

Landing in Leningrad

arrived on white night
we expected a greeter
I don't speak Russian

sent by Moscow host
eager to meet next colleagues
no greeter showed up

"do. you. speak. English?"
I called out to airport crowd
helpers soon appeared

so, we found Masha
driving empty city streets
midnight's eerie dusk

her Stalin-esque home
no Cold War tensions found here
kind folks everywhere

Setting: Leningrad, USSR (now St Petersburg, Russia), summer solstice, 1990,
accompanied by my 17-year-old daughter Su



Photo: With Masha and Su at Kirov ballet and opera theater, Leningrad

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