

Katerina Aksonova. Candidate.



Candidate

by Katerina Aksonova

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Characters.

NICK - man 40-50 years old.

JULY

HELENE

CLEMENT

Quotations: The Prince by Nicolo Machiavelli. Translated by
W.K.Marriott

Scene 1.

Stage decorated with posters "Vote for Candidate". Piles of newspapers.

Enters Nick, man in black suit.

NICK: *Others will help you if you help yourself.* Yes, you were right my dear Machiavelli. Today I begin new campaign. It will be huge and awesome, like always. And my candidate will win.

I remember my mistakes. I was wrong, when went to unknown territory. Big money in Mexico. Not only my candidate had such money. Loss can also be advantageous. Fine, old dog can learn new tricks.

Office is perfect. *My poverty is a witness to my honesty.*

(looks at watch)

NICK: Where is she? My main rule is to find new employee every time. Only one problem, difficult to remember names.

This time is different work. Choose candidate who will be ideal to electorate. *To understand the nature of the people it needs to be a prince, and to understand that of princes it needs to be of the people.* Sociological issue. Unusual, but for considerable sum I agreed.

Where is she? Hope, she not lied about work as actress.

Scene 2.

On stage hurriedly comes woman in costume of Snow White.

NICK: I see background. Hello, who are you?

JULY: We talked. My name is July, sorry I am late. I was working on the show.

NICK: Will we wait for gnomes?

JULY: No. Why?

NICK: Just asked.

JULY: I get it, costume. Birthday party.

NICK: On the phone...

JULY: It will never happen again. Dress code. Of course.

NICK: I hope so.

JULY: What do you prefer?

NICK: I don't know, what normal women wear at reliable work.

JULY: Skirt or trousers?

NICK: I am not your shop-assistant.

JULY: Sorry. I was really looking for normal job.

NICK: Yes. You need to spent time somewhere, when waiting for Prince.

JULY: What?

NICK: Nothing. Please never wear costume of Snow White at work. I can't concentrate, I just giggle.

JULY: As you say.

NICK: Do you know what is your duty?

JULY: Yes. Casting?

NICK: Nearly. I'll give you results of enquiry and your work is to find suitable man...

JULY: Or woman.

NICK: Person. Even a dog. But it has to fit all points.

JULY: I understand. I will search and give you a successful outcome. In which terms?

NICK: One week. I haven't time.

JULY: Yes. In one week. May I ask a question?

NICK: Absolutely.

JULY: You work on election campaigns for a long time.

NICK: Yes.

JULY: Why they always need different people?

NICK: I didn't get your question.

JULY: Every time they need new candidate.

NICK: Lack of person. Everybody who go to politic, say something beautiful and after that they will courted for corruption. It doesn't bother you.

JULY: I really need this job.

NICK: It's in human behaviour. *For men change their rulers willingly, hoping to better themselves, and this hope induces them to take up arms against him who rules: wherein they are deceived, because they afterwards find by experience they have gone from bad to worse.* It's unstoppable.

JULY: You are wise person.

NICK: Yes. And busy one, if you don't mind. You have your work, I have mine.

JULY: Have I inform you about results of my research?

NICK: No. You only bring me a candidate in this office in one week time. In normal dress. Understand?

JULY: Any Snow White! I'll go.

NICK: Farewell!

July exits.

Scene 3.

NICK: I am nervous. Interesting, it's after my staged fail in Mexico, or because of Snow White. I was always a witch with an apple.

Stop. I have to focus at work. I need to write new manifesto. And if everything will be wrong, most important to go away unharmed. Like you said, Machiavelli: *Men ought either to be well treated or crushed, because they can avenge themselves of lighter injuries, of more serious ones they cannot; therefore the injury that is to be done to a man ought to be of such a kind that one does not stand in fear of revenge.*

I could loose. Everybody could. But for this party people is no matter. Like for every political party, for which I worked. Results. And knowledge by heart all important catchphrases. This time I choose from actors, for them easy to learn meaningless text. Hope she didn't begin casting among her gnomes. Truly, I don't care.

If I am wrong in my new tactic I will be back to my practised story.

Blackout.

Scene 4.

Enters July in wedding dress. After her enter Helene and Clement look quite similar at appearance. Helene wears shirt skirt and lace T-shirt. Clement wears jeans and long sleeves shirt.

NICK: What the hell?

JULY: They, two are perfect.

NICK: Your dress.

JULY: It never happens again. It's just costume of princess, who...

NICK: Wedding dress!

JULY: Fine. Wedding dress. It is an episode in soap opera. Heroine will die. Role without a word. It was before...

NICK: When she will die?

JULY: After lunch. Now I suppose to have lunch. Not talk.

NICK: She could die earlier.

JULY: Helene and Clement. It's your boss - Nick. They are tailor-made. I checked. Bye. See you at evening.

July exits.

Scene 5.

NICK: Helene and Clement.

HELENE: I am also busy person.

NICK: Did our bride tell, why you are here?

CLEMENT: Yes.

NICK: Fine. Helene your recent role is a whore...

HELENE: No. Girl who tries to seduce a groom...

NICK: Let me guess... Of that bride, which die at next hour.

HELENE: Yes.

NICK: And you, Clement...

CLEMENT: I am working on gas station.

NICK: Excuse me. July made wrong choice. I need an actor, not worker.

CLEMENT: Relax. I am working on gas station on which will die bride in soap opera.

NICK: After lunch.

CLEMENT: Exactly.

NICK: You all will have a busy afternoon.

HELENE: What is about work?

NICK: I'll give you text. Your duty is to learn this by heart.

CLEMENT: When?

NICK: I'll wait for you the day after tomorrow.

HELENE: How it has to be performed.

NICK: Like most honest story in the world. But not to ecstatic you are not a priest. Not boring, you are not school master. Read like it is important for you.

CLEMENT: What is our purpose? Main idea?

NICK: Read, remember about sum which you will receive in the end. If everything will be all right it would be twice more.

HELENE: Money is a good motivator.

NICK: My rule. Now take papers and cancel all actor's work or you will be fired from my project.

CLEMENT: Today is last day of shooting.

HELENE: The same.

NICK: You are not A-list actors, I think it won't be a problem in recognition on streets.

HELENE: How you dare?

NICK: Darling, it's good for you.

HELENE: If you don't respect our work, why chose us.

NICK: It have to be that way.

CLEMENT: Why?

NICK: *He knows nothing and he thinks he knows everything. That points clearly to a political career. George Bernard Shaw.*

CLEMENT: Could we go?

NICK: Every word known be heart.

HELENE: Yes.

CLEMENT: Bye.

Helene and Clement exit.

Scene 6.

NICK: It was not the best of my ideas. But I have to finish it. The upshot, they wait from me. I'm unbeatable, even when I lose.

I created this story. Actors will learn topic.

"I, as your candidate, always will remember my promises. I will brawl for your rights, even die for them... on the field of parliament's wars.

I will stand for family values... No matter if you are divorced, married or lonely. Have children, dogs, cats, skunks. I will stay for family values.

I will fight organized crime... If I will be stupid enough and can't manage to become part of it.

I will spend every working moment engaged in activities that will benefit my constituents. I really will have only moments of work. It will be bad future if I have to work for fulfil my promises to you.

I will do what I could to pass the law which give me opportunity to stay on that post as long as I am not bored".

Something like that, it could be spectacular. Too honest, electorate need more lies in beautiful wrapping paper.

(Blackout.)

NICK: They know text, Helene and Clement. I hope they will come in clothes which are acceptable for our target audience. Time is now, they already received parcels, will see how it would be.

Scene 7.

Enters Helene in jeans, formless shirt, hair wrapped in scarf.

NICK: Not bad.

HELENE: Awful. I look like... I don't know.

NICK: Not sexual.

HELENE: Thank you.

NICK: It was opinion from group. You have to look homely.

HELENE: Like divorced mother of two children.

NICK: Good idea. Why you didn't tell it earlier? Even now we could manage...

HELENE: I'll go away.

NICK: Your biography already printed.

HELENE: First good news for today.

NICK: You remember that you had paid to look like that.

HELENE: Main point, why I am still here after I saw myself in the mirror. Where is our second candidate?

NICK: Clement?

HELENE: Yes. I want to see him.

NICK: Were different aims for each of you.

HELENE: What do you try to tell me, Nick?

NICK: You'll see yourself.

Scene 8.

Enters Clement in black suit with white shirt.

HELENE: No.

CLEMENT: Stupid.

NICK: Posh.

HELENE: Why?

NICK: Our check-group...

HELENE: I'll find their home addresses and call the police.

NICK: Accusing them in what?

HELENE: They stolen my dignity. I'm appealing woman, not that...

CLEMENT: Divorced widow.

HELENE: Thank you for support.

NICK: People want Clement look respectful and formal.

CLEMENT: Like a worker of funeral industry.

NICK: Why not?

HELENE: Unfair.

NICK: You always complain on rehearsals.

HELENE: No, but I never played such...

NICK: Whores are not popular among men's electorate.

CLEMENT: It's what they say when wife near.

NICK: Shut up, both of you.

HELENE: Will we need to read text for you?

NICK: I think it was not a problem.

CLEMENT: Stupid, but easy.

NICK: Like always. Now we have few weeks to win an election.

CLEMENT: I read about third candidate.

NICK: And?

HELENE: I also read about him. He is spectacular.

CLEMENT: He knows what he says.

NICK: It suppose to be so, how you can conquer him if he hasn't verisimilitude.

HELENE: You can't.

NICK: I did it. Now we need more preparations.

CLEMENT: You thought about everything.

NICK: It's my job. Debates...

(Blackout.)

HELENE: Do you really want that we arrange things together?

NICK: It can't be no other way.

CLEMENT: You told us that each of us could win.

NICK: Yes. It would be great team for our purpose. Their purpose.

HELENE: I don't understand. If they want glory, why we need all that competition.

NICK: All need back story, how to choose political allies.

CLEMENT: That's confusing. We'll talk against some of them.

NICK: Listen. *A prince is also respected when he is either a true friend or a downright enemy, that is to say, when, without any reservation, he declares himself in favour of one party against the other; which course will always be more advantageous than standing neutral; because if two of your powerful neighbours come to blows, they are of such a character that, if one of them conquers, you have either to fear him or not. In either case it will always be more advantageous for you to declare yourself and to make war strenuously; because, in the first case, if you do not declare yourself, you will invariably fall a prey to the conqueror, to the pleasure and satisfaction of him who has been conquered, and you will have no reasons to offer, nor anything to protect or to shelter you. Because he who conquers does not want doubtful friends who will not aid him in the time of trial; and he who loses will not harbour you because you did not willingly, sword in hand, court his fate.*

CLEMENT: Now we can go.

HELENE: In that clothes.

NICK: You wished that job.

CLEMENT: It was before masquerade.

HELENE: You can't complain. How I look like.

NICK: Go. You have your work to perform.

CLEMENT: All instructions only on phone?

NICK: Yes, we'll see each other only after victory.

HELENE: Hope, you're right.

Helene and Clement exit.

Scene 9.

NICK: Where is July? Hope she will be on time. I need first results.

Enters July, wears skirt and blouse.

JULY: First results. Not bad.

NICK: Not bad. *(looks in the papers)* Awesome.

JULY: Third candidate.

NICK: We will afraid about him later.

JULY: Hope so. Our... your client asked lot of questions.

NICK: And you?

JULY: I use all my charm and not a word about your involvement.

NICK: Believed?

JULY: Like in Holly Bible.

NICK: I don't know why rich people could be so trustful.

JULY: They never think that they could be an easy target.

NICK: And you habitually use their weakness.

JULY: We will not talk about me.

NICK: Than about our work.

JULY: Do I need to do something else?

NICK: Hurry up?

JULY: I have today one meeting.

NICK: Nothing is in our schedule.

JULY: It's personal.

NICK: Are you looking for a new role?

JULY: No. If. Why not?

NICK: I warned you.

JULY: What I will do after end?

NICK: You could work with me.

JULY: Thanks. But it was on my mind before. Bye, see you tomorrow.

July exits.

Blackout.

Scene 10.

NICK: I see. *To enable a prince to form an opinion of his servant there is one test which never fails; when you see the servant thinking more of his own interests than on yours, and seeking inwardly his own profit in everything, such a man will never make a good servant, nor will you ever be able to trust him.*

July, still believes that is smarter than me. Clever than Machiavelli.

Poor girl, she'll find life more cruel to her beauty.

It will end so quick. This elections. When I think they will never end, I had only few hours countdown to finish.

And at that moment I have to be with my actors.

Nick exits.

Scene 11.

Helene wears on one arm Nick's jacket. Nick and Clement without jackets. All are drunk.

CLEMENT: No one believes but we did it.

NICK: *We did it!*

HELENE: *You did it!*

CLEMENT: *You did it! You said that you would do it.*

NICK: *It was nothing, really nothing.*

CLEMENT: *I must have aged a year tonight.*

HELENE: *At times I thought I'd die of fright. (My fair lady)*

NICK: Victory.

HELENE: You are the best.

NICK: I know.

CLEMENT: It was nice to work with you.

-bottom: 0cm; font-style: normal; line-height: 150%"> HELENE: Truth.

NICK: I am glad that met you both.

Scene 12.

Enters July.

JULY: Celebration.

NICK: You are late, as always.

CLEMENT: We did it.

JULY: I heard. Tomorrow will be long day.

NICK: Now they need day off.

Helene leaves Nick's jacket. Nick puts it on. Helene and Clement exit.

Scene 13.

JULY: We need to talk.

NICK: Now?

JULY: Yes. Congratulations. It was great result.

NICK: Yes, my name returned to political PR.

JULY: I'm afraid, you are wrong.

NICK: Why? I had landslide victory. My candidate won. What else could be better?

JULY: My win.

NICK: Sorry.

JULY: Nobody saw you.

NICK: It was my plan.

JULY: Officially it was me.

NICK: I hired you.

JULY: I did what you taught me.

NICK: It couldn't be truth.

JULY: It is. *Men, walking almost always in paths beaten by others, and*

following by imitation their deeds, are yet unable to keep entirely to the ways of others or attain to the power of those they imitate. A wise man ought always to follow the path beaten by great men, and to imitate those who have been supreme, so that if his ability does not equal theirs, at least it will savour of it.

NICK: Bitch.

JULY: Thanks for your appreciation of my work.

NICK: *Nihil illi deerat ad regnandum praeter regnum. (He wanted nothing but a kingdom to be a king)*

JULY: Yes. Thank you, you was my Ace of Base. See you later. But, I hope we never met again. And I left you all money which you paid me. I made honest decision...

NICK: I admire yours generosity. *Who believes that new benefits will cause great personages to forget old injuries is deceived.*

JULY: You not shocked that I used you that way.

NICK: I had to remember about it.

JULY: Again. The Prince.

NICK: Always. *Because this is to be asserted in general of men, that they are ungrateful, fickle, false, cowardly, covetous, and as long as you succeed they are yours entirely: they will offer you their blood, property, life, and children... when the need is far distant; but when it approaches they turn against you. And that prince who, relying entirely on their promises, has neglected other precautions, is ruined...*

JULY: Sorry, but I don't believe that you did something to stop me.

NICK: Yes. I did. And I know that it could wait for few days. But I prefer to see your face at that moment.

JULY: No.

NICK: Yes. You remember antagonist with whom fight fiercely our candidates.

JULY: Of course. He lost everything and his campaign was doomed to fail.

NICK: I'm glad that you remember. Because he is your client.

JULY: Bad joke.

NICK: Not, dear, I created him. Or you really believed that our staged candidates could win in real fight.

JULY: You prepared them to win.

NICK: Yes. As prepared him to lose.

JULY: You could give me one of candidates.

NICK: I give one. It was your bonus.

JULY: Not that.

NICK: *A wise lord cannot, nor ought he to, keep faith when such observance may be turned against him, and when the reasons that caused him to pledge it exists no longer. If men were entirely good this precept would not hold, but because they are bad, and will not keep faith with you, you too are not bound to observe it with them. Nor will there ever be wanting to a prince legitimate reasons to excuse this non-observance.*

JULY: Bastard.

NICK: Nicolo Machiavelli.

JULY: All that papers which I signed...

NICK: It was about our third candidate. And your name is near his forever.

JULY: Why?

NICK: *Many consider that a wise prince, when he has the opportunity, ought with craft to foster some animosity against himself, so that, having crushed it, his renown may rise higher.*

JULY: You told that you had defeats.

NICK: Misunderstanding.

JULY: And... It was...

NICK: People never think that good work could be reused.

JULY: What will be with me?

NICK: You were brimful with plans.

JULY: It was before.

NICK: Hope your costume of Snow White is still fit.

JULY: Please.

NICK: You was wrong when you believed that could play with me on the same level.

JULY: No.

NICK: Bye, and forget that people who paid you are more stupid and weak than you are.

Nick exits.

JULY: *Some day my Prince will come. (Disney's Snow White)*

CURTAIN.

More about play.

I had idea from October 2014. I wanted to finish play before Ukrainian parliament elections. I planned to write it as joke. But can't, country had changed. "Political Dechradsance" "[Політичний Деграданс.](#)" was written in Ukrainian, and was comedy. I hoped that people won't believe in promises about good life. I was wrong. Now we have what we have.

The chief foundations of all states, new as well as old or composite, are good laws and good arms; and as there cannot be good laws where the state is not well armed, it follows that where they are well armed they have good laws. (The Prince by Nicolo Machiavelli)

I wrote in University about pre-election polemics in newspapers. Made interviews with candidates. I learned political science at University. It even was my second of final exams. First was journalistic. I can't understand how people can believe to unchangeable pledges.

Since 18 years old I visited every election in our country. I made my mark in ballot paper. And never believed that the same person could do something new if spend more time in parliament.

Politics in my country is second main theme after war. Before war debates in parliament were more popular than soap-operas.

On poster I wrote title candidate with specific Spanish n. In one store with office supplements in Lviv were stencils with letters. Women had discussion to which language it suits. It was Spanish alphabet with usual mark "Made in China". When I saw that misplaced item, immediately I had an idea for poster to my play and I bought stencil.

I don't think that Machiavelli could be out of fashion, to my pity. Human nature didn't changed in centuries. I try to show that "The Prince" could put important questions, which country have to answer. And I want to show that candidates are not martyrs, they had job, some kind of job.

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