Space Monkey

John Prine

Space monkey, space monkey, what you doing out there?
Why it's dark as a dungeon, way up in the air
Come gather 'round me you little monkeys and a story I'll tell
About a brave young primate, outer space knew him well
He was born at the top of a big old tree
Way back in 1953
He could swing through the jungle and hang by his toes
Till they took him to Russia 'cause they could I suppose
They dressed him up in a spacesuit and it started to snow
Shot him off in a rocket where no man would go
Space monkey, space monkey, what you doing out there?
Why it's dark as a dungeon way up in the air
There'll be no one to greet you when you get back home
Well, no hammer or sickle, you'll be on your own
He had plenty of Cuban bananas and loads of Spam
But he found great difficulty trying to open the can
One day he slipped on a banana peel and the ship lost control
It spun out of orbit and shot out the black hole
It's been four decades now, that's nine monkey years
That's a long time for a space monkey to confront all his fears
Space monkey, space monkey, what you doing out there?
Why it's dark as a dungeon way up in the air
But there'll be no one to greet you when you get back home
No hammer or sickle, you'll be all on your own

Space monkey, space monkey, it's time to get real
The space race is over, how does it feel
Cold War's had a heatwave, Iron Curtain's torn down
They've rolled up the carpet in space monkey town
Now Leningrad is Petersburg and Petersburg's hell
For a card-carrying monkey with a story to tell
The space monkey was reportedly last sighted about
A half a block off of Red Square
In a karaoke bar having a few drinks with some of his friends
There was the dog that flew Sputnik
And a blind red-headed, one legged parrot
Who had done some minor research for Dow Chemical
They were drinking American Vodka
Imported all the way from Paducah, Kentucky

And reportedly had their arms around each other's shoulders singing
"Those were the days, my friend, we thought they'd never end"
Space monkey, space monkey, there's nothing to do
But it's better than living in a Communist zoo
There'll be no one to greet you when you get back home
No hammer or sickle, you'll be all on you own
Space monkey

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