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‘Paradise Without Cocaine.’ Ousted Kremlin Aide Surkov Publishes Poem

Reflections on freedom and the joy of breathing.

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Vladislav Surkov **Andrei Lyubimov / Moskva News Agency**

Vladislav Surkov, Russian President Vladimir Putin’s longtime aide and Ukraine pointman, who was dismissed in February, has penned a poem on the virtues of freedom and loneliness.

In his poem, Surkov, 55, a noted lyricist and rap aficionado, reflected on being ousted after seven years of deciding Russia’s Ukraine policy and cultivating the image of a Kremlin puppet master.

“You could almost fit a person’s entire life in a poem like this,” said Russia’s monthly literary magazine *Russky Pioner* (Russian Pioneer), which published Surkov’s poem in its September issue.

Below is a rough translation of Surkov’s poem.

I’m alone again

I was given freedom

Who needs cocaine

When there’s this air?

Take it and breathe in

That’s it, wait for the high

This is what paradise looks like:

Desert freedom

Take it and breathe it in

With all your heart, with all your mind

All nights all days

All lands all stars

And all this May

Of all the soul’s abyss

And don’t breathe out

That’s it, don’t breathe

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