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Your main commentary should be focused on *adjectives*. Other topics may also be addressed.

There were countless preparations to be attended to: checking the temperature and wind velocity, mapping out a route in advance, making sure that he had on the proper amount of clothing. In cold weather, Effing wore all manner of superfluous outer protection,

- 5 wrapping himself up in sweaters and scarves, an enormous greatcoat that reached down to his ankles, a blanket, gloves, and a Russian fur hat equipped with earflaps. On especially frigid days (when the temperature dropped below thirty degrees), he also wore a ski mask. All these clothes fairly buried him under their
- 10 bulkiness, making him seem even punier and more ridiculous than usual, but Effing could not tolerate physical discomfort, and since he was not troubled by the thought of calling attention to himself, he played these sartorial extravagances to the hilt. On the day of our first walk, the weather was actually quite nippy, and as we
- 15 made our preparations to leave, he asked me if I had an overcoat. No, I said, I just had my leather jacket. That wouldn't do, he said, that wouldn't do at all. "I can't have you freezing your ass off in the middle of a walk," he explained. "You need clothing that will take you the distance, Fogg." Mrs. Hume was ordered to fetch the coat
- 20 that had once belonged to Pavel Shum. It turned out to be a battered tweed relic that fit me rather well: brownish in color with flecks of red and green dispersed throughout the material. In spite of my objections, Effing insisted that I keep it, and there wasn't much I could say after that without provoking a dispute. That was
- 25 how I came to inherit my predecessor's overcoat. I found it eerie to walk around in it, knowing that it had belonged to a man who was now dead, but I continued to wear it on all our outings for the rest of the winter. To assuage my compunctions, I tried to think of it as a kind of uniform that went with the job, but that didn't do much
- 30 good. Whenever I put it on, I couldn't help feeling that I was stepping into a dead man's body, that I had been turned into Pavel Shum's ghost.

It didn't take me long to get the hang of the wheelchair. There were a few bumps on the first day, but once I learned how to tilt

- 35 the chair at the proper angle when we went up and down curbs, things went fairly smoothly. Effing was exceedingly light, and pushing him around caused little strain on my arms. In other respects, however, our excursions were rather difficult for me. As soon as we got outside, Effing would begin jabbing his stick into the
- 40 air, asking in a loud voice what object he was pointing at. As soon as I told him, he would insist that I describe it for him. Garbage cans, shop windows, doorways: he wanted me to give him a precise account of these things, and if I couldn't muster the phrases swiftly enough to satisfy him, he would explode in anger.
- ⁴⁵ "Dammit, boy," he would say, "use the eyes in your head! I can't see a bloody thing, and here you're spouting drivel about 'your average lamppost' and 'perfectly ordinary manhole covers.' No two things are alike, you fool, any bumpkin knows that. I want to see what we're looking at, goddammit, I want you to make things
- 50 stand out for me!" It was humiliating to be scolded like that in the middle of the street, standing there as the old man lashed out at me, having to take it as people turned their beads to watch the uproar. Once or twice, I was tempted just to walk away and leave him there, but the fact was that Effing was not entirely wrong. I
- 55 was not doing a very good job. I realized that I had never acquired the habit of looking closely at things, and now that I was being asked to do it, the results were dreadfully inadequate. Until then, I had always had a penchant for generalizing, for seeing the similarities between things rather than their differences. Now I was
- 60 being plunged into a world of particulars, and the struggle to evoke them in words, to summon up the immediate sensual data, presented a challenge I was ill prepared for.