



**OCHIN PRIYATNA —
RUSSIA**

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MOSKVA

The Kremlin
Is the most beautiful thing
I have ever seen.

I passed it by
On different roads.
On the Moskva,
I passed it by
And never knew,
I would miss it so.

The cathedral
On the other side
With caterpillar cranes
And a golden dome
Shall I laugh or shall I not?

Maybe I am partial
Because of the lobster shop
Forty dollars fried in butter,
That,s worth the piled up snow.

I will not forget
That it was the last imbibing
In the car;
Before we reached our star.

I will not forget
That we never picnicked
On the lawns of Mosfilmovskaya,
Just sandwiches would have done
From the bar;

Of the rented boat.

LILY WONG

You had this penchant
To take me to obscure restaurants
On the Golden Ring.

The Vodka was the same
More or less
As it is
All over the world
But where is the song
Of Lily Wong?

And the frogs, legs
Off Tverskaya,
Fish in aquariums.

When the rear bumpers of our car
Would hit the snow bank
And stop
Vladimir would keep the heating on.

MORNING

Because of my smoking
You keep the little window
Out to the snow.

The garbage woman wakes me up
The quilt all garbled up
The flakes keep dropping away
Past the bare window,
Now what will you do
To put the quilt back
Over my feet?

What will you do
Except walk Amy barefoot
In the snow.

Dobre din, Moscow.

SHTO

I draw deep
From the well that runs steep
Memories are gray,
Trees sway
And yet branches
Have icicles
As you and I know.

The Hermitage
Is fixed in time,
An afternoon
In your fur coat
Boats on the Neva,
Even the yacht of the English Queen,

Canals through gardens
Swan on the water
Watercolors on the Nevsky
Gorodavoi
All the way
From Moskovsky Vagzal.

YOU

You never agreed
To fly a Yak-Sorak
From Krasnoyarsk to Irkutsk,

So I went Ceintourist,,
Droplets of rain
Instead of snow

But the sky
As gray as can be
And then the flakes
Gentle, so gentle

White armor
To carry on your shoulder
And then the Vodka.

In a smaller machine
(If that is possible)
From Irkutsk to Bratsk
Through walls of ice
To Ustilimsk

In a Mitsubishi Pajero.

WORDS

Just a few words
To commemorate,
What I have always said,
Just a few words
To send
Before the end.

Just a few words
To keep the grammar right,
To keep it tight,

Just a few words about the snow,
The glow
On your cheek,
And on your
Lip-stick.

Just a few words
That may have been,
As we walked out of the Metro
Just a few words
To show
What may have been

If you had held my hand.

JUST A MOOD

When will I get it right in Voronesh
I don,t even know the Vagsal,
I just know
That the meadows look like England
Why so?

English meadows on Russian steppes
Makes me think of heavy drapes
In CEsemi-detacheds, on Knightsbridge
(that,s horrible English)
The same tube station as Harrods,;

On the roof of which
One drinks cognac
But I am meandering I think,
Moving away from my drink.
Trousers from Marks & Spencer
Trousers for twenty-nine pounds,
Sit well on Voronesh ground,

The dew is the same as I encounter
In your bottom eye lid
The same as wildflower seed.

SUN

Rostov
On the Don,
The cathedral as the street slopes down,
Babushkas begging
One or two
Statues in the park,
From books in the imagination,
The riverboat chugs on.

Rostov
Of the sun,
Intourist packed with whores
With imagination

The morning airport ride
Through CEsland,
Handkerchief gardens
Tended by the old,
A factory chimney silent
While the riverboat chugs on.

Memories fade
But the plane
Comes in to Venukovo
And there is a Hare Krishna place
And a Bangladeshi restaurant
In Rostov
On the Don.

ULAN UDEY

The rail-line outside the window
While looking away
And talking to you enmeshed in Moscow,
Maybe,
It is the Trans-Siberian rail
From Vladivostok to Kiev.

Don,t grieve.
Autumn is brief
A day or two before the snow,
When, like your cheeks
The flowers glow,
In my Siberian meadow.

Not much of a town,
Sidewalks dirty,
Babushkas in dowdy tweeds,
But the snow will hide retreats
In the snow.

And at the end I will ask
What happened to the leaves,
To the little children
Who go to school,
What happened to the sun?

Is it having fun?

NIPPONSKI MORE

In Nakhodka a customs official told me why
The taps come away in Vladivostok,
China is near.

The Sea of Japan
Is clear;
A profusion of rainbows,
Shells on the sand
In my alien land.

And a boat to catch the fish
I was apprehensive,
I knew something would go wrong
In this CEhospitality, song.

They caught the fish
And bobbed back to shore,
And asked me to step up
To do the honors in this song.

They had been singing for a while, you see
Nachalniks and workers alike,
Vodka is a great Communist.

You could have it boiled
Or have it raw
Depending on your imbibement situation,
I pretended to have it boiled
And swore vegetarianism
That night.

But human memory is short,
I have the rainbows,
But the vegetarianism I have not.

SURGUT

Surreal,
Below the sea,
With shorts showing curvatures,
Beneath the formality.

And breasts are open game,
Arbuz from Azerbaijan,
The hotel is hot
Russian fans.
Open windows,
Fast cars that will win petroleum wars.

This is when
The Amerikanski will come,
With the Scandinavian in tow
To hunt for oil,
A whale or two
And ladies, breasts to woo.

NOVOSIBIRSK

My Sardar friend
Had a gun to walk his dog,
And defective shoes to sell
To gullible Russians
Coming to the well.

And I was told
That whores were only allowed
By the kitchen entrance,
So I said ĀEoh my God,
They will be well done,
What happened to the fun?

AVRORA

Colors crackling across the sky
Murmansk in the snow
Piled high.

My ship in the harbor
Incurring wharfage
And a customs guy
Talking about a whore with twenty cats
Why?

Awesome
The light across the heavens
Beyond the Krushchovsky flats
Piled layer on layer
In the snow
Live.

Sledge your children
Walk your dog
The Vodka and the Celog,,
The Kalbasa and the cats
Rats.

I never saw Murmansk in the day,
And when I came back to Petersburg,
A Ukranian would tell me why
Murmansk is dark;

North.

PENCIL LINES - ST. PETERSBURG

Night is night
And snow is snow
In summer,
You read the newspaper
In the park,
At night.

On Nevsky Prospekt,
The sketch artists continue to draw,
Pigs, trotters in fast food shops,
For the breakfast of the Chinese.

Cosmopolitan, is it not,
Whores from all over the USSR
Just out of Moskovsky Vagsal.

And yet Anna Akhmatova writes on,
In her soul imprisoned by Leningrad,
And an old man has newspaper
Over his face, to shade the sun.

In a park on the other side
Of Peter and Paul,
The Hermitage looks at the Neva
And horses trot
In the royal square,

With the smell of Indian food.

The Waldorf Astoria looks on
With its wafer thin sandwiches
On the piano,
The hairdresser tucked away
In the basement,
And the selected whores
In the bar, all at war.

The whiskey shop outside the
Peterhoff
A whiff of Switzerland
In the middle of Scotland,
Located in the Neva's mouth,
The skylight that rolls back
At the Grand Europa,
The stairs to fall from
In the duplex suite,

My ship at sea, what will be,
Of these afternoons in the park?

SANT PETERBURG

As airports go,
I think I know you best
Maybe Delhi, maybe Sheremetyevo,
Maybe Mumbai with its garbage smell,
Maybe San Francisco,
Or even Heathrow;
But no;
I think I know you best,
You, with your overpriced perfume,
And scarves with Gucci everywhere.

Landing in the desperate snow
With furs and Conifers
And landing lights in the day
Another malinki Vodka,
Da, da.

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