

## BALLAD OF THE ARZAMAS TRAIN

*(Commemorating the events of February 1995 when Dave Nokes took Mim John, Nancy Davis, Patricia Newman, Tom Sellers, and Clyde Layne on the overnight train from Moscow to a program review meeting at Arzamas-16, called "Los Arzamas" because it is the Russian counterpart to Los Alamos)*

Now listen, my children, and you shall hear  
How Sandia management handles its fear.

Los Arzamas beckoned, we'd travel by train,  
A simple arrangement that'd cause us no pain.  
We gathered like gypsies with bundles and sacks,  
Set out for the train and never looked back.

But when we arrived, a surprise was in store  
As we entered the car and looked at the doors.  
Six tickets we had and thought they were fine,  
A cabin for each and all in a line.

But that was a dream that wasn't to be;  
The cabins weren't six, we only had three.  
The cabins were small, two beds they allowed  
For the six of us there in our Sandia crowd.

Three hims and three hers, and a pause that ensued  
As Sandia minds took the problem and chewed.  
Two hims in the first—like lightning they leaped!  
Three hers and one him just shuffled their feet.

"Straws we can draw and try to divide,  
Or," said Mim, "it's you and me, Clyde."  
Clyde, like a gentleman born and bred,  
Said not a word, but his face burned red.

"You rats!" he cried, as he turned to Dave,  
"You jumped in together your heinies to save!  
Is this how management shelters its staff?"  
And David and Tommy tried hard not to laugh.

Don't worry, my children, it all ended well,  
Virtue has triumphed, as often it will.  
The wagon was empty, and the train crew agreed  
We could spread ourselves out as much as we pleased.

We each had a cabin, our own little bower.  
We partied in one till the midnight hour,  
Then retired to our places and slept all alone.  
See how our lab takes care of its own?

It's directors, you see, who have special funds  
To spend at discretion, whatever may come.  
So Tommy forked over the cold hard cash,  
Perhaps six dollars from his secret stash.

The total per person for the overnight ride—  
'bout 23 bucks and panic for Clyde.  
I wouldn't propose it to any good friends,  
But it makes a great story—and this is its end.

*Patricia Newman*