

The Czar Song

(a.k.a. - "An Intimate Friend Of The Czar", "The Palace Of The Czar"
& "Shootin' With Rasputin")

Words:
Gene Raskin (music: unknown)

Many thanks to Songhound Elizabeth Block who started the search for the writer of this song. She found it in a book by Jerry Silverman entitled "62 Outrageous Songs". From there, I was able to tweak my web searches until I discovered that Gene Raskin wrote the word to this tune. According to his granddaughter -- who has her own version on YouTube -- "Shootin' With Rasputin" is the official title of this song. Any hints on the composer?

Am Dm
A personal friend of the Czar was I,
Am E
An intimate friend of the great Nicholai.
Am Dm
We practically slept in the same double bed,
Am E
I at the foot, and he at the head.

PRE-CHORUS:

Am Dm
But all that seems distant and all that seems far,
Am E E7
Were those wonderful nights in the palace of the Czar, when----

CHORUS:

Am
I was shootin' with Rasputin, ate farina with Czarina,
E Am
Blintzes with the princess and the Czar (Hey! Hey! Hey!)
Am
We were sharing tea and herring, dipped banana in Smetana,
E Am E Am
Borscht and vorscht around the samovar, hoo-ha!

Friends with the Czar was I for life,
[alt: "The Czar & I were friends for life"
or: "A friend of the Czar, I was all his gracious life."]
But friendlier still was I with his wife.
[alt: "Much better friends was I with his pretty, young wife."
or: "More intimate still with his pretty, young wife."]
We practically slept in the same double bed,
'Til the Czar kicked me out and slept there instead.

PRE-CHORUS: & CHORUS:

One bloody day revolution broke out,
I went to see what the tsimis was about.
I finally bid old Rushka goodbye,
For it was a case of Lenin or I.

*[alt verse: Then one bloody day revolution broke out,
I went to see what all the fuss was about.
Now, here is the story, as it seemed to be,
It was clearly a case of Lenin --- or me.*

OR:

*BUT! - One awful day revolution broke out,
I failed to see what the fuss was about.
So one frosty morning I bid Russia good-bye.
It was simply a case of Lenin or I.]*

PRE-CHORUS: & CHORUS:

The boss took my money and left me in the cold,
All I had left were some rubles and gold.
I turned about for New York City,
Where I got even on the Un-American Activities Committee.

*[alt verse: Yes the Bolsheviks came, kicked me out in the cold
[alt, too: "The Reds took my dough, kicked me out in the cold"]
And all I had left were some diamonds and gold.
But I'll get my revenge here, and I'll have no pity
By giving my testimony to the House Un-American Activities Committee!]*

PRE-CHORUS: & CHORUS:

*Another version subs the last two verses with this one verse:
The revolution came, I was out in the cold.
All the Bolsheviks left me was my silver and gold.
The Reds kicked me out without any pity.
But I got even, on the McCarthy Committee.*

*[alt final line: " "Yes, I was penniless. But the Czar, ah, he was...
Nicholas."]*