

# ‘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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