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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

In the Spotlight

By Anna Malpas

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This week, everyone was transfixed by President Dmitry Medvedev's moves on the dance floor after some rat leaked a video from his university reunion to YouTube. On a stage in broad daylight, he flails away valiantly to some of the worst music of the 1980s.

The video had been watched more than 1.4 million times on YouTube on Thursday, and for true aficionados, Lifenews.ru had a longer eight-minute cut for the full awkward experience.

"It has to be a fake, tell me it's a fake," the spokeswoman for the pro-Kremlin youth group Nashi, Kristina Potupchik, wrote on Twitter, her faith in the Kremlin apparently shot to the core, after herding thousands of the faithful in white aprons on the weekend.

My sympathies went out to Medvedev for having to attend what looked like the worst party ever, although I was less sympathetic when I read on Life News that he organized it. Certainly it is no ordinary reunion. Instead of 1980s pop on the turntables, it has the actual singers performing on stage. The group Kombinatsia belts out its hit "American Boy," a classic about a Russian girl who wants to be whisked away to the States and ride in a Mercedes.

There are conspiracy theories out there about the video's release having something to do with Russia's position on Libya because the name of the YouTube account is KremlinLivia, or Libya in Russian. I wonder if it is meant to be a play on the word "live," though. But my goodness, if that is the worst dirt they can find, Medvedev has nothing to worry about. He's no dancer and should ditch the shiny jacket, but he looks better than many of his matronly or portly contemporaries. What intrigued me was his apparent lack of interaction with the other dancers, almost as if he paid for the party but still can't be the popular kid.

The awkward men of the world probably took heart from the spy Anna Chapman's interview with the Sun, where she confessed she fell in love with her British husband because he had long hair like Oasis star Liam Gallagher and wore clumpy Clarks shoes — the sensible brand loved by parents.

"Whenever he rolled his tobacco and wore his loose-hanging jeans, with his Clarks shoes and Liam Gallagher-style hair, it took my breath away," she gushed, praising his "aristocratic beauty."

In a far-from-gentlemanly fashion, her now ex-husband, Alex Chapman, sold or gave photographs of Chapman topless to The Daily Telegraph, sealing her reputation as the "hot" spy. Later some unpleasantly private photographs of her lying in the bath, taken by another British ex, were published in Playboy.

Chapman said she cried when she saw the Playboy photographs, calling them the "final blow."

And she delicately skewered her ex-husband, suggesting that he is a complete loser. He is "an incredible, talented person who still hasn't yet found himself in this life," she commiserated sweetly. Meanwhile she is shooting up the ranks of United Russia's youth wing and working as a mysterious bank "consultant," not to mention shots at modeling and hosting a creaky television show.

Perhaps Mr. Chapman should turn to the power of prayer, like ballerina Anastasia Volochkova, who told Komsomolskaya Pravda that her latest toy, a two-tone Maybach car, appeared through divine intervention.

After posting photos of the blue-and-white car on her blog, she told the tabloid: "I prayed to God. He heard my prayers. I walked out into the street, and it was parked there." Although oddly for a gift from God, she knew the exact price tag: 3 million rubles ($100,000).

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