



After this quarter life crisis, I wonder  
When did you learn we lost? Was it the Caucuses'  
Chill as you beside a cart with your mother,  
Three sisters huddled and the youngest  
Clinging to your father's  
Out-of-use coat?

Could it have been when the little Frenchies  
Jeered that the Russian bear couldn't swim?  
Or when mom mentioned she'd met  
An American Man?

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Grandfather, Dedushka, I want to hear  
A dry joke, something about Napoleon's men in the snow  
And their dissolving buttons,  
Or anything about Oma's proper Dutch face  
When she saw you with two oranges  
Under your shirt.

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Nichevo strasnovo, indeed, when  
We both have become stones smoothed  
Under wind and snow.