

Moonlight

Mnye nye spitsya, nye lezhitsya,
i son minya nye biryot.

Ya s-khadil bý k Sashe v gosti,
da nye znayu gdye zhývyot.

Ya s-khadil bý k Sashe v gosti,
da nye znayu gdye zhývyot.

Paprosil bý tovarisha
moi tovarish dovidyot.

Paprosil bý tovarisha
moi tovarish dovidyot.

No tovarish lutshe, krashe,
bayus, Sashu atabyot.

Svetit myesyats, svetit yasný,
svetit byelaya zarya,
osvetila put'-daroshku
vdol do Sashina dvora.

Padkhazhu ya k Sashe, k domu,
no agnya u Sashi nyet.
Pastutshal ya pod okoshkom –
moya Sashu krepleto spit.

"Stýdno, stýdno tibe, Sashu,
so vetshera rano spat!"

"A tibe, moi drug, stýdnyeye
do polunotshi gulyat!"

I cannot fall asleep, not stay in bed,
sleep will not fetch me.

I would like to visit Sasha now,
but I do not know the way.

I would like to visit Sasha now,
but I do not know the way.

I could ask my friend,
my friend would show me the way, sure.

I could ask my friend,
my friend would show me the way.
But my friend is better and more beautiful,
I am afraid he will alienate Sasha from me.

The moon is shining, bright and clear,
shining with its white light,
and it illuminated the whole small path
all the way to Sasha's farmstead.

And when I come to Sasha's house
I see no lights.
I knocked at the small window –
my girl-friend Sasha is fast asleep.

"Shameful, shameful for you, Sasha,
to sleep so early in the evening!"

"It is even more shameful for you, my friend,
to roam and ramble until midnight!"

Words and music: Russian folksong

Pronunciation:

a as in "bar", *e* as in "bed", *i* as in "bid", *o* as in "bore", *u* as in "blue"

y = as in "yellow" / *y* = dull *i*, as in "bill"

s = always voiceless, as in "son" / *z* = voiced, as in "zone"

sh = voiceless, as in "mesh" / *zh* = voiced, like the *s* in "measure"

kh = mostly rough, like the *ch* in Scotch "loch", but smooth when "e" or "i" follows

a, e, i, o, u, y = the underlined vowel signifies the stressed syllable of a word.

Transcription and analogous translation: Kai Kracht

Comment:

Of this cheerful, frolicsome dance song several text versions are known, and they all are witty, roguish, cheeky. On certain occasions you easily can add a few rhymes of your own, too, because form and contents of the verses are rather unpretentious. Maybe that is the reason why this song is often performed only with instruments – the racy melody is more important than the words at any rate. You might say that this song is an obligatory stock-piece of every balalaika orchestra.

Mostly the performance begins at a slow pace, but the tempo is increased from verse to verse until the fingers are gliding over the strings like a whirlwind ... Only when the last dancer gets out of breath and gives up, a long balalaika tremolo catches up the rapid tempo and leads over to a last verse which begins very slowly again, with a coquettishly accentuated rhythm, but then quickly grows faster and faster and in the end abruptly stops with a mighty blow.

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