

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 "Titanic" 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 your 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.