

Complete Lyrics and Shorter Poems

Volume 2

*Complete Lyrics
and
Shorter Poems*

Volume 2

*Early Years in St Petersburg
1817–20*

*In the South
1820–24*

Alexander Pushkin

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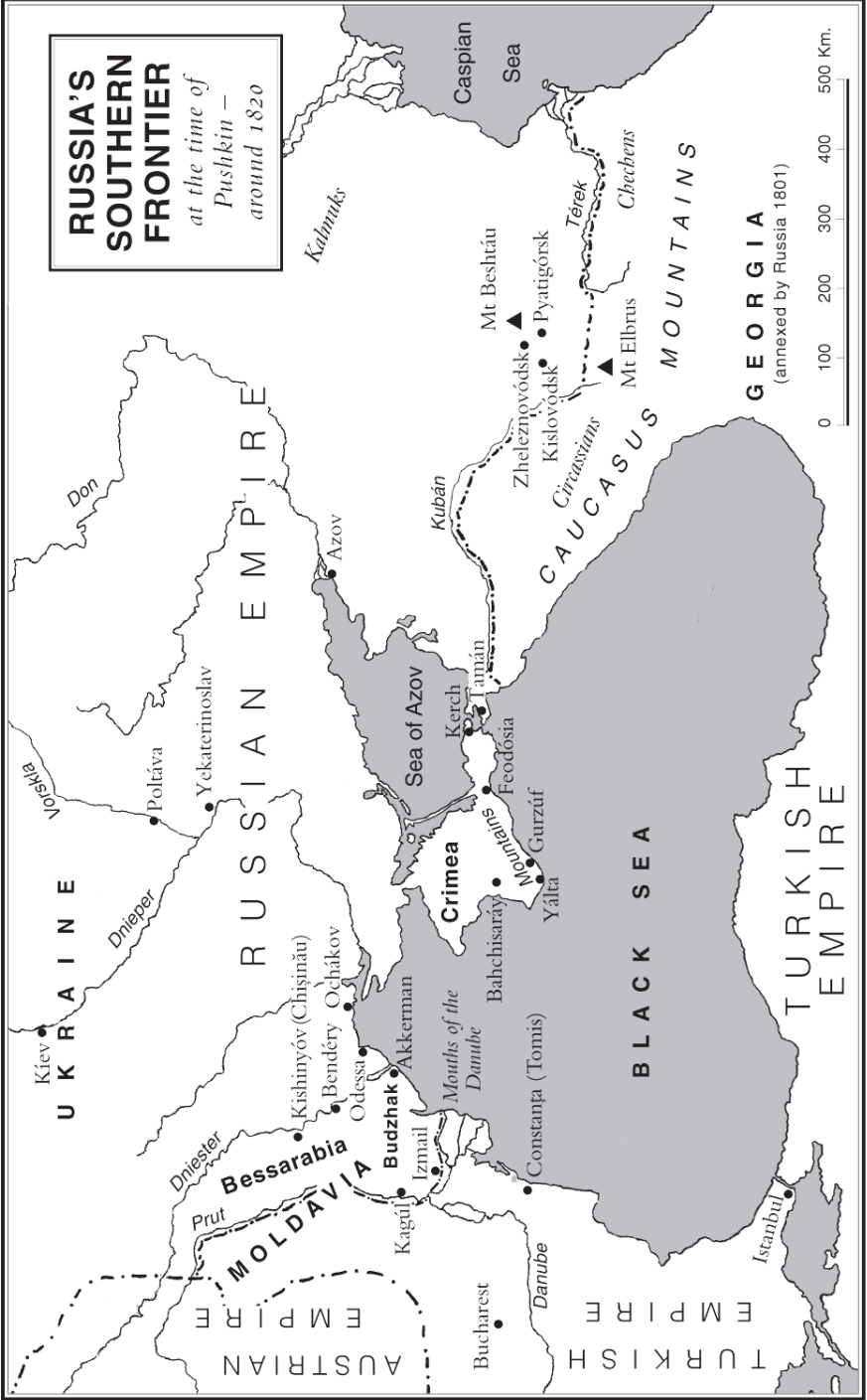
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RUSSIA'S SOUTHERN FRONTIER
at the time of Pushkin — around 1820



GEORGIA
 (annexed by Russia 1801)



Lyrics and Shorter Poems

Volume 2

Early Years in St Petersburg

1817-20

1817

138

* * *

Есть в России город Луга
Петербургского округа;
Хуже не было б сего
Городишки на примете,
Если б не было на свете
Новоржева моего.

139

* * *

Простите, верные дубравы!
Прости, беспечный мир полей,
И легкокрылые забавы
Столь быстро улетевших дней!
Прости, Тригорское, где радость
Меня встречала столько раз!
На то ль узнал я вашу сладость,
Чтоб навсегда покинуть вас?
От вас беру воспоминанье.
А сердце оставляю вам.
Быть может (сладкое мечтанье!),
Я к вашим возвращусь полям,
Приду под липовые своды,
На скат тригорского холма,
Поклонник дружеской свободы,
Веселья, граций и ума.

10

1817

138

* * *

There's a Russian town called Luga –
not that far from Petersburg. A
dump it is – the very worst
dump that's anywhere existed,
were my Novorzhev not listed
as unquestionably first.

RC

139

* * *

Farewell, you oaks – you've long us guarded,
farewell to you, calm countryside,
and to the fun we've shared, light-hearted,
in hours that flew too quickly by.
Farewell, Trigórskoye, where gladness
has come my way unfailingly:
must I now really face the sadness
of losing you enduringly?
I'll take with me my recollections
(my heart to you, though, I donate)
and maybe (cheerier reflections!)
I *shall* return to your estate –
beneath the limes I'll walk hereafter
back to the dwelling down the hill,
in thrall to beauty, wit and laughter,
and to spontaneous goodwill.

IO

RC

140

К ОГАРЕВОЙ,

которой митрополит прислал плодов из своего саду

Митрополит, хвастун бесстыдный,
Тебе прислав своих плодов,
Хотел уверить нас, как видно,
Что сам он бог своих садов.

Возможно всё тебе – Харита
Улыбкой Дряхлость победит,
С ума сведет митрополита
И пыл желаний в нем родит.

И он, твой встретив взор волшебный,
Забудет о своем кресте
И нежно станет петь молебны
Твоей небесной красоте.

10

141

ТУРГЕНЕВУ

Тургенев, верный покровитель
Попов, евреев и скопцов,
Но слишком счастливый гонитель
И езуитов, и глупцов,
И лености моей бесплодной,
Всегда беспечной и свободной,
Подруги благотворных снов!
К чему смеяться надо мною,
Когда я слабою рукою
На лире с трепетом брожу
И лишь изнеженные звуки
Любви, сей милой сердцу муки,
В струнах незвонких нахожу?
Душой предавшись наслажденью,
Я сладко, сладко задремал.
Один лишь ты с глубокой ленью
К трудам охоту сочетал;
Один лишь ты, любовник страстный
И Саблуковой, и креста,
То ночью прыгаешь с прекрасной,
То проповедуешь Христа,

10

20

TO OGARYÓVA

to whom the bishop sent some fruit from his garden

Sending you fruit from his domain,
the bishop – shameless show-off he! –
meant to present himself, that's plain,
as procreation's deity.

Nothing's beyond you – smiling Grace
will win Senility with ease:
you'll set the bishop's heart ablaze
and bring him senseless to your knees.

Now he has met your magic gaze,
the cross he wears he'll quite forget,
and he'll sing tender hymns of praise
to your divine charms, Lisabet.

10

RC

FOR TURGÉNEV

Turgénev, you're a staunch defender
of pastors, Jews and self-made eunuchs,
but all too keen to persecute
not only Jesuits and fools,
but even unproductive me,
so idle, carefree, easygoing
and fond of well-intentioned dreams.
Why do you taunt me? Is it that
with feeble hand and trembling arm
I stroke my harp haphazardly,
strum tritely on its untuned strings
and celebrate love's pains and joys
to a banal accompaniment?
I've yielded up my soul to pleasure
and lapsed into delicious dreams.
There's none but you that can unite
an inborn sloth with the urge to work,
none else that feels the same devotion
to Sablukóva and to cross,
cavorts at night with pretty girlfriend
and preaches Jesus Christ by day,

10

20

На свадьбах и в Библейской зале,
 Среди веселий и забот;
 Роняешь Лунину на бале,
 Подъемлешь трепетных сирот;
 Ленивец милый на Парнассе,
 Забыв любви своей печаль,
 С улыбкой дремлешь в Арзамасе
 И спишь у графа де-Лаваль;
 Нося мучительное бремя
 Пустых иль тяжких должностей,
 Один лишь ты находишь время
 Смеяться лениости моей.

30

Не вызывай меня ты боле
 К навек оставленным трудам,
 Ни к поэтической неволе,
 Ни к обработанным стихам.
 Что нужды, если и с ошибкой
 И слабо иногда пою?
 Пускай Нинета лишь улыбкой
 Любовь беспечную мою
 Воспламенит и успокоит!
 А труд и холоден и пуст:
 Поэма никогда не стоит
 Улыбки сладострастных уст.

40

142

К ***

Не спрашивай, за чем унылой думой
 Среди забав я часто омрачен,
 За чем на всё подъямлю взор угрюмый,
 За чем не мил мне сладкий жизни сон;

Не спрашивай, за чем душой остылой
 Я разлюбил веселую любовь
 И никого не называю милой —
 Кто раз любил, уж не полюбит вновь;

Кто счастье знал, уж не узнает счастья.
 На краткий миг блаженство нам дано:
 От юности, от нег и сладострастья
 Останется уныние одно...

10

at weddings and at Bible meetings,
 mid jollity and duty's call;
 you dance with Lúnina, then drop her,
 while poor, shy orphans you support.
 A poet charming yet lethargic,
 unhappy love affair forgotten,
 you doze in bliss at Arzamás,
 then snooze again at de Laval's.
 Despite the crushing load you bear
 of duties serious or trifling,
 there's none but you can find the time
 to ridicule my indolence.

30

So do not challenge me again
 to take up tasks I've quit for good,
 or to resume poetic bondage,
 or to revise my finished verse.
 Who cares if sometimes compositions
 of mine show weaknesses and errors?
 Enough if, smilingly, Ninette
 excites and satisfies the love
 I lavish heedlessly upon her!
 Hard work is futile, dull and cold:
 no epic poem's worth the cost,
 should she her smiling lips withhold.

40

RC

142

TO ***

Please don't ask why my mind is often clouded
 with cheerless thoughts amidst frivolity,
 why everything I look upon is shrouded
 in gloom, why life is no sweet dream to me.

Please don't ask why my heart has cooled. I fear
 I've fallen out with love. I can't explain
 why now I never call someone "my dear" –
 why one who loved can never love again.

For happiness, once lost, is not recovered.
 A moment's bliss is all the heart attains.
 Of youth, of all the ecstasy discovered
 in love, despair – and nothing more – remains...

10

MH

143

* * *

Краев чужих неопытный любитель
 И своего всегдашний обвинитель,
 Я говорил: в отечестве моем
 Где верный ум, где гений мы найдем?
 Где гражданин с душою благородной,
 Возвышенной и пламенно свободной?
 Где женщина – не с холодной красотой,
 Но с пламенной, пленительной, живой?
 Где разговор найду непринужденный,
 Блистательный, веселый, просвещенный? 10
 С кем можно быть не хладным, не пустым?
 Отечество почти я ненавидел —
 Но я вчера Галлицыну увидел
 И примирен с отечеством моим.

144

К НЕЙ

В печальной праздности я лиру забывал,
 Воображение в мечтах не разгоралось,
 С дарами юности мой гений отлетал,
 И сердце медленно хладело, закрывалось.
 Вас вновь я призывал, о дни моей весны,
 Вы, пролетевшие под сенью тишины,
 Дни дружества, любви, надежд и грусти нежной,
 Когда, поэзии поклонник безмятежный,
 На лире счастливой я тихо воспевал
 Волнение любви, уныние разлуки — 10
 И гул дубрав горам передавал
 Мои задумчивые звуки...

Напрасно! Я влачил постыдной лени груз,
 В дремоту хладную невольно погружался,
 Бежал от радостей, бежал от милых муз
 И – слезы на глазах – со славою прощался!
 Но вдруг, как молнии стрела,
 Зажглась в увядшем сердце младость,
 Душа проснулась, ожила,
 Узнала вновь любви надежду, скорбь и радость. 20

* * *

Lover of unfamiliar foreign lands,
 and constant critic of my land of birth,
 I often said: "Where can we find at home
 true intellect and genius of worth?
 Where's there a citizen of noble soul,
 a lofty spirit, longing to be free?
 Where's there a woman, not of frigid beauty,
 but charm that burns with real vitality?
 Where can I find spontaneous conversation,
 enlightened, full of sparkling words that shine? 10
 With whom can one be warm, not cold and empty?"
 I'd almost come to hate this land of mine.
 But yesterday Golitsyna just smiled,
 and to my homeland I was reconciled. DLM

TO HER

Sunk in sad idleness, I near forgot my lyre.
 My youthful genius fled, and my imagination
 had almost ceased, in dreams, to burn with its bright fire,
 my heart had slowly cooled, and closed to inspiration.
 I summoned you again, you dear days of my spring,
 who, 'neath the silent heavens, had sped by on the wing.
 Those days of friendship, love, of hope and grief so tender,
 when, poetry's meek slave, on happy lyre I'd render
 quiet tribute to the wild emotions of first love,
 and to the bleak despair of lovers' separation – 10
 when oak woods relayed to the hills above
 the music of my meditation...

In vain! I dragged my load of shameful idleness,
 immersed against my will in that cold, dreaming story.
 I fled from happiness, I fled my Muse no less,
 and – teardrops in my eyes – I bade farewell to glory!
 But, suddenly as lightning flashes,
 youth blazed in my dull heart again,
 my soul awoke, rose from the ashes,
 I knew the hope of love, its ecstasies, its pain. 20

Всё снова расцвело! Я жизнью трепетал;
 Природы вновь восторженный свидетель,
 Живее чувствовал, свободнее дышал,
 Сильней пленяла добродетель...
 Хвала любви, хвала богам!
 Вновь лиры сладостной раздался голос юный,
 И с звонким трепетом воскреснувшие струны
 Несу к твоим ногам!..

145

СВОБОДА

Ода

Беги, сокройся от очей,
 Цитеры слабая царица!
 Где ты, где ты, гроза царей.
 Свободы гордая певица? —
 Приди, сорви с меня венок,
 Разбей изнеженную лиру...
 Хочу воспеть Свободу миру,
 На троне поразить порок.

Открой мне благородный след
 Того возвышенного галла, 10
 Кому сама средь славных бед
 Ты гимны смелые внушала.
 Питомцы ветреной Судьбы,
 Тираны мира! трепещите!
 А вы, мужайтесь и внемлите,
 Восстаньте, падшие рабы!

Увы! куда ни брошу взор —
 Везде бичи, везде железы,
 Законов гибельный позор,
 Неволи немощные слезы: 20
 Везде несправедная Власть
 В сгущенной мгле предрассуждений
 Воссела – Рабства грозный Гений
 И Славы роковая страсть.

Лишь там над царскою главой
 Народов не легло страданье,

The whole world bloomed anew! I pulsed with life once more
 and gazed, enraptured, upon nature's beauty.
 I felt more strongly, breathed more freely, than before,
 deemed virtue a delightful duty..

Praise love, oh praise the gods! The sweet
 young voice of my true lyre resounded with the quiver
 of resurrected strings, these few lines to deliver –
 I lay them at your feet!...

MH

145

LIBERTY

An Ode

Be off with you now, disappear,
 Venus, Cythera's queen too gentle.
 You, scourge of tsars, instead come here –
 sing Freedom's song unsentimental!
 Tear off Love's wreath that I've outgrown,
 shatter my feebly simpering lyre.
 I'll lift my voice for Freedom higher,
 denouncing vice on every throne.

Show me where that great French bard strode,
 the path that led to execution.
 On him brave anthems you bestowed
 to sing midst din of revolution.
 You favourites of fickle Chance,
 world's tyrants, shake in consternation;
 you grovelling serfs, though, give attention:
 arise, take courage and advance!

10

When anywhere I turn my eyes,
 I see but jailing, beating, flogging,
 weak laws that those in power despise
 and helpless slaves in bondage sobbing.
 Yes, Might, enthroned, is right (and wrong!),
 shrouded in clouds of superstition:
 behold dire Serfdom's apparition,
 hear Glory's deadly siren song!

20

Show me where human misery
 has not a monarch's image blighted! –

Где крепко с Вольностью святой
 Законов мощных сочетанье;
 Где всем простерт их твердый щит,
 Где сжатый верными руками
 Граждан над равными главами
 Их меч без выбора скользит

30

И преступленье с высока
 Сражает праведным размахом;
 Где не подкупна их рука
 Ни алчной скупостью, ни страхом.
 Владыки! вам венец и трон
 Дает Закон – а не природа;
 Стоите выше вы народа,
 Но вечный выше вас Закон.

40

И горе, горе племенам,
 Где дремлет он неосторожно,
 Где иль народу иль царям
 Законом властвовать возможно!
 Тебя в свидетели зову,
 О мученик ошибок славных,
 За предков в шуме бурь недавних
 Сложивший царскую главу.

Восходит к смерти Людовик
 В виду безмолвного потомства,
 Челом развенчанным приник
 К кровавой плахе Вероломства.
 Молчит Закон – народ молчит,
 Падет преступная секира...
 И се – злодейская порфира
 На галлах скованных лежит.

50

Самовластительный Злодей!
 Тебя, твой трон я ненавижу,
 Твою погибель, смерть детей
 С жестокой радостью вижу.
 Читают на твоём челе
 Печать проклятия народы,
 Ты ужас мира, стыд природы;
 Упрек ты богу на земле.

60

Когда на мрачную Неву
 Звезда полуночи сверкает,

only where love for Liberty
 and rule of Law have been united,
 where Law's strong shield extends to all,
 and where, without discrimination, 30
 her sword, held firm above the nation,
 on any man's misdeeds will fall,

and where the forces of the law
 firmly resist all subornation,
 not guilty of extortion, nor
 prepared to use intimidation.
 It is by Law, not birth, that you,
 rulers, your crowns and thrones acquire.
 True, midst your subjects you stand higher;
 the Law, though, stands above you too. 40

If Law's neglected, woe betide
 those realms where judges fail to listen,
 where mobs or kings can override
 the safeguards of a legal system.
 I call on you, France, to attest
 the price you've paid for age-long error –
 not just the regicidal Terror,
 but years of turbulent unrest.

Louis the steps to death ascends
 midst crowds that care for nothing royal; 50
 his head, now stripped of crown, he bends
 onto a bloody block unloyal.
 Hushed is the Law, the rabble too,
 down drops the blade – a deed illegal! –
 and soon another mantle regal
 smothers the French, enchained anew.

Villainous tyrant! I abhor
 you and your reign beyond all measure.
 Your downfall, your men's deaths in war,
 I contemplate with savage pleasure. 60
 The nations read upon your brow
 the mark imprinted by the Devil:
 terror, disgrace, the soul of evil,
 taunting the God you disavow.

When midnight's star its lustre sheds
 on the Nevá through darkness flowing

И беззаботную главу
 Спокойный сон отягощает,
 Глядит задумчивый певец
 На грозно спящий средь тумана 70
 Пустынный памятник тирана,
 Забвенью брошенный дворец —

И слышит Клии страшный глас
 За сими страшными стенами,
 Калигуллы последний час
 Он видит живо пред очами,
 Он видит – в лентах и звездах,
 Вином и злобой упоенны
 Идут убийцы потаенны,
 На лицах дерзость, в сердце страх. 80

Молчит неверный часовой,
 Опущен молча мост подъемный,
 Врата отверсты в тьме ночной
 Рукой предательства наемной...
 О стыд! о ужас наших дней!
 Как звери, вторглись янычары!..
 Падут бесславные удары...
 Погиб увенчанный злодей.

И днесь учитеь, о цари:
 Ни наказанья, ни награды, 90
 Ни кров темниц, ни алтари
 Не верные для вас огады.
 Склонитесь первые главой
 Под сень надежную Закона,
 И станут вечной стражей трона
 Народов вольность и покой.

146

кн. ГОЛИЦЫНОЙ

посылая ей оду «Вольность»

Простой воспитанник природы,
 Так я, бывало, воспевал
 Мечту прекрасную свободы
 И ею сладостно дышал.

and when deep sleep weighs down the heads
of carefree folk, its calm bestowing,
gravely I view that bastion,
memorial to a tyrant's malice, 70
empty now, mist-bound, grim, a palace
abandoned to oblivion.

The voice of Clio, striking fear,
comes to me from one fearsome tower,
and there before me, all too clear,
I watch Caligula's last hour.
I see the killers striding in,
unrecognized, each decorated,
resentful and intoxicated,
outwardly bold, but scared within. 80

The guard, unspeaking, stands aside;
the drawbridge, soundlessly, is lowered;
in dark of night the door swings wide,
unloosened by some venal coward –
with shame these days of ours resound!
Fierce bodyguards, like beasts, are straining
to hold the man, blows on him raining –
and thus he dies, a villain crowned!

So now take this to heart, you tsars:
no rich largesse, no forced correction, 90
no holy shrines, no prison bars
can promise you a sure protection.
Be humble: seek to rule at ease
beneath the Law's unfailing cover;
then you will have as guards for ever
your peoples' liberty and peace. RC

146

FOR PRINCESS GOLÍTSYNA

on sending her the ode 'Liberty'

As Nature's simple devotee,
I'd written this to celebrate
Freedom as a sublime ideal;
I'd be its sweet-tongued advocate.

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