

# INTERVIEW

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*The performance space is empty, except for a solitary seat in the middle of the place. It is a sturdy rounded wooden seat with the seat-back forming a semi-circle. There is a black curtain in the background, and shiny beige parquet flooring. A dim spot-light is placed above the seat, with the lights coming up gradually, reaching half of the light's power as the opening music comes to an end, and "S" comes in and sits down. The performance takes place within the framework of monodrama; but there is a female voice of a certain TV-presenter (referred to as "The Voice"), which at times interrupts the monologue and directs the speech elsewhere through comments and questions. There is a very dim light, which falls on the audience, who are, sometimes, incorporated into the performance and given space for comments and questions.*

*N.B. The character of "S" should be played as though he were not a human being, and should try to puzzle the audience about whether or not he is a doll. However, the*

*actor playing this role should have a unique charisma and great gripping powers over the audience. Body language and mime take an important part of acting, as there are internal changes that take place within the character, accompanied by music and recorded voice, but cannot be revealed except through silent forms of expression. The identity of "S" should not be marked by social features; but to simplify matters for the actor, he could imagine "S" as one of the contemporary religious preachers who appear on satellite TV channels, or those who give training courses in the art of living, personality development and leadership skills.*

**S:** (He flicks his jacket, and opens it to the side, then crosses his legs. He takes a comfortable position, then stares at the view in front of him, with his hands interlocked over his thighs. He's very elegant; beautiful

and elusive like a devil. He's wearing a dark grey suit and a white shirt open at the neck; a pair of black remarkably shiny shoes, and an expensive gold watch.)

**The Voice:** We'd like to welcome you today .. and we thank you for agreeing to come and give us this interview.

**S:** (Smiles) ...

**The Voice:** Would you care to introduce yourself to the audience present here, and what would you say about yourself?

**S:** I can't say anything more than what anyone would say about himself. So whatever you'd like to say about me suits me well .. (with a nice smile).

**The Voice:** Are you sure of this kind invitation? You might end up hearing unpleasant things. You've even chosen not to say your name.

**S:** As I said .. I'm like anyone of you; so how would it be possible for you to say about me what you wouldn't want to hear being said about yourselves? .. So let's not spend too much time on this introduction business; I guess everyone here knows me. Right? **(Addressing the audience) (with an artificial laugh)** ... I guess that if you didn't know anything .. anything at all .. about what was going to happen here tonight .. you wouldn't have come in the first place .. **(defiantly)** or rather it wouldn't be possible for us to call you an audience.

**The Voice: (With a changed tone)** Anyhow, the least we could say about our guest tonight is that he's a troublemaker; not at all easygoing; and most importantly that his life of struggle is exemplary. Would you like to tell us about how you started, and the choices you made in life which led

you to your current position, here and now?

**S:** (He bursts out laughing.)

**The Voice:**(Trying to provoke him) Have I asked a wrong question?

**S:** (Continues laughing) (crosses his legs the other way).

*(Some moments go by while we hear nothing other than "S"'s interrupted laughter, which sounds less sarcastic of the programme presenter and more cynical and self-critical of his life itself. His laughter sometimes sounds like a cover hiding his enormous nervousness, while at other times his laughs turn him into more of a human being compared to the way he appears in his elegant suit. His laughter comes to an end, giving way to a sense of relief, and a friendlier shift in the conversation.)*

**S:** OK. I could say that - like anyone else- I didn't get to understand

the reality about the life I'm living except when I discovered its ability in deception and pretence. In other words, I realised the origin of things and their realities when I managed to get into the depths of life - its lies and falsity. All of this isn't bad; it's a skill, very much like the light falling on me, and like the order of the chairs where you are seated. One could say that the core of the choices about which the lady is asking me lies in my knowledge of the shortest way leading me from one step to the other on the road to the major climb-up. The shortest road .. the shortest way.. that's what determines one's choice, and nothing else. Don't believe the one who tells you that he could climb up, but chose not to. He didn't make a choice .. No .. He couldn't even make the choice. He couldn't. He didn't

see the yardstick of choice .. perhaps he didn't even see the rest of the stairs. And in our world, there are so many people to hinder you. There are people whose occupation is to hinder you. But not me. I wouldn't want to hinder you. I came here, in the first place, to help you .. Perhaps you'd manage to walk along with me in the same direction .. and perhaps we would shorten the stairs.

**The Voice:**Excuse me .. Sir ..

**S:** **(Interrupting her)** Hold on a second. What I'm trying to say is that anyone of us can change his destiny. But it's a game .. that he has to understand as I've already mentioned, and has to know how to move gradually ahead until he reaches the point of absolute heroism; much like the point I'm at tonight. Or is this called

a monodrama?! **(He laughs sweetly).**  
By the way, there's nothing of the  
sort; just as I have a role, you too  
have your roles. Right? **(He stares  
at the audience with a friendly smile  
that turns into a laugh.)**

**The Voice:****(Correcting him)** You are referring,  
Sir, to the roles in this programme  
**(laughing to hide her nervous-  
ness) ..**

**S:** And you too have a role. Don't be  
scared, we're not going to take it  
away from you **(laughing).** **(He un-  
crosses his legs and moves his  
body forward. He holds his hands  
together with interlocked fin-  
gers. He looks at the audience,  
and there's a moment of silence).**  
I'd like to listen to what you have to  
say.. to listen to your real questions.  
What do you want to know? Let me  
hear your voice.

*(This is followed by a free space whereby members of the audience may intervene posing their free questions. The actor playing the role of "S" should respond to them, but without losing sight of his character, in terms of his experiences, elegance and leadership spirit. The actor must not give any final answers, and it'd be better for him to improvise by responding to questions if possible with further questions, and to maintain a level of language that is both ambiguous and poetic.)*

*(If the audience does not intervene within fifteen seconds, a shift should take place from this scene to another, through a very slow change of lighting, during which "S" very slowly alters his seating position, so that we can see his posture and face changing through the light effects and the altered seating position.)*

*(After five to six exchanges with the actor, if the audience decides to intervene - or after the scene shift - "S" appears sitting deep in his chair with his legs stretched out in front of*

*him and his feet crossed, while his hands are held interlocked on his belly.)*

**The Voice:** As we've noticed before the break, our guest speaks with grace, loves people, and perhaps we should therefore leave the mike in his hands, so that he may talk to us about his memories with the people he met on his journey upwards.

**S:** **(Lights a cigarette)** Most of the time I don't like to remember .. I don't like to go back, except maybe only when I wish to learn a lesson from an experience that I've been through. But in your case, guys, and by the way, you shouldn't forget anything; your memory should be always active. It's not a matter of being good or bad .. No .. I must remember those who've hurt me when I was a child, so that I may deal them a double blow when I grow up. I must remember those who've

stepped on my toes as I was walking along, so that I may block their way when I reach the end of my way. And, therefore, I can go back in history today, just for your sake, not mine. You get my point of course.

The heroes of most of my stories are dead people (**A short laugh**). Don't look at me this way. It wasn't me! Who knows where they are today. What counts now is that I am here and they are there .. Where? .. It's none of my business. One of them, for instance, pretended to be my friend, while in fact he wanted to use me as a step to climb on his way up; but when I realized what was going on, I used him as a step. He was the first step I used to climb on my way up. He was my first teacher, and I learned the lesson when I knew how to exploit him more than he could exploit me. Do

you consider this evil? By no means!  
Deep inside I carry an angel's heart.  
**(With spurious sweetness)** There  
was nothing as taintless and pure as  
me; but don't you come and squash  
me and then claim that I've chosen  
to be bad. Not at all .. My badness is  
the greatest expression of beauty  
as long as it gives me life; and who  
is it who wouldn't want to live?! Can  
you tell me which one of us didn't  
consider cursing the whole world a  
thousand times a day?! Which one  
of us didn't consider knavery?! be-  
trayal?! changing the world order?  
saying here I am!! I'm ugly .. blunt ..  
and in being so, I'm a reflection of  
your own faces .. their own faces.  
Everyday, each of you thinks why  
he's not present in another place?  
Why isn't he in that big nice house?  
Why doesn't he have that great  
wealth? Why aren't all the other

people hurting and thus relieving some of his hurt?!! What would be wrong if I found a sack full of money? if I had a glass or two of booze, a pill or two of drugs, or a smoke or two of hash, that would make me fly high in the sky? .. What would be wrong if all the responsibilities and questions vanished, and I remained all alone? Free to do as I wish! holding my destiny in my own hands! And if there was someone who didn't accept me the way I would be, I'd step on him.. And may he burn in hell. Actually, the real hell is here not up there. We all say so .. sometimes .. we think so. This means that I've been right throughout my life; that's what reality proves to us, so why should we deceive ourselves? What I've come to say today is that there's nothing wrong with such feelings .. What you feel is in itself

right; and it doesn't matter what he or they say. It's your step, so mount it. This is the right choice.

In our job, many people are even scared of uttering my name .. as though I were a devil. **(He puts the cigarette off)**. But I swear by God that nobody worries as much as I do about the happiness of the people around. I've never told my workmates: this is right, and this is wrong. There isn't anything absolutely right or wrong; it all depends on what you want and how you achieve it. That's the right logic behind things. That's why my audience increases in number from one day to the other. And here's the proof **(pointing at the audience, and laughing)**. I work on people, I work from inside the people .. the people to whom I belong. And as I've already said at the beginning, I am

like any one of them .. and any one of you could've been sitting here in my place today. I'm asking you to think about your lives; to search for who you are and what it is that you want; and consider what it is that is keeping you going on the way you are? My role is to help you change yourselves .. and for us to be allies. It doesn't matter if many things get shattered .. but what counts is that we achieve what we want.

*(The lights change consecutively and swiftly, accompanied by strong rhythmical music mixed sporadically and indistinctively with fragments of the previous monologue. Throughout twenty seconds, "S" gets up of his seat and goes around it, gesticulating as though he were addressing a crowd or preaching a new religion. After twenty seconds, he returns to his seat from the direction opposite the one he took when he got up. He lights another cigarette as he's at the peak of his presence and concentration.)*

**The Voice:** Sir, excuse me. We wanted to move on to show your latest business achievements, and their benefit for the society, so that the young people who're watching us may learn something from you, Sir **(with affected coquetry)**.

**S:** I owe all my achievements to young people. They are behind the success or failure of any project, and I therefore thank them for standing by me and supporting me instead of going to my rival, despite the recent rise in his propaganda and advertising. But the young people continue listening to their hearts, and follow them. For instance, I myself am against education **(an excessively friendly laugh)**. I'm serious. What use do we get from education?! Now you, guys, have got an education; tell me, what use did you get out of it?! The books are all full of infiltrated

information. There is nothing such as an innocent book. Each and every book aims at drawing you to its side, to the extent that there is a book that includes false information about me. I don't mean anything in particular, but let's look into the real world and see who serves the people and whose audience is the largest. **(He tries smiling, but it seems as though there's something in his throat. He tries to cover up the situation, but he can't say a word. It's as though some kind of power has him under control. He tries to light a cigarette but he puts it off before taking a smoke. He can't stop coughing, as though he couldn't breathe. He turns his seat, giving his back to the audience, and leans downwards.)**

*(The lights turn moon-light blue. From far-away we hear the music of a flute, accompanied*

*by the sound of breathing, together with the sounds of an unknown language in the voice of "S". We sense that he's in a state combining both surrender to this external power and resistance.)*

*("S" shakes himself and sits up in the same direction. He raises his arms and pushes them upwards as though trying to get up. He fails, and his arms fall to his sides. He screams.)*

**S:** (A recording) Why me? Why me, out of all these people?! Who can bear all this cruelty?! all this loneliness?! I'm on top, all by myself on one side, while the whole world is on the other side .. Elegant and eloquent.. philosophical .. gentle .. loving .. exciting .. seductive .. infatuating.. clever .. graceful .. beautiful .. lonely.. lonely. Everybody's watching me. Everybody's waiting for me to sell something or to buy. And I'm always ready .. always thinking about eve-

rybody. But my heaven is not in my hands, and nobody can bring it back to me. (*The lights change gradually*)

*("S" stands up, he turns round and walks towards the audience. He then gets hold of the seat from behind his back and turns it to face the audience. He looks beyond the audience, ambiguously.)*

**The Voice:** We apologize to you, Sir, for any stress we might have caused you today. Of course it isn't easy for a person to be totally alone while facing an audience of such a size. Most of our guests always asked us "Why Me?" (**Laughing**) And you, Sir, have come here after a long and hard day, but our consolation is that it's going to be a good end for the day. Or what do you think, Sir? (**Laughs with affected coquetry.**)

**S:** (**Back in his normal state**) On the contrary, my day is just about to

begin. I'll go out from here with lots of work to do. Success requires effort, and I am ready. **(He sits down on the seat and makes the gestures of the opening scene: the jacket, hands and legs.)**

*The Voice:* I can't tell you, Sir, how grateful I am to you, and how much I admire you, Sir, and...

**S:** **(Interrupting her, harshly)** I don't really understand who is the subject of this programme?! If you don't know how to talk, then shut up for a while, and we'll carry on. **(He's being aggressive)** **(addressing the audience)** As I've said before, we are here to make use and help each other. Did you ever hear of any current of thought that was strong and different, and which didn't face opposition and oppression?! I, too, went through all of this. But today

I have my own position .. I have my own propaganda and advertisements that you can see everywhere. Even the media gives me space to advertise my commodities. In short, I don't want our time together to come to an end without knowing from you how you feel about me? Can you feel the real me? Do you really know the real me, without this suit and microphone?! Can you identify with me, or not? **(A brief space for the audience's reactions. If the audience do not respond, we get a sequence of drum-beats accompanied by "S" 's movement three steps forward with his seat. With the last beat, he takes off his jacket and hangs it on the back of the seat.)**

**S:** I forgot to tell you how happy I am with this meeting! The programme is surely counting on making mon-

ey, commercials and breaks. They, too, have learned from me. But I am pleased to have met you face to face, which is also an opportunity for you to see me face to face. I'm not arrogant, but this is the truth; for a long time I've been eager to meet each and every one of my audience .. this closely. There's a major difference in knowing the features of each and every one by heart. What's the time now? **(He stares at the audience waiting for the answer).** It's just that my watch has stopped at a particular time. It's an appointment that means nothing to you .. an appointment that has nothing to do with your time. But it's a time by which I need to have finished new lists. So what's the time on your watches?

**The Voice:(Suspiciously)** Sir, now that the results of the Secondary Education

Certificate exams are about to come out, could you please tell us a little more about your original education, and the extent to which your graduation from the Higher Institute of Dramatic Arts helped you in your career, Sir?

**S:** That's a clever question .. finally .. a clever question. It seems that you've done good preparation for this episode. Few people know that I studied at the Higher Institute of Dramatic Arts. This is a good opportunity for me to talk about this issue - an issue I've never broached before. Although there are still many people who think that an institute doesn't measure up to university, but what they do not know is that our Institute is the oldest and the first institute of drama and theatre in the Arab world. I am proud to have studied there. I spe-

cialized in acting and directing. And by the way, many currently popular actors were my classmates. Acting is a beautiful art. It's a profession first and foremost.. I mean it's a skill as I've already pointed out. The actor, therefore, has to be a skilful professional, not a professional whom you can easily understand, but skilful in the arts of camouflage and deception. He has to make you believe him; and to make you believe him, he has to study you pretty well, so that he may know how to influence and convince you .. how to reach you .. how to make you admire him. The actor has to understand the world and the people around him very well. It's a part of his job, and the other part is that he must do anything and everything. Of course we sometimes hear about people who prefer to play a particular role or act

a specific character who carries a social message, etc... But originally this profession depends on your being able to do whatever is asked of you; in other words, on your ability to do things contrary to each other, and to say things contrary to each other; to be convincing in both cases .. and to be yourself in both cases. It's complex, isn't it?! **(He laughs.)**

I guess I don't need to explain any more .. about how much the Institute has been of help to me. Of course I was naturally gifted; that's what all my professors said. And this is why I preferred not to work in the field in which all my colleagues worked. The most important thing is that you make the best use of your privileges outside their natural location. This is where you face much less competition, and where the opportunities for creativity increase.

Acting is definitely a matter of practice, and there isn't more practice than what I've been through. In the real world, that is. I don't mean the daily acting that we all practice in all the roles that we have to play, but I mean the acting required in the game of leadership. In order to be a good leader in my work I must be a good actor. You may call it a game of control or domination, but I never played it except when they wanted me to do so. Acting is like leadership, like seduction. **(A slight smile that turns into a laugh as he stares at the audience's reactions.)** When you practice it, then you're definitely answering an invitation .. accepting a vocation; even if the invitation comes from someone who isn't very aware of it. I mean, he must be helping you .. making your mission easier to carry

out, just as you are helping me now with my mission, by listening to me, following me, maybe even by keeping silent. **(He stretches his arms out to the audience, and opens his hands waiting for comments.)**

**The Voice:** We didn't actually know all this background related to your work, Sir. But, you didn't actually try, Sir, to work as an actor; or did you? Sorry, it's because, Sir, you're much of a movie-star. **(Interrupted laughs.)**

**S:** **(He stretches his hands out again to the audience. There's an expression of sweetness and kindness on his face)** Didn't I tell you?! The art of seduction! **(He laughs drawing his body backwards till his back rests against the seat. He laughs to his full, and his head leans backwards. Then, very gradually, his laughter fades**

away, and he sits up in his seat with a confident smile. The look in his eyes changes.) Now you tell me, can I be an actor? (The communication with the audience intensifies in the following part, even if they don't intervene verbally. It is as though the next phrases take the form of open questions or statements to be completed by the audience and by "S" through bodily movement.) Can I be an actor? For instance can I be an... (his facial expressions and posture act the role of an idiot); or a... (he gets up playing the role of a murderer holding a machine-gun; he then drops the illusory weapon and laugh. He walks around the seat); or be a... (he walks front-stage as though he were a "cool" young man smoking a cigarette and flirting with a girl); or even be... (imitates

the actor Ismail Yaseen); or be an...  
(returns to his seat and sits down  
as though he were an old man suf-  
fering from a heart attack).

*The Voice:* (laughing) What's all of this?! You're  
very funny, Sir. (She continues laugh-  
ing.)

*S:* One has to be funny; even the devil  
himself has to be funny (he be-  
gins laughing, but then he collects  
himself and changes the subject).  
I think it's difficult after having  
built my career to become an ac-  
tor again; that is, to stand facing  
you this way, and instead of being  
myself to pretend that I'm a dif-  
ferent character?! I think nobody  
would believe me, and I myself  
wouldn't be able to handle all that  
dose of self-effacement. Right?! I  
don't want to say that I'm selfish,  
though it's important for one to be

selfish sometimes- actually, at all times. But what I'm trying to say is that I still need to talk about myself. I'm constantly consumed by my work; there's no one in the world who works more than me, or loves his work and is devoted to it like me. But all of this creates states of loneliness. Can you believe that I haven't gone out with a friend since my days at the Institute? .. that I haven't felt that I was sought after without interest. And regardless of my success and climb-up, I find no satisfaction .. no peace of mind. I guess none of you has experienced such a feeling. It's been a long while since I last managed to sleep .. I don't even feel that I need to sleep. And all the people that I helped and supported, the men and women who have become now the crème of society, never thought of

becoming my friends. I wish I could one day take a leave from work and know that, even when I'm not working, the world would still go on the way I want it to go on .. perfectly balanced.. scale by scale. But I don't think so.

**The Voice:** Please, please Sir. You know how much your audience loves you and supports you .. always, always. You are with us today, Sir, because you are a role-model that we all respect and appreciate. I mean...

**S:** **(Interrupting as usual)** I was just saying that you're clever. It seems that I was wrong. You can't interrupt me, Madam, in such a crude manner!

**The Voice:** Sorry, sorry .. I didn't mean at all...

**S:** What I meant to say is that there's nothing that goes without a price to pay. I know it, and all of you should

know it. But I think that I've already paid the price - all in advance, and I have the right to forgiveness. My work is my fate, and I'm not the only one in control of it. But it's time for me to carry on with it with peace of mind, without others considering me to be their enemies, or thinking that the world would be better without me. It isn't likely that anyone of you has experienced the loneliness I'm living. Glory and loneliness always go hand in hand. So tell me, all of you, is this fair or foul?!

*(The lighting changes. We see shadows on the floor which highlight the edge of the seat, "S" 's limbs and the front of his hairline - a blue silhouette. He lights a cigarette and we see the smoke going up against this light, accompanied by the music of a flute intersecting with drum-beats. We hear echoes of "S"'s breathing and scattered incomprehensible words. Suddenly, the lights fade out and we're back*

*in the atmosphere of the programme, but with the lights slightly dimmer than before.)*

*("S" takes the jacket from the back of the seat, he puts it on very slowly, as though he's feeling very cold. In the following part he will try, for the third time, to make the same movements from the opening scene: the jacket, the legs and the hands. But this time, he moves much slower than before, and this continues as he starts speaking with great difficulty.)*

**S:** What's the time now? **(Regardless whether the audience answer or not)** I think that the time goes by quickly as we're together. Maybe there's little time left before the programme comes to an end; and I don't want to miss this opportunity for us to get closer. There must be some space in this programme for the audience's comments. Don't be afraid .. speak up! **(To the programme presenter)** Right, Madam?!

(Smiling) I hope you're not upset with me, or anything.

**The Voice:**(Like someone hypnotised) Ha...

**S:** As I said. My role in the programme won't be complete without your words. So, are you ready?!

*(Enough space is left for four or five interventions from the audience. The actor has to improvise according to the situation, but he should retain the character's grace, and react in a nice and cooperative manner. If he receives questions that require concrete information about his work, he should give glamorous yet ambiguous answers. To help the actor in this, he can think that "S" is the richest man in Egypt, and that he is the mastermind and the greatest beneficiary from the privatisation process going on in Egypt at the moment. If the audience doesn't respond, the actor says "So you're not ready yet..." .)*

**S:** You must know that I didn't come

here today for the programme - but for you. And I hope to leave this place with new friends. Our relationship will not end with the end of this programme. No, this is just a beginning, and you'll see that I'm going to keep my promise. In order to make it easier for us to keep in touch, here's my business card (**he takes out a bunch of business cards from his jacket's inside pocket, and he distributes them among the audience in the first row. He then scatters the rest of them throwing them at the audience. All the cards are either black or white - blank without anything written on them. He does this in a showy way against a musical background).**)

**The Voice:** Excuse me, Sir. I noticed that your mobile phone number isn't written on the card; nor even your email address!!

**S:** (He throws the last business card backwards, to her.) (He stands behind the seat, fixes his jacket, smoothes his hair, and catches his breath) I'd like to tell you that the coming period will be a critical stage in our relationship with the society. Therefore if we accept to become friends, we'll have to keep always in touch. Maybe even before you start looking for me, you'll find me by your side. We are beginning to hear about young boys who walk around carrying bayonets and jack-knives; and in the near future they'll be carrying weapons. By the way, they are very creative and they could even invent their own weapons. These kids are left to roam free in the streets. So tell me, isn't that a vocation?! We must play a role with them, right?! I don't believe that this could change, but it has to follow a system, and

only then it will have a form and be of use. Believe me, I'm talking out of experience. So what about the other kids who smoke anything you can imagine. Is it right to leave them like this?! It's the future of our country that we're talking about here, guys! So what happens if we stand still in our places watching them?! or if we continue suppressing them? The result will definitely be in nobody's interest. Don't think that things will calm down by themselves. No, this is just the beginning. Armed gangs are a reality, not imaginary; and when they're organised they become states of military armed forces that can change the map of the world. It's not a matter of a great difference, it's just a matter of how we can make a system and unify our efforts.

*(He sits now down on the seat, crosses his legs*

*once more, buttons up his jacket, holds his hands together, and stares at the audience.)*

*The Voice:* We ask your permission, Sir, for a brief commercial break ...

*(For three seconds, there's an almost total lighting up of both the audience and performance spaces. What follows is a suggestion for the actor's improvisation that may be altered according to the audience's reactions. This whole part may also be entirely removed by the director if that's his wish. The performance may then continue by replacing the presenter's last phrase with her question which follows this suggested improvisation.)*

*S:* (Having become just a normal person) By the way, these cigarettes make one cough. I want a Cleopatra cigarette, anyone got a Cleopatra cigarette?

*The Voice:* Come on, Sherif .. We'll have a three-minute break, so don't leave

the studio.

**S:** Fine, but I want to talk to the people. I want to see what it is that they understood of the programme so far.

**The Voice:** Don't forget that you're just an actor here .. so just do what you're told to do, as you've just said yourself a little while ago.

**S:** **(He stands up)** But this is my break, so I should be doing what I want to do! I've had to bear your cigarettes that make me cough!! These can't be the cigarettes smoked by the rich!!

**The Voice:** Stop fooling around Mr. Movie-star. They understand! They've always understood, but they keep it to themselves. **(She laughs)** .. It's unbelievable!!

**S:** **(To the audience)** Come on, guys, before the break is over, tell me

what is it that you do not understand and I'll explain it in the final scene coming up. I want to tell you that there's space for improvisation!

**The Voice:** Sherif, back to your place. Rolling. Come on, hurry up, lest they should believe that you're a real actor!!  
**(She laughs)** .. Three, two, one .. On air!!

*(The lighting changes quickly bringing an end to the improvisation section. We go back to the programme's atmosphere, but with more intensive effects that develop gradually throughout the following dialogue, so that we don't see anything other than the seat and "S" detached from his surrounding. There's nothing around him except darkness, with a dark blue light-spot over him.)*

**The Voice:** Sir. Sorry, Sir. As we approach the end of the programme, I have some quick questions that might bring

your personality closer to our audience tonight. May I?

**S:** Sure. I'm at your service for the audience's sake. I have even noticed during the break that they have many questions.

**The Voice:**OK. What's your favourite colour?

**S:** What a question?! Black! Of course!

**The Voice:**What is the best time of the day for you?

**S:** It's hard to say because I don't sense the time the way you do. But I could say it's at 12 midnight, and the hour before dawn. Of course most of you are asleep at that time of the day!! **(Laughing)**

**The Voice:**Your favourite number?

**S:** Seven.

**The Voice:**Your worst day of the week?

**S:** Friday, no doubt!

**The Voice:** Why?

**S:** I think it's clear from what I've been saying. My life away from work is very limited, so what am I to do on Fridays?!!

**The Voice:** The role of women in your life?

**S:** Women .. I like this question. Women play a great role in my life, particularly since it's a woman who was the first one to hear me and listen to what I say. Women are incredibly intelligent and can make a lot of changes. Wasn't Eve the one behind Adam's fall from Heaven? If it wasn't for her we wouldn't have been here!!

**The Voice:** What do you consider to be the most important thing in a woman?

**S:** Will you let me be honest? It's obedience, and the power of seduction.

I cannot imagine the world without women of that sort. What do you, guys, think?

**The Voice:** What's the memory that you'll never forget?

**S:** It's the day my father kicked me out of the house .. although I was still young and understood nothing about the world.

**The Voice:** Wow!! This is an opportunity for the programme to bring the two of you back together!!

**S:** **(He laughs hysterically)** Carry on, my dear. Carry on.

**The Voice:** **(Coquettishly)** Now .. what's your favourite dish?

**S:** The dish you like cooking!!

**The Voice:** **(At a loss)** Aha .. Oh .. **(She laughs)** Well, then it seems that ... enough of these short questions, and let's leave the microphone in your hands,

Sir, so that you may talk to us about the project which you're about to begin soon. This is our surprise to our audience .. exclusively on our channel!!

**S:** Sure. The next stage of my work is moving on logically along the lines of what I've already told you. I mean that through my examination of the conditions in the society, I discovered that there are loads of problems, and loads of risks, which increase by the day. Each of us has to be able to protect himself, and that's why - since I of course care about each and every one of you - I decided to start a new production line in my factories - weapon production, of all sizes and types: pistols, machine-guns, etc... I know that the laws of the country do not allow this, but as long as our interest lies there, then we must change

the laws. Imagine the society with every human being capable of defending himself by himself!! capable of getting his rights by his own hands!! This is going to save the state a lot of effort, and will allow each and every one of us to feel really capable of exercising self-determination. I'd therefore like my friends, present here, I mean all of you, to stand by my side in this next step. I guess those of you, who had queries or sensed ambiguity in my words, can now understand the real direction I'm taking. I'm not lying at anybody! I'm answering your call! Don't you want to get stronger?

*(The blue light mixes with snow-green, and once again we hear the recorded sound of panting, together with the sound of moaning coming from afar. "S" resists all these sounds as though they were his own internal voice which he rejects, or the sounds of*

*some external powers. His face makes several intensive expressions of gradual weakness or submission or struggle with the past. He stutters trying to continue his speech, and succeeds with difficulty when the sounds fade out.)*

*The Voice:*Excuse me, Sir, we must now...

**S:**           **(Interrupting her)** There isn't anything that I must do. The time set on my watch hasn't come yet. **(To the audience)** As I've already told you, things are much simpler than the way they seem to be .. It's a matter of steps that we take on our way up, and here is the next step, and you need it. Don't deceive yourselves. I'm not asking you anything other than to be honest with me, the way I'm honest with you. Can you tell me where the world is heading to now?! I think that everyone agrees that it's heading towards

destruction.. but destruction is not necessarily terrifying as long as it follows a system.. as long as we can have agency in the process!! Why should we be afraid?! We must be strong!! And this is the only way for us to be strong.

**The Voice:(From a distance, interrupted and fading away)** We thank our guest today, and thank you.

**S:** I mean that the whole world will be governed .. is governed .. by evil. And whoever will try to resist it, will be exterminated! The game is settled and crystal-clear!

**The Voice:(Interrupted and fading away further)** And we hope that you've enjoyed this episode of our programme. We send greetings to all our sponsors .. and we hope to be always up to your expectations!

*(The lighting is gradually reduced. We hear the*

*distant sound of drums, the same as the one we heard before, but is accompanied this time with the programme titles.)*

*("S" adamantly insists on continuing his speech.)*

**S:** (He gets up from the seat, and raises his arms high in the air) Believe me .. All of us have been thrown out of heaven a long time ago .. and we'll never get back there. We have to accept this fact .. and I was the first one to accept it. Enough of this wrong-headedness .. It's our fate, and there's no return.. no peace.

*(As he says these words, the lights reach their final degree of fading, so that we can only see of "S" the borders of his body, and his hair dark blue, while his surroundings are all black. The music rises, overcoming his voice of which we hear nothing other than scattered words or sounds from his speech, which are gradually mixed with his recorded words, sounds and breathing. As the stage is covered in darkness,*

*the sound track stays on for a short while, and then vanishes into the blackout. The end of the programme.)*

**THE END**