy tongue twists to utter this. You've wiped everyone's eyes. Now you're thinking about the desert. Perhaps, you're going to make a garden out of it?

Eunuch. *(with exaggerated weariness).*
One could do that.

Sand-drift. So why are you coming here for so many days and sighing deeply looking in the sand?

Eunuch. O... I have a triple personality! Or is it another friend of mine? A sun shaft, perhaps? It must be from the early childhood.

Sand-drift. Do not hurt the old bloated master.

Eunuch. Who is croaking here?

Wind. It is the heap of sand under you. Sand-drift is its name.

Eunuch. *(Mockingly).* Aha! I should have guessed! Surely, it is a sand-drift. Guys! I've understood it! You are not yourselves, you are Symbols! Wind must be a symbol of my past. Well, you know...delights...freedom...ideals...idle talk... And the sand-drift must be the menacing sign of my future. Force, mightiness, heap of space... seems like the pyramid above the shrine of my sovereign

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soul... no, indeed Agafreud would be delighted to know what a sojourn under the heating sun could do to a man!

Sand-drift. It is not clever and it is not funny, Eunuch. You don't think to be our creator, do you? You act surprisingly illogically and obnoxiously. The wind is a good one, too... what kind of imbecile talk is that? I'm listening, listening to you and still cannot catch the drift, why is this conversation so strange? The wind whistling like a chatterbox, doing scenic tricks with my sand, by the way; Eunuch either resents, or gets angry, or cites the book of geopolitics and psychiatry. What kind of an endless game in not understanding the evident is this?

Eunuch. "An endless game in not understanding the evident"...wind, did you get anything of this phrase? I think he read that book with you.

Wind. HE didn't read anything, because HE doesn't need it. Concerning the issue of understanding...frankly speaking, I could never understand him. And to digest his words... you can finish up having mind gripes because of this. The thing is, it is difficult to understand the object principle. You know, the sand-drift, as you imagine it, does not exist.

Sand-drift. Thank you.

Wind. Don't interrupt me. So, he does not exist.

Eunuch. What exists then?

Wind. Sand, a sand-grain. When the sand-grains gather themselves in a big heap, HE appears.

Eunuch. The sand-drift.

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- Wind.** Why, simply HE. And when HE starts talking, billions of voices appear in his words, they flourish like the roses of millions images, they release the spears of thousands notions.
- Sand-drift.** Actually the wind is right, my dear Eunuch-sand-drift. Yes. Yes. Do not make a wry face. You are my relative, in a way... according to your function.
- Eunuch.** *(In a very irritated voice).*
Delirious conversation. And once more: Delirious conversation. I do not understand anything! Myself is myself, not some sand-drift.
- Wind.** He does not understand! Have you ever heard of an allegory? Should a sand-grain be a certain shape of the weathered stone? Have you heard about the sand-grain-man? Isn't an ant in his anthill a sand-grain?
- Eunuch.** So what?
- Sand-drift.** This. One man is a man. One ant is an ant. Many men – are a society. Many ants are the ant society. It is HIM.
- Wind.** Indeed – HIM. The one consisting of millions sand-grains-ants-people, speaking from their name, acting on his own behalf, and not existing in reality....
- Sand-drift.** Thank you once more.
- Wind.** You are always welcome.

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- Eunuch.** *(With a grumble).*
Then I am no sand-drift.
- Wind.** Who are you then?
- Eunuch.** *(very seriously).*
A sand-grain.
- Wind.** The mightiest of the great? The master of the Great ravine, Emperor of 99 valley and 80 rivers...
- Eunuch.** But I am alone. After all, I could be one giant sand-grain... a rock, a monolith, not a sand-drift, that's for sure. While HE, as you put it, consists of others...
- Wind.** It is indeed so. Well, you for example have YOUR town, Palace, military force, people. Your own thoughts, feelings. You unite them inside yourself. You are they. And they are you, so all together is you. Understand?
- Eunuch.** No, but I realize it.
- Wind.** Do "understand" and "realize" have different notions for you?
- Eunuch.** To understand is to express something in words, to realize is to express something in images of your own heart.
- Wind.** You are such a bore... you are so difficult to deal with...
- Sand-drift.** What's so difficult in that? Nothing at all. This so called difficulty is

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a norm in a way. As most men do not understand who they are and what they are doing, but they know exactly who they don't want to be and what they don't feel like doing. Sometimes, though you have certain deviations, you like doing something they do not understand and do not realize what you are doing. And the thing works perfectly well. Some scribbler scribes his text on a papyrus without realizing where the papyrus comes from, not realizing even what a letter as a symbol means on the universal scale... though he scribes quite well. And the eunuch is simply trying to be perfectly precise in description of categories and notions.

Eunuch. What a speech you made! THE SAND-DRIFT...

Wind. He can do even more. He's a fundamentalist... in one word.

Eunuch. Who are you then?

Sand-drift. He's a despicable sophist.

Eunuch. Who am I then?

Sand-drift. The knowledge of what you are not does not suit you anymore? You want to know who you are, or at least who you are at times?

Eunuch. That would be a great fun. To know who I am from a heap of sand and chaffed air flow. Or rather... to know from the two halves of my own "Me" what is his third half like. Magnificent! What an opportunity! So you can come to know..woow! Thus I will know what my real united "Me" is. Come on, voices, feed my vanity, it is funny indeed!

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- Sand-drift.** He's biting our heads off.
- Wind.** No doubt.
- Sand-drift.** He probably doesn't know that such a lark costs a fortune. What's more, he is biting our heads off so nastily, I would even say that he is mocking us, sneering, playing the fool.
- Wind.** Indeed, he is up to eyebrow in debt for his present and past.
- Eunuch.** (*making fun*).
Me? In debt? To you? Well, ok, present debts are clear. But past ones? What do you mean?
- Sand-drift.** You're sitting on me; you're trampling my sand with your legs.
- Wind.** You're talking to the wind, and sometimes you spit against it.
- Sand-drift.** Don't you think you own us something?
- Eunuch.** (*Mockingly*).
How can I pay to you then? With gold? Virgins? Land? What can you wish? How can I gift you?
- Wind.** With your emotions.
- Sand-drift.** With your memory.
- Eunuch.** (*Scornfully and upset*).
Phew, such a trifle. I thought you would ask for my soul. And this is but a trifle. One could spare that, even if one doesn't have much at 75.

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Wind. There is one more thing.

Sand-drift. Every emotion you have felt will vanish for yourself. But you'll remember to have felt it before. You will remember but you will not be able to bring it back. As you will throw it to the wind.

Wind. Every grain of your memory, either re-experienced by yourself, or felt once more by your heart will be lost for you. But you will know that once upon a time you had a certain recollection of this fact. You will know it, but you will never be able to feel your recollection as your own. Because you have dug into the sand and gave it away to the sand-drift.

PAUSE. (Wind swishing, sand rustling)

Eunuch. *(Cautiously)*. It is not possible.

Wind. Let's try then?

PAUSE

Eunuch. I don't want to.

Wind. Why?

Eunuch. I just... don't feel like doing it.
(Artificially, yawning too much).
I'm not in the right mood.

Sand-drift. In fact, it doesn't depend on you. We were asking just to be polite.

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Eunuch. Well, that's enough. I am sick and tired of it. Meticulous visuals, that's too much for me.

PAUSE

I am out of here. I have lots of things to do. And really... I am bored.

Sand-drift. You won't go until you pay back.

Eunuch. Come off it, you're no one, and the wind... is only wind. While I am what I am. And no imaginary voices can stop me, the Emperor and the master of peoples with 60-years experience. Best wishes staying, philosophers

Leather shoes creaking, steps on the sand.

Music M-3.

Wind swishing and sand rustling. Tense Eunuch's exclamations as if opposing the storm. Silence. Tired Eunuch's heavy sighs and the sound of light breeze with the melodic rustling of sand.

Sand-drift. So, still sitting on a sand-drift?

Eunuch. *(Spitting, breezing heavily and exhausted).*
Never...seen... a sand-storm.. like this... so sudden.. and unexpected.

Wind. Yes, it is unique. Sand plus air drag, you know, can rip flesh off one's bones, not simply cut some old man short. Beg you pardon, an Emperor with 60-years experience.

Eunuch. So I cannot leave.

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Sand-drift. You cannot.

Eunuch. What do you need my emotions and memory for?

Wind. For collection.

Sand-drift. This is a code of conduct for any self-respectable sand-drift. To take away and give nothing in return, like water. It is important for anyone who has the spirit of a collector.

Eunuch. Your lie is easily seen through. It is an obvious sheer lie!

Wind. Of course it is.

Sand-drift. By no means. It is a simple truth! You didn't believe us to be independent powers... and now you have to.

Eunuch. Ok. I believe. You are not hallucinations and not mirages. But why do you need so many traits of my personality?

Wind. You see, your time has come. You have exhausted your supply of humanity. This always happens to the "Mightiest of the Great". And we appear. Wind and Sand-drift. Some people we have to visit personally as they hide in palaces... some visit us, like you did. Usually those who come have realized the vanity of their lives and the time wasted... without exception we try their feelings and emotions. Then they become real

Sand-drift. Wind! You are an accomplished liar! I've never heard so many lies in my life, not even from you!

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Wind. But this is the simplest truth!

Eunuch. (*Out of pique*).

Phew! One could wait to hear the truth from you for ages. It's just like waiting some good advice from the wise ones. I get it now, that I had not understood anything and I never will. So, there is another question. How are you going to dissect my emotions and memory?

Wind. Why dissect? I will blow them out, and the sand-drift will wipe them tenderly.

Eunuch. Or, you can put it differently. One will cut them with air, another will peel them with sand.

Sand-drift. One can say anything.

Wind. So-so. Don't be so gloomy. Think about it, Eunuch. We cannot simply grasp any old pieces of your personality, as it isn't esthetic and good form. To act elegantly, we have to know you better. And how can you achieve it without pleasant and, I will be bold enough to say it, friendly conversation?

Sand-drift. IT doesn't hurt, to lose a memory. IT is even pleasant, in a way. You can communicate, recollect... then your past will become brighter and brighter until it finally sparkles and fades to black.

Wind. Emotions. What can they give to you? What will you lose if they leave you? What is more, IT is not painful. Well, you will be distressed for some time, then you will admire, then you will feel

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upset and finally the blessed nothing will come, you will stop feeling anything. IT will not last long. Some 10-15 minutes for the emotions, 10 minutes for memory and that's it.

Sand-drift. But IT's going to be later. First of all we should perceive you.

Eunuch. (*Meditatively*). I think you are sailing under false colors.

Sand-drift. This is a complex philosophical question.

Wind. You're going to sail... and we are simply elements, powers. Earth and Air.

Sand-drift. Two modes of living – anarchy and order.

Eunuch. (*Bluntly*). You deal with Evil, don't you?

Wind. What is Evil? And does it matter in your fixed situation?

Eunuch. To know who you deal with is always important. I just thought... won't you make a bad bargain with a client like me? My emotions burned out a long time ago, and my memory is fading...

Wind. This is our business. So, if you have nothing to lose, why don't we begin?

Eunuch... Oh.. let it be. Does it matter, anyway? There is nothing to steal from me, in fact. I have nothing to lose. At least I'll have fun with you. 20-25 minutes.

Sand-drift. It's a specifically business approach to paying one's debts.

Wind. Excellent! Then, do you mind answering Sand-drift's question?

Eunuch. Which question?

Sand-drift. You come here for a number of days and sign, looking bluntly in the sand, don't you?

Eunuch. Oh. Well, how shall I put it? No spirit, see? No passion towards life. And how can one have passion and spirit when the aim is missing? It has vanished. So I am looking for her, my dearest and most beloved, the source of all my sorrows, here. Though yet... I have seen only wind and in addition got some sand from the sand-drift.

Wind. Some people never see me at all, only hiss through their clenched teeth when I am toying with them.

Eunuch. What do I have to do with you? Aim, get it? I am looking for a sense of life. And what can you suggest to me? Phew, only sand in my nose. To lose one's emotions and memory is not that bad. It's quite fine, you can get new emotions, you can refresh your memory. To lose the aim – that is bad indeed.

Wind. Don't make me depressed. Your words are so trite and boring, they make me sleepy and dull. You're clinging to the same subject and cannot stop. No passion, no aim, no spirit and the sense of life in addition to that. What do you need them for? You'd better keep silent. The sand-drift is keeping silent, too. He doesn't have passion, spirit and sense of life either. So what?

(To himself. Giggling).

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Though he rather has existence than life, the choir of sand-grains, in one word.

Sand-drift. Truly, so what?

Eunuch. Man cannot live without an aim, that is.

Wind. Even if he's not a man, but a eunuch, like you?

Eunuch. Yes!

Sand-drift. Even if he's not a man but "The Mightiest of the Great and the master of the most Magnificent", like you?

Eunuch. Correct.

Wind. And if he's "The Mightiest of the Great and the master of the most Mightiest" and the eunuch, like you?

Eunuch. He still cannot live without an aim.

Sand-drift. Well, here's your aim then: "to get the power and maintain it". The aim is good, profitable from the financial point of view and pleasing human vanity at the same time.

Eunuch. Well, aim is not the task.

Wind. Well, what about turning oneself into a clever learned person?

Eunuch. This is a subject to tackle, not an Aim.

Wind. You're such a squeamish person. Why don't you try becoming a Man, with a capital letter?

Eunuch. Surely, and to reject the sword of "The Mightiest of the Great and the Master of the most Mightiest"? I am no fool. If I were, I wouldn't be "The Mightiest"...

Sand-drift. This is curious. What about this aim: "To overcome the fact of being a eunuch?"

Eunuch. You know for "The Mightiest..." being castrated is even better – there are almost no simple, secret vices. They are all secret, as common sense cannot understand them and thus, they are fearsome and awesome. Though seriously... eunuch has only one life – and that is a state. Forget about it, digress for a moment, and you are no longer a sovereign. The usual disposed sovereign can count on a noble exile, some luxury, and, if he's clever enough, on his return. While a castrati – is a despicable being, and one would treat him with disgust and squeamishness. Only ruling a eunuch can earn respect and weight...only then... that's why for centuries we, castrati have become "The Mightiest"... intelligent, powerful, wise "The Mightiest"... So why would I want to overcome this, both power and myself? Alas! This is no aim for an intelligent castrati. What is left?

Wind. The Good? The beauty?

Eunuch. I create it according to my ability and understanding. This is

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the purpose of my living for now. I build hospitals and art galleries, orphanages and conservatories... They cost me so much effort! More than war does! So what kind of an aim is it, if you reach every day?

Wind. Mm... yeah.... Ask for trouble and the chicks appear. One eunuch I knew had invented this saying.

Eunuch. (*Coldly*). Very funny.

PAUSE

Eunuch. (*baffled, as if talking to himself*).
What a strange thing: I don't want to live and don't want to die either. (why am I saying this?). I have had enough of reigning. Soon henchmen will start walking all over me. Though, no, they will not. My instinct of "The Mightiest" will not allow this happen. Though, they know somehow that I have changed. Indeed, I have profoundly changed. Though the power is left, the might is left and the force is left. This they know as well, that's why they are still loyal.

Wind. Does it mean that you had had Aim and Spirit before?

Eunuch. You bet.

Sand-drift. I don't think you'd ever had them. Just after the scalpel's job was done and your teachers started to bring you up to a powerful wisdom, it was all over. At 15 you had already had the contempt for the other people, you had had vanity... the

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shadow of “The Mightiest” was already upon you. There was nothing more.

Eunuch. That’s not true! That’s a lie!

Quiet sound of M-3, becoming louder after every phrase. One can hear the wind gusts.

Wind. (*With pathos*). That’s not true, you say?! That’s a lie, you say?! So let the past take you into itself! Watch yourself in the youth when you...

(giggling)

went great guns.

M-3 bursts aloud, the wind is howling.

Eunuch. What are you contriving? What is this windstorm of sand for? I cannot see anything.

Deafening laughter. Jackals howling.

Eunuch. What’s going on?

SCENE TWO.

EXT – Upper atmosphere. One can see the town from there. People rumbling is audible, but it seems to be far away.

Sound of M-2.

The voices are dim as they are crushed down by the silence of the amplitude.

Eunuch. (*Agitated*). My capital? But why is it so small, like a chewed loaf of bread? Wait, is it below me?

Wind. (*quietly*). Perhaps it is, though I think it's we who are high above it.

Eunuch. (*Very loudly and with an intonation of a reigning monarch*). Wind, is that you, you prankster? Put me down to earth immediately! No, on the balcony of my palace! Rascal.

Wind. You? Look around, can you see yourself?

Eunuch. (*Quietly*). Indeed, I can see no arms and no legs but I do feel myself!

Wind. Well, go on feeling. And there is one tiny thing you should know. It is not YOUR capital. And it is not YOUR palace.

Eunuch. Not mine...

(Constrained, in a hoarse voice)

... have I lost my power?

Wind. Not at all. You haven't gained it yet. Well, relax. Nothing bad has yet happened. I just took you, as you people put it, 60 years ago.

Eunuch. Why?

Wind. You have forgotten how your path to power had begun, your path to the sand-drift and me. Now I will remind you. Try to recollect. Your first serious military campaign. “The Mightiest of the Great” went to the campaign. Who did he honour to be a herald?

Eunuch. Myself. I was chosen. And only those could become heralds, who...

Wind. That’s it. Don’t be afraid. No one can see us. One could only feel us. Though, who will pay attention to a couple of stray winds? And you, you will hear people and you will hear yourself. Believe me, it’s a good luck to hear oneself without muffling the souls choir of other people...

Eunuch. Wait, and where is the sand-drift, where is the sand?

Wind. I run the show here. Things dealing with the recollections will pass away to sand, metaphysically speaking. While emotions are my cup of tea... they are mine... physically. That is why it is me who is forming the world you see now. And I form it quite vividly. The most important things here are emotions, feelings.

The power of the Sand-drift is of a different nature. Later, much later, you will be able to feel the sand-grains of ages on your face...then emotions will pass away to me, metaphysically, and the Sand-drift will vividly and sensibly create your past according to his rules.

Eunuch. This is too illogical and too tautological.

Wind. Ok then. What is the last thing you remember before you arrived here?

Eunuch. A sand storm similar to the one that wouldn't let me go away from you.

Wind. That's correct. Which prevails in the sand storm – sand or wind?

Eunuch. Both. Though sometimes, the most tiresome is the sand, sometimes – the wind, but one cannot separate them in the sand storm.

Wind. It is really so... now you are in my region and this particular moment you're going to feel me. The other moments Sand-drift will dominate you. You know, sand is ubiquitous, not to mention his bastard daughter, dust.

Eunuch. It is difficult to understand... and to believe in.

Wind. You will believe it... and you will understand. Later...much later... when you lose everything you don't notice. After all, stop bothering about trite things. You are indebted. After paying your debt, you'll be free as wind. So let's fly.

SCENE THREE

EXT – City Square.

Background SFX-1. SFX-2 forthcoming.

Eunuch. This is..,

Wind. Sss.... We are hindering other people talking. Try to hear them. Don't muffle people's thoughts with your noise. You see, an honorable merchant is talking to an honorable officer.

Honorable Merchant. What a...?

Honorable officer. You rascal, put your junk off the street!

Honorable Merchant. You call a silver stall junk?

Background completely changed to SFX-2

Hard crumbling blow on the wood, the clatter of silver coins scattering on a causeway.

Wind. Tough, isn't it?

Eunuch. He shouldn't have done that. Look, there is a woman weeping. The Merchant has lost almost all his income. Well, I don't really care for the merchant but there will be whisperings... the merchant will be insulted and might sooner or later put his nose out of joint.

Wind. His nose is too small to compare it with the tremendous limbs of the empire.

Eunuch. It is small, but imagine 10 000 noses like this?

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Wind. You think so? Listen, you cannot see very well (this is the major problem of all young winds; to hear with one's soul is easy, while to see with one's heart is much more difficult. Listen again to the one you so rationally felt sorry for. Here he is a couple of minutes later.

Loud intense cry of a young boy.

Honorable Merchant. Poor boy, crushed down with the gammons, such a small boy.

Townsman. And where were your gammons?

Honorable Merchant. In your wife's...!

Townsman. *(Loud impudent laughter)*

Honorable Merchant. *(Nasty choking cascade of giggles)*

Eunuch. Disgusting.

Wind. Indeed? This trifle is but a background. Look, here they are!

SFX-3. Hysterical cat's scream.

Townsman. Hey, what a die-hard cat... look, look over there! There, I tell you, see? Its head is smashed with a hoof, but it's still twitching. There, you see? With its hind legs in the air... oh, here's the cavalry, it will stamp the cat down. Here... dead...

Eunuch. *(Shuddering).* Brrrr... why choosing scenes like that, Wind?

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SFX-1... one can hear distinctly young Eunuch's sharp boyish falsetto.

The falsetto is gradually becoming louder and louder, deafening the crowd's rumble and thus, creating an effect of the speaker approaching.

Young eunuch.

Give way...

Lions...

Are marching...

Give way...

Guardians of "The Mightiest"...

Eunuch.

Oh! I see myself. No, I don't see but I... Wind, I can hear my thoughts... no, not thoughts... but emotions and feelings.. I sense them. Where do these words come from, why are they bothering me?

Wind.

It's you, old friend, they are your visions, they are your joys, emotions, images existing in your soul...

Eunuch.

Well, those are no colors or hues, they are words, sounds, though vivid, distinct, as if my ears have learned to see. Wind, am I going insane? I hear words... and see images?

Wind.

In a number of centuries people will sit in front of strange boxes, listening to strange noises from there... they will feel certain of watching the world, while listening to the mummings howling from those boxes. They will forget having their eyes. Others, though, will watch even bigger boxes, forgetting they have their ears... no one will remember about mind, soul... which a man should use for watching... and they will feel happy about it...

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Eunuch. Box? Mummers? Centuries?

Wind. Forget what I have said. You just have to realize the most important thing now. Now you will hear the same thing you'd heard a little bit before. Though then your ears were the ears of an "absolute...mm... sovereign" who arrived here with his wind-friend and a soul open to the crowd. Now you'll hear the beautiful voice of eunuch-boy, the Lord of this town's favorite toy, who appeared in the same crowd without any soul or wind in his head.

SFX-1. When a young eunuch is talking to himself, the overall noise becomes really quiet, as if sounding from a far away distance. And then again it seems near when the hero is speaking aloud, playing public.

Young eunuch. *(To himself quietly).*

This not a sea but rather a great swamp, human swamp, with toad groans and mosquito dialogues. Well, and these proud horsemen somehow crush it, squeeze it, make it more fluid, and push it to the walls. No, not so soon. First a herald dives into this stench, then another one, and another one, and another one. The swamp deepens in spite of his words...

(loudly, playing public)

"Give way! Lions of the Mightiest are marching"

(To himself quietly)

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Now to the floating weed of human faces, goes lion cavalry in a crusty pace.

SFX-1 gradually flowing into SFX-2

(Quietly to himself).

These are four hundred sturdy armored 35-year old veterans. Sole insight and rumble of human bog seems to dissolve into two parts – the right one and the left one. Though some liquid lumps flow too slowly and too awkwardly. And now the little lion steps on them, and if this lump bothers too much – a lion can hit it.

Hard crumbling blow on the wood, the clatter of silver coins scattering on a causeway.

(mocking laughter, then again quietly to himself)

Ha-ha-ha. Way to go! “Bang!” and pushed by a sharp spear point, silver, gold and perfume falls down to the cavalry’s feet. Gold or rubies, little lions are all **envious**. Throw your honor on the ground and you won’t pick it up. Those who have tried are still there, bent in the mud. Bog mud. Or, to put in in other words, in human excrement.

SFX-3

CAVALRY CENTURY! That’s right! Capitalized: CAVALRY CENTURY. Yeah.. The swamp is moving, pushed to the wall, someone’s squashed.

The road is clear. Dirty stench human mass was waving, shaking with sounds, yelling, groaning and stinking. Form a wall, between the ankles of somebody’s pushing legs, flew something dark, stinky – Shit and Urine.

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Boy's yell and cat's howl.

What else one can do when the symbol of power is approaching you steadily haughtily, scornfully? This is not time for altercation or thinking. Power is power. Everyone loved it, especially when another one is suffering. One could laugh here. Though, power doesn't give a damn about it. It doesn't notice it, as it's not used to looking under its horse's feet, while everything below it is dust, prostrate nullities and nothing more.

Eunuch. I see myself! There, there I am. Such a young, chubby squirelet. Wearing a beret, a blue velvet coat and a golden bandlet. And the trousers of black leather... shining with my white face and batiste shirt.

Background SFX-1. SFX-3 is approaching wave-like.

Young eunuch. (*Loudly playing public. Plays with words, swelling with their magnitude*).

Give way! Guardians of "The Mightiest" are marching!

Eunuch. Why yell like this, one could ask? You could whisper that and everyone would still hear it. As "The Mightiest of the Great" walks with this century only. Ten tens and ten demigods, whose hearts are the heart of "The Mightiest". In comparison with them all other regular forces are no forces but dust and the best of usual warriors are no lions but baby-lions.

Wind. Quieter.

Eunuch. I'm keeping silent.

SFX-3

Young eunuch. (*Venturous. To himself.*)

Aha! Great is the glory of the Mightiest! Great is fear of the greatest!
Swamp somehow shrank. It stands still, clinging to the walls more
than ever.

(*Pompously reciting to himself*)

Recently noise was the master of the situation, now my words have
crushed it.

(*As loud and vehement as possible, almost screaming*)

“Give way! Guardians of the Mightiest are marching!”

Eunuch. What a turkey cock. Just look at him.

Wind. At you. And the voice...

Eunuch. (*Scornful giggle.*) Ha-ha.

(*Preaching*)

Voice crushed the crowd! It's not a voice that crushed the crowd,
neither even power, nor force. Neither its symbol, but a core of the
empire – “The Mightiest of the Great”.

Wind. Why so self-critically? As it was your tongue and the lightest air

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vibrations that made thousands of throats shut, that made hearts stop, that sent into void millions of people's feelings and hundreds of people's thoughts around you. No, not people. How did you put it? "Human sea. Human swamp. People of the Great City."

Eunuch.

Yeah, I remember. I shouted until my little horse reached the vaults of the capital's biggest tower. Crying wouldn't have made any sense there: too dark, dump and dull. So I shut up.

Wind.

You shut up, and City's people didn't. As behind the last person of your master's train....mmm..."the swamp gradually merged into a solitary mass, fist slowly, not willingly, then swifter and swifter." Mmm. To say in the manner of the previous you. Mmm... "Frog concerts shook the silence. Eternal law of the thinking bog came into power. The silence burst. The city came back to its usual screamly venturous pace".

Sharp wind gusts.

SCENE FOUR

EXT – desert, old crumbling sand-drift.

SFX – wind blowing, sand rustling.

Eunuch. (*languidly*). Sand-drift again? Once more in the desert without any hocus-pocus, jackals howling and sand aiming in the face?

Wind. Well, come one! I love sound effects! I am wind, after all.

Eunuch. (*slightly puzzled*).

Yes, indeed. What was that all for, anyway? That City, young me, those people. What does my path to power has to do with that all and with... You?

Wind. I just wanted to show that the absence of aim didn't stop you from being an aim-motivated young man. Concerning the sense of life, backwards you had it on the tip of your tongue, which cried out loud the sacramental "Give way! The Guardians of "The Mightiest" are marching!".

Eunuch. (*Coldly*). Acid-tongued devil.

Wind. Well, at least you are arising from your indifference.

Eunuch. Anyway, it does not make any sense to you. Which emotions could you have snatched from me?

Wind. Passion.

Eunuch. (*Indifferently*).

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Passion?

Wind. (*Curiously*). Have you forgotten how you used to cry: “I see myself, I see myself!”
“I hear!”

Eunuch. (*Bristly*). Sand-drift told I’ve never had it, didn’t he?

Sand-drift. (*Mockingly*).
Well, I’ve made a mistake.

Wind. Well, you definitely don’t have it now.

Eunuch. Thus, minus one emotion. What else have I lost?

Wind. Surprise.

Eunuch. I see. Though...what do you mean, I’ve lost it? I am surprised now, am I not?

Sand-drift. Now you’re calculating the weight of your loss, fixing the limits of the preserved feelings, thinking about your situation. This is no surprise.

Wind. (*Enjoying*). Your ability to feel surprise deals with the anxiety of perceiving something new. Remember how delighted you were to see me? Or how you mocked the voice of the sand-drift? Or these amazing words: “What’s going on?”, “I see with my ears!”, “Am I going insane?”.

Eunuch. (with an effort).
This is some kind of joke. The things you say... make me uneasy... though this is nonsense... all these words referred to a definite

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situation... they had their reasons... what does surprise... and passion... have to do with that? Wind, Sand-drift, am I not passionately surprised now?

Sand-drift. You are painfully concerned.

Eunuch. (*Painfully*). Emotions... I felt sorry for the merchant... or didn't I? I simply stated the fact of an irrational class attitude...no, I felt sorry for the merchant's wife...

Wind. I think you are messed up... and you also lost a bit of your memory.

Eunuch. (*Perplexed*). Indeed, the recollections are weird: merchant, cat, some kind of boy... either in the crowd...or on a horse...march...army...solemnity... perhaps, the reality is somehow intervened with something I have read...or written...or seen before... from a file...

(*Vehement burst*)

oh, the damned sun...it's burning my top too much.

Sand-drift. I think sun has nothing to do with that. By the way, excessive anger – is an odd payment to the wind. And he already has enough: Passion, Delight, Surprise, Compassion, Contempt, Scorn, Disgust, Vanity, Joy, Condescension...

Wind. Sand-drift! Don't be so mean and don't baffle our friend!

Eunuch! My dearest! Don't poke yourself in vain! It's no use. And, by the way, you are still indebted to the sand-drift.

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Eunuch. (*Meditatively*). Mmmm... yes. Of course. You're right. Debt. Order. Discipline.
Punishment.

Wind. Good for you! Shall we go on?

Eunuch. What's this time?

Sand-drift. Maybe, the surgeon's knife? Maybe the time you've lost your hope of becoming a man?

Eunuch. (*Tartly*). No.

Wind. Why not? Is the memory of this dreadful event so precious for you?

Eunuch. (*Callously, gravely*).
No. It's not. But I do not remember those moments. Previous "Mightiest" personally made me drink forgetful potion. So I simply don't remember anything about the process. After I regained consciousness, long days and weeks were blurred for me. I heard only whisperings of empire's best leeches... their rhythmical murmur makes me think about my humiliation and thus I don't wish to bring the recollection up.

Wind. We can unveil their mesmerizing pall and you will see you emotions.

Eunuch. (*slightly terrified*).
I don't want to remember these days and hours, even if I'll forget them immediately. If you need my approval, the answer is no.

Sand-drift. Now you gave your Fear to the Wind.

Eunuch. (*Indifferently*). Very sad indeed. I can deal without it.

Sand-drift. You don't want the surgeon's knife... what about the scalpel of your soul? The time you realized that power is a physical force? The time you found yourself, forgot your abnormality, your jealousy towards other people and... lost your peacefulness by gaining soul?

Eunuch. (*Preaching*). One cannot gain soul by realizing power to be a physical force.

Sand-drift. Surely, one can. This is how it usually happens. As you weren't an ordinary man at that time. The Surgeon's knife was already covered in blood. Emptiness haunted you. Though suddenly you gained confidence. O! Yes! You've realized power. You've sensed its fragrance. In the City when people were clinging to the walls... Later, a couple of weeks later in the desert you've tried it, or it has tried you, it doesn't matter in fact for a personality as strong as yours... In that tent, when they were spilling water over you, trying to bring you back into consciousness, you understood it. You realized that you could have it. Finally you understood that power is something bigger than having one or 99 harem creatures. As, being an emperor, you can any second have hundreds of thousands people, enjoying your unprecedented mightiness prolonged in time. This once more helped to mold your soul, prostrate after shearing a certain part of yours and the efforts of the Best whisperers in the Empire.

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Eunuch. Rather ornate.

Sand-drift. Shall I show it to you?

Eunuch. Why not? This is going to be my final payment to you and I be able to leave this place at last.

Wind. So it will be.

Eunuch. And what should I do now?

Sand-drift. Get up. Stand there. Do you see that cavity, with the sand dripping? Yes, that's it. Step in its' center. Close your eyes.

Roaring and loud noise of falling sand.

SCENE FIVE

INT – tent in the desert.

SFX – suppressed voices audible. They are quiet, unarticulated.

The voices arise in the resounding premise and can be easily heard from the above.

Sometimes one can hear soles shuffling on the sand and leather shoes creaking.

Eunuch. I have a feeling somebody’s walking on me. No, my eyes.

Sand-drift. Calm down, calm down.

Eunuch. I am calm. Though the soles pressing my eyeballs are extremely annoying. By the way, why cannot I feel my legs, my arms? Am I two solitary eyeballs and nothing more?

Sand-drift. I’ve turned you into dust, temporarily, of course. You’re scattered in the desert in a thin layer above my sand. Here was established the military counsel tent of “The Mightiest of the Great, Master of the Greatest, Lord of Great Ravine, Master of 99 valleys and 80 rivers”.

Eunuch. I see. So “The Mightiest” is not me.

Sand-drift. NOT YET.

Eunuch. Uhm... so, apparently, THEN I was a herald pronounced to be a legal heir?

Sand-drift. Yes, you were already deprived of certain physical abilities.

- Eunuch.** So, apparently, I should remember the event that took place in that tent?
- Sand-drift.** It is difficult to forget your first campaign and your first military counsel.
- Eunuch.** Of course. It was after the solemn march through the city. And, as far as I remember Din-lions notorious campaign has started. Afterwards, they set a tent on a sand hill and took a decision to go through the “Death without Repentance” desert and walked directly into their enemies’ hands. “The Mightiest” fell as a hero.
- Sand-drift.** *(With pathos).*
Drowned in pot of meat broth.
- Eunuch.** *(Carelessly).*
That’s gossiping.
- Sand-drift.** *(Smiling).*
Told by the witnesses of the event, now deceased.
- Eunuch.** *(With pressure).*
That’s a trifle...
- Sand-drift.** That elevated you to your mightiness. You cannot deny that for a couple more years until you gained absolute power, some people used to call you a cookery specialist, not without a reason. Though later they ceased talking... with their mouths full of sand.

Eunuch. *(Trying to justify himself).*
It would not have happened if “The Mightiest”...

Sand-drift. Had known who his heir was. How talented a castrato could be. How soon after the first blows he would be hardened to the power of respect. How soon he would reject the obeisance to his master and how subtle his elevation to power would be.

Eunuch. *(Harshly).* Tradition to reverence before one who had deprived you of a part of your body should have been stopped. Too long the eunuchs have been ruling the land, personally choosing their heirs and emasculating them. Almost three hundred years. That is a long time...

Sand-drift. It should have been stopped to give a birth to a rebel. I would even say, to a revolutionary... despising the crowd

PAUSE

And longing for power. As you were heading towards the throne, not simply avenging yourself.

Eunuch. Probably it was all combined into one.

Sand-drift. A desire to have a woman in one's bed is an inseparable part of any eunuch's personality. But to what extent can it define his deeds?

Eunuch. It does not define them at all, but it is hidden in every deed, or almost in every one... in the deed that deals with a woman.

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Sand-drift. Or a man... or a donkey...

Eunuch. Don't be so vulgar... and don't flatter the crowd's vanity.

Sand-drift. Crowd?

Eunuch. I think you and wind are constantly playing to the public. Like actors in booths. And there is someone else in our madcap communication. Someone invisible, inaudible, though multifaceted and not always pleasant.

Sand-drift. (*quarrelsomely*).
I cannot feel or hear anything. You shouldn't be talking to the wind too much.

Eunuch. We cannot hear him but he can hear us... and maybe it's not him but HIM.

PAUSE

Sand-drift. We are digressing.

Eunuch. Indeed. Well, here we are, one more heel on my...my...

Sand-drift. On your body crumbled into dust. You simply have begun to see with the surface of your existence. It is not always pleasant, though it is always informative.

Eunuch. These voices...tent...desert... it must be indeed the first counsel... the very counsel...

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Sand-drift. Yes, yes. It is the very counsel where you got your power injection.

Boots creaking, leg-shuffling stops, the din of voices is increasing.

Eunuch. Uhm... I see the hesitation of these little boots, boots and marching shoes.

Sand-drift. Do you remember what caused it?

Eunuch. They are thinking about their positions at the table of counsel. "The Mightiest" made it round. As the Sovereign never longed for equality and thus, the table never had a head-place of an honorable place.

Sand-drift. Don't you think it's a paradox?

Eunuch. Not at all. Why would anyone need an honorable place surrounded by his captains? Isn't it clear WHO is the master? It is. The others are indeed equal in their slavery, they are equally far from the supreme power... so there is no need in assigning the corners...

The creaking of boots is increasing, it at times becomes disordered, then ordered, at times it is loud, at times quiet, the humming of voices is gradually becoming louder and louder, giggles are audible.

Eunuch. Uhm...they are worrying, they are scurrying. Look, how nervously they walk around the table... someone's standing still, someone's, on the contrary, doubling his activity – it a sheer pleasure to watch this hen-house...

Sand-drift. Do you remember what this vanity is for?

Eunuch. Yes, of course. The place of orderliness in the counsel depends on the counselors. Each one chooses the place at the table he thinks to be appropriate. Only after the last participant of the counsel takes his place, can two commander-in-Chiefs choose their location: Cavalry Chief and Infantry Chief. “The Mightiest” is watching this fuss peacefully and relaxed. Only when the Commanders-in-Chiefs are seated, he takes his place. Someone appears to be on the left hand, someone – on the right hand... someone closer...someone nearer... it can have a certain meaning, or can be a whim of the Sovereign.

Sand-drift. I see. It’s technical.

Eunuch. This isn’t all. Watching the behavior of his commanders, “The Mightiest” evaluates their personal aspirations, discovers a number of petty schemes on their early stages before they see the green light. I have forgotten to mention that during the performance is it conventional not to pay any attention to “The Mightiest”.

Sand-drift. Technical indeed. Why did you reject this technical system in a couple of years since you got the throne?

Eunuch. It failed. One of the most talented commanders – Lord of the Cavalry, simply didn’t want to be scrutinized and he regularly drove imperious wise men and scheme admirers out of their wits (and people admire schemes for 500 years already). He always, unconditionally, sat by the chief’s left hand. He was never close to him, he hated him as much as he hated anybody else, but he always adhered to his rule. If the

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place was taken, he would simply throw his rival off his seat... after ten deathly duels no one would risk to take this place. Many people tried to follow the same procedure... but they could only hold on for month, a year, or two... then, they would unescapably give up, fall under the influence of scheming. The cavalryman managed to hold on for 11 years, though.

Sand-drift.

And then?

Eunuch.

He perished. Accidentally. On the eleventh duel.

Sand-drift.

And you have completely finished up with the tradition.

Eunuch.

It's a pity to lose talented military men in such a stupid way.

Sand-drift.

You're right. The counsel begins now. Do you recognize yourself?

Eunuch.

Yes, I do. There are my boots. I am standing in the corner looking into the sand... I mean, at myself. Nice to see you, my boy.

Sand-drift.

Do you remember a question "The Mightiest" asked?

Eunuch.

I do. He asked...

"The Mightiest".

Who has any questions about the campaign?

Eunuch.

Everyone kept silent. Just as they kept silent then, they are

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keeping silent now. Nobody wants to ask HIM questions, even when he himself asks. Now, finally, he has chosen the respondent himself.

“The Mightiest”. You. Question. Speak. Immediately.

Hollow noise of people wearing leather boots shifting from one foot to another.

The hubbub has decreased. The silence is deep and solemn.

Eunuch. The silence was terrifying. I was keeping silent, quivering in awe. It was evident that somebody has been ignoring the Lord’s questions, though one shouldn’t have been doing this, neither impudently, nor respectfully.

Sand-drift. And that very moment.

Eunuch. (*Whispering*). Yes, now I’m going to raise my eyes in curiosity and see that the Mightiest is demanding an answer from me.

Sand-drift. And you are going to faint.

Soft thud of a fallen body.

Sand-drift. Just like I said.

Eunuch. One can understand myself. This a first question put to a herald in 550 years.

Sand-drift. They are carrying water. Now they are going to split it on you.

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Water falling. Sputter, sobs.

Young eunuch. Achoo... hamatch... anwhesthecrat... whewhethecrat?

Eunuch. That was a tough mumbling. I didn't see a part of cart while marching. So I decided to ask a question. The things was that...

An avalanche noise of the sand hitting a zinc bucket.

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SCENE SIX

EXT – desert, old crumbling sand-drift.

SFX – wind blowing, sand rustling.

Eunuch. Me. Here are my arms, my legs. That's very nice. What's next?

Sand-drift. Nothing. You are free.

Wind. As a wind.

Eunuch. You repeat yourself. And that's not funny at all.

Wind. Surely, as you cannot laugh.

Eunuch. Nonsense.

Wind. Smile then.

Eunuch. I don't want to.

Wind. That's it, and you will never want to, and when you will logically deduce the idea that smiling is a good thing – you won't be able to do it. Though, this is such a trifle.

Eunuch. No doubt.

Sand-drift. So what about the AIM? Do you still want to realize it? To find you loadstar to happiness? As you have almost proved us that a man doesn't matter much without the aim.

Eunuch. I don't have an aim. Why are you harping on, anyway? Aim, Aim. I'm tired of it. I don't need you to understand that to look for and to find are different things. I know what you are going to say. Kind of "a search is already a valuable thing and it can surely become the aim of any life"... and I absolutely agree with you. Though, this is all a logorrhea with a sentimental air. What is all this fuss with sense-relying, doubt-playing and self-digging about? Your fun is a waste of time: search, sufferings, hopes, admiring unobtainable, compassion, awe... In addition, an attempt to define the purpose of life or to obtain it – corrupts your mind, burdens your heart, weakens your will.

I was a fool to waste my time on it for such a long time.

Wind. Well, then. You may go. See the dust over there? It must be your bodyguards dragging for you through the desert.

Sand-drift. These guys' horses are good on the sand. Soon they will be here.

Eunuch. I will meet them half-way.

Wind. Go.

The creak of boots I withdrawing. Rustle of the falling sand.

Wind. (*Mockingly*). 75-year bones, covered by the thick lines of skin, under which the muscles were playing, have easily taken the green turban, stripped dressing gown and wide grey trousers tucked into the short soft boots. "The Mightiest of the Great and the

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Master of the Mightiest, Emperor of the Great Plain, Master of 99 valleys and 80 rivers” easily gliding down the sand-drift, in a pace of a desert man, took the direction towards the East, with his thought flowing easily, his soul sealed and his feelings open to the desert.

Horses snorting from a distant. Salutary ejaculations. Horses neighing and cavalry tramp withdrawing.

Sand-drift. So, one more Lord vanishing for himself.

Wind. There’s something left for him.

Sand-drift. Yes, of course: body, dressing-gown, title, warriors.

Wind. He has some common sense. And a perfect life philosophy.

Sand-drift. An excellent philosophy: nothing to surprise to, nothing to doubt, to be self-confident and at the same time know that you want nothing but an everyday peaceful existence.

Wind. This resembles many human ideals.

Sand-drift. Surely, but for a lord, these qualities are contraindicated.

Wind. Why so?

Sand-drift. He’s lost his fear, thus he has no sense of danger. He’s lost his doubts, thus he is unable to realize his own mistakes. He is not surprised by this world any longer, thus he’s unable to surprise someone else. In addition, he has forgotten how he

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had gained power... he doesn't remember the essence of ruling without stupid formalities like glitter and crown anymore. He will remember how to rule but he won't turn this knowledge into a personal skill, a norm of his personal life on throne. Such rulers become despots, tyrants and...don't live for a long time.

Wind. Sometimes they end in a caldron of mutton soup.

Sand-drift. Yes, this happens.

Wind. By the way, don't you think that this time we did it somehow clumsily, in an uncouth fashion? Snatching the pieces of his memory, licking emotional hues as usually, but at the same time were in a hurry, producing an effect of a buckwheat, rice and millet mash in one pot?

Sand-drift. The present day "Mightiest" had an extraordinary personality. If we hadn't ruined to his ability to think logically from the very beginning, we wouldn't have succeeded.

Wind. Yes, he might have found the way out.

Sand-drift. He simply thought everything was lost for him: joy, laughter, life. He simply didn't appreciate his memory. He thought it had been such a trifle – to remember who you were, who you might have been, and who have you become.

Wind. That's an old trick of ours. You can assure some people in this fact, others, without any reason, try to assure us...

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Sand-drift. Then erasing a personality becomes an easy and unsophisticated thing.

Wind. Though some of them might still change their ways.

Sand-drift. To tear the web of dismay and complacency, wrought by one's own pride is not an easy thing, though you are right of course. There were exceptions.

Wind. There were... now those some of them are building a tremendous ship. I've seen the wharves. They boggle one's imagination.

PAUSE

Sand-drift. Listen, why did none of our wards, whose term of being a human is over, ever tried to take away at least a tiny piece of our personalities?

Wind. Only a free and powerful person would be able to do that.

Sand-drift. We've seen lots of people: Rulers of realms, Masters of minds, Lords of hearts...

Wind. Statesmen, philosophers, poets...

Sand-drift. Have they never reached the magnitude you're talking about?

Wind. No, they haven't. The absence of doubt tricked them. Doubt

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as an attribute of power, absolute power over one's personality.

Sand-drift. But this very last client was full of doubt, like the desert is full of sand. Or like the world which is soon going to be full of water.

Wind. He was full of grief, disappointment, dismay and sentimental pity to himself. He was consequent in his feelings, he was steadfastly fundamental in nurturing and cultivating them and he fought for them desperately. What kind of doubt is that?

Sand-drift. That was a game. Eunuch took pleasure in teasing himself... in behaving outrageously... in itching from his own imperfection...while millions of other people bent their backs before him.

Wind. Power took complete control over him and his conscience made him run to the desert... to toy with his magnitude... when he was alone... he though sovereigns could be sensitive and weak with impunity... and he paid for it.

Sand-drift. He did.

Wind. Stop being a hypocrite. "You tread on my sand... don't you think you own us something?... pay your debt and you will be free to go..." if people believe it and like listening to it, it doesn't mean you can say this crap to me.

Metronome knocking starts. It quietly claps every second.

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Sand-drift. These are the rules of our actions and the order of our words. We have to obey them. They were not made by ourselves, and they must not be broken by ourselves.

Wind. Nonsense. We are free and almighty. We constantly prove it, turning inside out anyone caught in our nets.

Sand-drift. There is an essential limitation.

Wind. There isn't.

Sand-drift. There is. Just try to reveal the mystery to my sand-grains and to me here and now. The mystery that is forbidden to say aloud; the one that explains, reveals and throws light on every paradox happened to Eunuch and strips lie form our words!

The knocking of metronome increases.

Wind. I will try.

Sand-drift. Do it. Can't your hear the seconds counting the time left of your existence?

PAUSE

Sand-drift. Why are you keeping silent?

Wind. I'm pulling myself up. It's not an easy thing to transcend

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oneself. Now I do understand the pains of our objects, when they try to resist us.

Sand-drift. No, you do not. As you only exist here because you are allowed to do so by some other, much more powerful personality. The latter is the source of our being, the source, at least, of this local world. Above him there is another personality, so magnificent, so grand that we cannot perceive it. It's not easy even for our demiurge, and for us...

PAUSE

And this clatter... I think your...no, our time elapses.

Wind. *(quieter and less distinctly after every word).*

I am ready to break the rules! Listen! We are not the ones we've said to Eunuch. You, Sand-drift, and I, Wind, are in fact....

Sand-drift. Hey, Wind! I can't hear you! Speak louder! Have been dumb-stricken from fear?!

The metronome knocking is deafening.

Wind. *(Trying with an effort to speak louder, but he cannot manage it. His voice is gradually becoming quieter and the pauses longer).*

An exclusive power...(Pause) to act like that... (Pause) the essence of Sand-drift's and mine... (Pause) and eunuch's debt is nothing more than...

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Metronome clatter stops abruptly.

PAUSE

Speaker. Dear audience! Due to the strong gusty wind the broadcasting of this play is interrupted for technical reasons.

THE END