

Novel seeking publisher



Castigation

by **Sultan Rayev** | translated by Shelley Fairweather-Vega

The charismatic Emperor has convinced six fellow inmates to escape their mental institution together, promising to lead them to the Holy Land. But soon, they're lost in the desert, with plenty of time to contemplate their own lives – and their past lives, too, for which all are now experiencing excruciating punishment. Part epic adventure, part religious parable (but from what religion?), *Castigation* leads readers on a bewitching, dark, absurdist journey which is destined to end badly. Along the way, we meet Genghis Khan, Cleopatra, King Lear, and Alexander the Great, plus far too many snakes, a rebellious dervish, a blind man who wandered the desert with Moses, and a Holy Man whose Holy Book has only one page left. Most of the travellers have met that man and his book, but by the end, they have only their madness to guide them through the desert to salvation.

They had followed his instructions and escaped from Nation of Nutters, but the six of them had now lost their guide in the middle of the endless sandy desert, and they were left in utter confusion. Now the Emperor who had told them secrets about the Holy Land had turned to ashes, a lifeless, breathless body... In which of the seventeen thousand worlds was this cursed Holy Land hiding? Or was it just a fantasy of the Emperor?



Originally published in Kyrgyz in 2012, the novel earned praise from some of Central Asia's most authoritative literary figures and the 2014 Novel of the Year prize in Kazakhstan. It has been translated into several other languages. This first-ever English translation is from the Kyrgyz and fixes numerous errors in the Russian translation. All rights belong to the author.

About the Author

Sultan Rayev is a former Minister of Culture of Kyrgyzstan and currently serves as head of the Turkic Writers Union, a multinational organization. He has written two novels and many screenplays.

This translation is fully funded and complete, ready for review by interested publishers.
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