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Navalny Goes Va Banque – Part I

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7-8 minutes

“Расчет, умеренность и трудолюбие: вот мои три верные карты, вот что утроит, усемерит мой капитал и доставит мне покой и независимость!”

(“Thriftiness, moderation, and hard work: Those are my 3 reliable cards, this is what will triple, nay septuple, my capital, and bring me peace of mind and independence!” — Pushkin, The Queen of Spades

Dear Readers:

The phrase [“va banque”](#) was borrowed from French into Russian. It refers to that moment at the gambling table where the player throws all caution to the winds, relies on a hunch, and goes “all in”, as the Americans say. Which is a fitting analogy for Alexei Navalny’s Novichok gamble.



The winning card?

So, [I have this piece](#) by reporter/analyst Petr Akopov on Navalny's latest risky gambit.

I chose to frame this story in a trite metaphor that a Russian Lit major will spot a mile away: Navalny = Hermann from Pushkin's **Queen of Spades**. Oh, I know, it doesn't really fit in a lot of ways; so this is a bit of a stretch. But please humor me anyhow, because I like to have my fun. To be sure, the German Hermann engineering student is a sensible and even-headed fellow, right up until the moment when he isn't. Whereas the impulsive Russian "Dmitry Karamazov" type Navalny always had "Risky" as his middle name. Many is the time, in his disorganized life, when Navalny was forced to flee creditors or stay one step ahead of police investigators. One recalls his comical flight from Vyatsk all the way to Connecticut, back in his KirovLes glory days, after failing in that lumber-swiping enterprise. And reminding loyal readers, once again, that "**KirovLes**" spelled backwards is "**SeIVorik**", which is Russian for "The little thief went to jail."

Still, Navalny has persisted solidly for many years in his chosen "profession" as a White Collar Criminal cum professional Oppositionist backed by oligarchs and foreign governments alike. And retained a degree of caution. And stayed out of real trouble, for the most part. Until now... Something has changed. And hence the literary metaphor...





EU bureaucrats try to gas-light the entire world.

According to Akopov, Navalny's "Novichok" saga has passed its first phase already. And the pessimists who thought this adventure would blow up North Stream 2 were wrong: The Germans have no intention of halting this pipeline project. Nonetheless, the story is still growing many legs and spawning anti-Russia hysteria within the EU. Whose bureaucrats accuse the Russian government of employing "chemical weapons against their own people" – gasp! But, having lied through their teeth about, for example, Saddam "gassing his own people", this same gaggle of bureaucrats are now busy **gas-lighting** their own people; as well as other peoples' people.

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Akopov: Recently Navalny himself turned up the heat, when, in an interview with **Spiegel** he directly accused Russian President Putin of poisoning him. Navalny's logic is iron-clad, and goes something like this: Given that he was poisoned with Novichok, the most heinous poison ever invented; and given that only the Russian special services possess this weapon; and given that only one man — Putin — has the power to give the order to employ this chemical weapon against a Russian citizen; then it follows that Putin directly gave the order to poison Navalny with Novichok.

QED.

Further corroboration is given by the fact that the Russian doctors and lab workers could not find even a trace of Novichok in Navalny's system, when his body was in their hands; and yet the Germans *did* find it, once Navalny's body transferred into their

tender care! The conclusion is obvious: The Novichok was there all along, and the Russians covered it up, orders from higher-up. And any child who scratches his head and asks: “But was there really Novichok?” is either a fool or a dupe.



“I bathe in Novichok every morning, it makes me immune!”

Like a hero of a Hollywood blockbuster, Navalny himself has uncovered his own poisoner, and announces to the world: It was Putin all along. President Evil. Western public are taught that poisoning is an old Russian tradition, just like boiling borscht. Namely, to poison anybody who poses a threat to the Kremlin. *[yalensis: If there is such a tradition, it actually goes the other way: Like, poisoning the Tsar...]* Using a horrific, hellish poison which is (1) easy to diagnose, (2) points a finger directly at the government, and yet (3) is weirdly ineffective and leaves its victims alive and chatty.

And anybody who doubts this horrific narrative is called a dupe, and is made to learn all the truth about the Bloody Tyrant in the Kremlin; he who controls the Lubyanka; who also happens to be Trump’s puppet-master. It has to be Putin. Who else could it be?

Spiegel: But what if it wasn’t Putin?





Peaceful Germans should feel threatened by Russian chemical weapons.

Navalny: If it wasn't him, then the situation is even worse than we thought. One mug of Novichok is enough to poison all the passengers in a large Berlin metro station. If there are, say, 30 rather than 3, people in the world who have access to this chemical weapon, then this is a global threat. It would be horrible.

Akopov draws attention to Navalny's pathos as the latter tries to scare the pants off the Spiegel reporters. With his horrific scenario of ordinary, peaceful Berliners under threat from Russian chemical weapons. Navalny will develop this theme even further as he goes along; until his intent is so clear that even a foetus will understand his point: That Germany as a nation, ordinary German citizens, not to mention all of EU people — these nice, wonderful people are under threat.



Navalny summons Teutons for new Crusade against Russia.

The threat is Russia. Russia possesses chemical weapons and has proved that it will use them. There is only one solution: The civilized world must come together against the madman Putin, as they did against the madman Saddam Hussein. **Putin must go!**

Remove him via regime-change. And if it *wasn't* Putin who did this, why, then it's even worse, because we don't have just one madman, we have a whole rogue nation! What is Navalny doing here? It is not over-dramatizing one iota to state that Navalny is basically inciting to war, one could even call it a Crusade: West, go march against East. And why not, since all such past attempts have worked out so well?

This is the moment where Crusader Navalny goes **Va Banque**. Causing an equal and opposite reaction from Putin's advisor Peskov. Who testily stated that "**Navalny is working for the CIA.**" An accusation which caused the blogosphere to gasp: "No shit, Sherlock!"

Next: A candid look at the Russian Fifth Column, and its level of support among ordinary Russians.

[to be continued]