

## **Vladimir, Vladimirovich**

Jack McCourt – Apr 2014

Vladimir, Vladimirovich  
In Leningrad your heart first twitched  
Your Mom and Dad did what they could  
Two siblings lost, you understood

Life was hard, Nazi's marched east  
Dad a conscript in the Red Navy  
In a submarine, he performed his work  
Ironic later, your actions Kursk

You survive, but others wont  
Mother's uncles lost on the war front  
Grandma killed in what became Kalinin  
These experiences form the beginning

School 193 on Baskov Lane  
In academics, interest feigned  
A rowdy sort, you chose to Sambo  
A hands-on sport, a type of Judo

To Pioneers, you came late  
Yet eventually, it was your fate  
Surviving life, it became the trait  
In the Vladimir it helped create

Your on-screen heroes were a factor  
Tikhonov was clearly one such actor  
On a path that you would love  
Owe your ideals to Georgiy Zhzhonov

So Vladimir, Vladimirovich  
You had to scratch, you had the itch  
The KGB was your way in  
An ambassador to the Kremlin

First Second, then First Directorate  
Bodies controlled by no electorate  
You embrace polices most viewed unfair  
All originate in Lubyanka Square

Eventually, you head west  
Serving faithfully in Directorate S  
And in your case, east is best  
In things Germanic, you would attest

Become familiar in all things Stasi  
Support the *Shield and Sword of the Party*  
In Dresden you hone your spy skills  
How many converts, how many kills?

And then the Berlin wall came down  
On Kremlin faces, one found frowns  
Back to Leningrad, how apropos  
To recruit recruits, University you go

Reacquaint yourself with friend Sobchak  
When he is Mayor, he has your back  
Appoints you head of External Relations  
Only one year later, an investigation

A KGB lead coup d'état  
Soon interrupts your "vivre de joie"  
One side or t'other, you must choose  
Consider wisely, lest you lose

Mikhail Gorbachev you supported  
In merely two days, CPSU thwarted  
Capitulation, the *Gang of Eight*  
You choose wisely, it sealed your fate

So back in Moscow, a new game  
Presidential Property Management is the name  
Property stamped *USSR*  
Were these former assets of the *TSAR*?

To the Russian Federation they now belong  
It doesn't matter, right or wrong  
Borodin will help you do your thing  
Later he is charged with money laundering

Yes Vladimir, Vladimirovich  
You're on a roll, you've found your niche  
Up yet another rung you climb  
In you, Boris Yeltsin invests his dime

Economics dissertation you did write  
But, oh the controversy it incites  
Plagiarism charges you must defend  
Brookings fellows follow, but to no end

In Ninety-Eight the FSB  
You're back home in security  
And not long after PM Deputy  
PM next, State Duma agrees

Your image is of law and order  
Protect the motherland, secure the border  
Second Chechen war you help plan  
Response to the invasion of Dagestan

In Grozny begins a wintry surge  
Chechen separatists will now be purged  
Eleven-thousand Russians die and others  
Report the Committee of Soldiers Mothers

A Presidential decree ensures from you  
Corruption charges won't be pursued  
Against Yeltsin and his family  
A law later replaces your decree

A naval exercise shows corps d'esprit  
August 2000 in the Barents Sea  
The "unsinkable" Kursk Russia does claim  
Suffered a "Titantic" misfortune in a war game

A torpedo weld leaked HTP  
High Test Peroxide, think chemistry  
Did not mix well with kerosene  
Determined the fate of this submarine

An explosion heard, modest reaction  
The Pyotr Veliky takes some action  
Call in to Naval Headquarters Moscow  
The response "Nothing's wrong, we disavow"

A 4.2 records the Richter scale  
This is not a fart from just any whale  
Cause it's seen close-by and in Alaska  
But not as far as Lincoln, Nebraska

But hours later from Kursk no word  
No emergency buoy, nothing is heard  
Those in power become nervous  
Regarding rescue they pay lip service

Invent a story, that's where you go  
Naval collision with USS Toledo?  
Instead of getting those men out  
One wastes their lives creating doubt

What should you learn from this disaster?  
President of Russia, former Spymaster  
When comes situations of urgency  
Remember it was the Barents, not Black Sea

Four years later begins a crisis  
In Beslan town, Northern Caucasus  
Armed Chechen and Ingush militants  
Kidnap one-thousand hostage innocents

Suffice to say things don't end well  
Over three hundred dead this day "First Bell"  
Most militants killed in September  
Lives destroyed, that's what we remember

What lessons gleaned from this event  
Parents over their children's deaths lament  
The Nazh tribes remain discontent  
While additional powers you did cement

In a third term you cannot serve  
Throw a fast ball, no.... you throw a curve  
President Medvedev, you choose him  
But control the reigns as the PM

2012 in a not surprising move  
Your "castling" tactics clearly prove  
In chess you're now the master of  
Moves perfected by Garry Kasparov

But Kasparov is not impressed  
Your policies create duress  
In his eyes you're just a thug  
It's your power he wants to unplug

And as for chess, you lack finesse  
It's poker playing, that's Garry's guess  
Where you excel, Aces & Eights  
But time has come for your checkmate

Well Vladimir, Vladimirovich  
With Super Bowl, it's bait and switch  
No memory meeting Robert Kraft  
A ring you acquire with your tradecraft

You pocket the ring, say it's a gift  
You walk away, Robert Kraft is miffed  
Three bodyguards, intimidate  
No support given by boys from State

Edward Snowden arrives, how elegant  
Russia protects this **Boundless Informant**  
He's on the run from the NSA  
At Sheremteyev he'll make his stay

It's only **TEMPORARY** though  
While he awaits the chance to go  
To a country that will have him  
And see his views through his **PRISM**

For you it's an opportunity  
To flex those muscles so the world can see  
We know how **MUSCULAR** you are  
The world's you're stage, you are the star

But Vladimir, Vladimirovich  
The Olympic Games, they'll make you rich!  
Not only world publicity  
It'll add "sweetener" to your Russian tea

And clearly the world will not forget  
Those classy Russian hotel toilets  
The “love toilets” they offer you  
One just for pee and one for poo

Toilet fishing is never allowed  
Bathroom signs display for this Olympic crowd  
But the hotel water, it looks like pee  
Perhaps water piped in from the Yellow Sea?

And tell me now, is this July?  
I see no snowflakes in the sky  
People in shirtsleeves having so much fun  
Perhaps we should run a marathon

Mais non, ce sont les Olympiques d’hiver  
It’s winter dress that we should wear  
But winter snow cannot be found  
Upon these Olympic snow grounds

But security, it is top notch  
For Chechen black widows your men must watch  
But no holes are there in this ring of steel  
Is this Sochi or Israel?

You do so inspire the punk rock genre  
Towards your policies its music is contre  
Pussy Riot achieves global attention  
Until they find themselves in detention

Oh Vladimir, Vladimirovich  
Concoct a story for your sales pitch  
It’s Crimea you chose to annex  
Protect fellow Russians, your pretext

With propaganda of your design  
Nations borders you will redefine  
In a manner in which you're so inclined  
Helped by Russian soldiers you consign

The Ukrainian government you dismiss  
You claim that they are all fascists  
Well take a look in any mirror  
The answer couldn't be any clearer

The world watches and it wonders  
What other countries will you plunder?  
What constitutions torn asunder  
As you plot and weave in this spell your under

It seems to me in all you do  
You need an audience or two  
With daring deeds, the risks you take  
The invincible image you try to make

So are you Rambo or Dirty Harry?  
Personas that really are not contrary  
But they have something both in common  
Unlike you, they believe in the law, man

Methinks you of a different sort  
Not John Wayne, you're much too short  
Of Dr. Evil you remind me clearly  
The resemblance uncanny, I state sincerely

So when you tire of that usurping  
From Vodka drinking and all its burping  
Consider a career in Hollywood  
The sun and sand will do you good



Begin your journey on Hollywood and Vine  
Lots of friends and fun there you will find  
Studios filming actors shootin'  
They'll welcome you, they won't razz Putin

As Americans, we all aspire  
To live like Clooney or as Mike Meyers  
Cause in the end it's all the same  
One man's work is another man's fame.