

'Twas the Night Before Russian Christmas

By [Michele A. Berdy](#)

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Pixabay

'Twas the night before Christmas,
when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
In the attic our бомж — a nice man
with no home —
Was peacefully sleeping on bedding of foam.

Соседи (my neighbors) nestled snug
in their beds,
While all kinds of visions danced in their heads:
Happy children and cars
and good health in old age,

Vacations and pensions
and an honest day's wage.

When out in the двор there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
As car alarms screamed, I imagined the worst:
Either gangsters or tanks or another pipe burst!

The street light was dim on the new-fallen snow,
As I strained to make out
what was happening below.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer.
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
He calmed down his reindeer
and patted their heads,
Then, wiping his brow, he excitedly said:

“The traffic is awful! It's просто кошмар!
Thank heaven I'm not making deliveries by car!
And how are we going to get up to the roof,
Where antennas lay traps
for my poor reindeers' hoofs?”

“Now, Dasher! Now, Dancer!
Now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! On Donner and Blitzen!
Don't let your hoofs touch those satellite dishes,
We've got to deliver our bag full of wishes!”

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As bags were unloaded, I heard my roof creak,
And all I could think was: I just fixed that leak!

But then with a whoosh he descended the air vent,
On his back was a sack overflowing with presents.
But the gifts that he brought
weren't just trinkets or toys.
This year he brought us a sack full of joy.

With a tweak of his nose
all corruption was banished!
Взятки, откаты, конвертики — all vanished!
Every pension was raised, every election was fair,
St. Nicholas — once again —
answered all of our prayers.

The бомж in our attic would regain his home,
And Russians, contented, no longer would roam.
I know what you're thinking!
I was dreaming or drinking!
Or maybe it's only my own wishful thinking.

But I saw him! I did! With his hands on the reins
Of a sleigh led by reindeer, up high like a plane.
And I heard him exclaim,
ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all,
and to all a good night!"

With apologies to Clement Clarke Moore.

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