

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
The Snow Maiden

Opera in a prologue and four acts
Libretto by Rimsky-Korsakov after
Alexander Ostrovsky

SUNG TEXTS

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

PROLOGUE

It is at the beginning of spring; night has fallen, and the Red Mountain is covered with snow. To the right, bushes, a scattered cluster of leafless birches. To the left, a thick forest of pine and firtrees, their branches bending beneath the weight of the snow. At the back, at the foot of the mountain, a river; holes in the ice are surrounded by small firs. On the other side of the river, the town of Berendeycff, the capital of the Tzar Berexdey. Its palaces, houses and izbas are of wood, ornamented with carvings painted in various colors. Lights shine in the windows. A full moon silvers the open country. In the distance the cocks are crowing.

SCENE I

Fairy Spring and the Birds.
The Faun is seated in a hollow tree. Little by little, the entire sky is covered with birds arriving from beyond the seas.

THE FAUN

Farewell winter ! The cocks have crowed, and Fairy Spring will come to earth with dawn.

The time's at hand when my long vigil o'er,
I'll once more sleep in peace.
He disappears in the hollow of the tree.
The Birds continue to arrive in increasing numbers. Fairy Spring, borne through the air by storks, swans and geese, and surrounded by a retinue of Birds, alights on the Red Mountain.

FAIRY SPRING

At the hour given, the day is marked in the calends
of time, I seek the country of the Berendeys ;
A land of cold, a land of winters long,
A silent land, whose welcome does not cheer.
Where are, alas, those lands,
Those lovely lands of sunshine?
The land whose joy endures,
Beside the azure waves?
Yonder, the flowering meads,
The sombre myrtle thickets,
And gardens full of roses
Scent all the evening air.
A fragrance warm and sweet
Is breathed forth by the earth.
Yonder, a silver moon,

A tender moon and calm,
Caresses with its rays
The blossom-laden trees,
And in men's souls
I waken love.
Now in the very shadow, vast and chill,
of woods that mourn,
I bid the flowers spring up from the frozen sod.
Speaking to the Birds, who are trembling with cold.
Dear birds of mine, you gossips dear to me,
'Tis sixteen years ago, moved by mere caprice,
That I coquetted with old Winter here,
Galant with heart of ice. And since that day,
'Tis I who am his slave. A girl
Was born us, and is in his power.
He keeps my child, my cherished Snégurotchka,
In these vast forests of eternal shade,
Deep in the heart of woods that never thaw.
Her father in his palace guards my child;
I, who adore her, fain would see her happy.
For love of her I must submit
To my old husband Winter, despot morose.
Ruling this land and me.
He will not, does not wish to yield his place to gentle Spring!
Come, come, dance a round, dance to warm yourselves.
Dance, dance, as dance the sons of men!
Sonic Birds seize their instruments, others begin to sing, while still others dance.

CHORUS OF BIRDS

From one end to the other
Of this vast world.
The birds come hastening;
To their queen's presence.
Subjects leal.
The birds assemble.
Who among our folk
Are the strong, the masters?
Who are the small and weak?
Hail, followed by snowflakes, commences to fall on the dancing Birds; the wind begins to blow, the sky is veiled in clouds which hide the moon; the storm spreads afar.

THE BIRDS

Crowding around Fairy Spring, cry out.
Ah, ah! It is snowing! The big flakes are falling!

FAIRY SPRING

Quick! Into the woods!
King Winter himself is coming!
The Birds hide in the bushes. King Winter comes out of the forest.

SCENE II

Fairy Spring, King Winter

KING WINTER

When the cold cracks the timbers.
And the walls of the houses ;
When the frost makes the great courtyard gates
Creak on their hinges,
Then the smoke rising over the dwellings,
The smoke floating upward to vanish
'Neath the breath of the wind,
I freeze of a sudden.
Aye, I freeze it and hold it
Suspended ;
O'er the plain, above the trees
Suspended —
What pleasure it gives me.
How I enjoy it!

FAIRY SPRING

Your holiday has lasted long enough.
Come,
Be reasonable, and go! Off with you!

KING WINTER

Let be!
I'm going — You no longer love me, though.
No longer you recall the days gone by.

FAIRY SPRING

Now to whom
Will you confide your daughter?

KING WINTER

She is here,
Already grown up, steady, old enough to behave;
No road leads to her refuge safe:
There she can stay all undisturbed.

FAIRY SPRING

Madness !
Nay, liberty is what a young girl needs.

KING WINTER

Well do I know the sun
Would gladly slay our darling child,
I know the burning sun would clasp and melt
In the sky's fire, in passion's flame the heart
Of our child Snégurotchka. She, however,
As long as she is pure and innocent.
Need never fear the burning sun. Listen !
No girl can ever be too straightly guarded.
Boby!, the poor devil, he is childless.
We'll give her to him, she shall be his daughter !

FAIRY SPRING

I am willing.

KING WINTER

Little Snégurotchka, come here quickly!

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Peering out from the edge of the forest.
Hallo! Hallo!
She runs out upon the stage and goes up to her father.

SCENE III

Snégurotchka, King Winter and Fairy Spring, afterward the Faun.

FAIRY SPRING

Poor little flower, poor wild flower.
Come to me quickly, come into my arms!
Caressing her.
My sweet, would you live alone and free
Among mere men ?

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Oh yes, oh yes, dear mother !
To go a-strawberrying in the woods,
Replying to merry-voiced companions,
A-ou, A-ou !
To sing in chorus, after Lel repeat
The joyous songs that celebrate the
spring,
Oi, Lado Lel!
Such is my dream, were my delight;
For without song I cannot live.
Consent, dear father, and when you
return.
With Winter to deep forest fastnesses.
At fall of night then I will sing, I'll sing.
To lend our loneliness a needed cheer.
The gayest of the songs I know.
'Tis handsome Lei who'll teach me them.
And I'll be quick to learn.

KING WINTER

This handsome Lel, who made him
known to you ?

SNÉGUROTCHKA

From out my hiding place
I've seen him passing. I have seen the
girls
Go to him, promising the shepherd boy
The sweetest kisses if he'd sing for them.
And call him tender names: You
handsome Lel!
You charming Lel, Oh Lel beloved!

FAIRY SPRING

This Lel.
Say, does he sing so well, my pet?

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Mother! I know
I know, dear mother mine, all of the
loveliest songs.
The lark's, which rises laughing to the
skies,
And the swan's plaintive call, sounding
o'er lakes adream.
Yes. and I know, I know
The nightingale's pure voice, her song
sublime.
Enchantress of profoundest night;
but I love Lel's songs best of all.
Yes, I love best the songs of Lel, and day
and night.

Without rest or repose

I hark and listen;
And feel my whole heart melt.

KING WINTER

Melt! Melt!
O dreaded word! Word filled with evil
omen!
Snégurotchka, avoid Lel, my daughter.
Mistrust his song and pleasant words!

FAIRY SPRING

O my daughter,
Your mother loves you, and will watch
o'er you!

SNÉGUROTCHKA

I am a child both prudent and discreet,
but I
Fear neither Lel, nor yet the songs he
sings.

FAIRY SPRING

Snégurotchka, if it should chance that
you
Some day are filled with anguish and
with grief.
Come seek me in the vale of the god
Yarilo.
Call on my name, and whatever you
demand.
That will I do for you!

SNÉGUROTCH KA

Thanks, mother mine.

VOICES IN THE FOREST

A-ou! A-ou!
*The Faun comes out of the hollow tree-
trunk, stretching and yawning.*

KING WINTER

Hark to me, Faun:
If Lel, or any other of these men.
Ever pursues the daughter of the snow.
Against their culpable attempts, defend
her;
Lead them astray amid the tangled
thickets.
And set them floundering in the water-
bogs!

THE FAUN

I shall, my master!
*Crossing his arms above his head he
disappears in the hollow trunk. The
Berendeys are celebrating the
carnaval, off stage.*

CHORUS

Oï, oï, oï,
Oï, fair Carnaval, Carnaval!
Oï, fair Carnaval, Carnaval!

FAIRY SPRING

They are the joyous songs sung by the
Berendeys.
King Winter, let us be off! Snégurotchka,
farewell!
Be happy now, O child of mine!

SNÉGUROTCHKA

O mother mine.
Whether or not I may find happiness,
at least I'll seek it!

FAIRY SPRING

Come now, let winter cease!
A truce to hailstorms and to frosts ! Go
swiftly.
Do not sadden thus the merry carnival
cortege!

KING WINTER

A truce to cold, the winter's o'er!
*Off, making a sign with his cap. The
snowfall ceases, the clouds disappear.
The weather becomes clear as at the
beginning of the act. A crowd of the
Berendeys. Some are pushing the sleigh
bearing the mannekin representing the
Carnaval toward the forest (Chorus I.);
others remain somewhat further to the
rear (Chorus II.). Snégurotchka remains
behind the bushes, near the hollow tree.*

SCENE IV

*Snégurotchka, Bobyl, Bobyllicka,
Berendeys.*

CHORUS II

Entering upon the stage.
Oï, oï, oï!
Oï, fair Carnaval! Oï, fair Carnaval!
Carnaval procession.

CHORUS I

The cocks have crowed since dawn
began.
Announcing merry carnival.
Farewell, farewell. Carnaval, farewell!
You have gorged us with good food,
Made us tipsy with hydromel and beer,
Farewell, farewell, Carnaval, farewell!
Good wine has been running in streams.
Good wine has been running like water.
Farewell, farewell, Carnaval, farewell!
There you stand, so haughty and proud,
Stuffed with straw, dressed in moss,
Farewell, farewell. Carnaval, farewell!
Royal honors have been paid you here,
We lead you to the woods in a
handsome sleigh.
Farewell, farewell. Carnaval, farewell!
We shall leave you in a moment or so.
And our eyes shall see you no more.
Farewell, farewell, Carnaval, farewell!
*Chorus I pushes the sleigh toward the
forest and steps aside.*

CHORUS II

Oï, oï, oï!
Oï, fair Carnaval, Oï, fair Carnaval oï!
A whole year long there you shall sleep.
And when next year comes awake again.
Farewell!

CARNAVAL

The summer coming soon will fly,
Farewell, thou sun of gold and flame!
Fall will take flight when summer's gone.
Farewell, ye crops, harvests farewell!
Then come the months whose nights are long.
The winter white with fallen snows.
Already, though, the day grows long,
the Sun grows hotter. When sets in
The thaw, and when the birds once more
Drink running water from the brooks.
You will see Carnival again!
He disappears. Bobyl catches hold of the empty sleigh, his wife clings to him.

BOBLICKA

Come, let us go back!

BOBYL

Now wait!
What, wife of mine, is it already over?
Our laughter done? Are we no more
To eat and drink while others pay?
Must we now toil and tighten up the belt?
Thanks, thanks! In truth, that will not do for me.
Boby! what shall we do, alas!
Poor dear, how can we manage without drink?
he dances.
Most beggarly of all beggars
Is Bobyl! — named wretchedness.
He has nothing here on earth.
To spend or wear, no goods nor chattels.

BORYLICKA

Will you come back here, drunkard!

CHORUS OF BERENDEYS

Bah, let him be!
Bobyl moves off toward the forest. Snégurotchka shows herself. Everybody draws near the tree trunk.

BOBYL

Good people, come and see this wondrous miracle!

CHORUS OF BERENDEYS

A princess! A live one, a real one!
With her gloves, her boots and her pelisse !

BOBYL

Princess, tell us where you're going!
What shall we call you ? Speak, Princess!

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Snégurotchka ! Where I go how can I tell?
Yet if you be kind, then be my hosts.
And I will follow you into your town.
He who had the wit to discover me
Let him take me for his daughter.

BOBYL

Ah well, then I'm a great lord this moment.

Come all of you, come step into my palace,
Enter my palace with its seven marble pillars.
Come, boyards and princes, come one and all!
Bring unto me all your most splendid gifts
And I, who am not proud, will smile on you.

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Farewell, father, farewell, farewell, my mother!
Oh forest, farewell, farewell, farewell!

VOICES IN THE FOREST

Farewell, farewell, farewell, farewell!
The trees and bushes salute Snégurotchka, bending down before her.

CHORUS OF BERENDEYS

A-ou, a-ou! How terrifying!
Aie, aie, aie, aie, aie!
The crowd disperses in a panic.

Curtain.

ACT I

A suburb of Berendey, across the river. To the right, Bobyl's wretched hut, with its crumbling front; before it, a bench. To the left, Koupava's house, painted with various colors. At the back a street; at the other end of the street a hop-garden and a bee-hive. Between them, a path leading to the river. It is evening; the horns of the shepherd's are heard. The inhabitants of the suburb gather together, among them Bobyl.

SCENE I

Bobyl, Lel, Snégurotchka, somewhat later. Young Girls.

LEL

He enters, playing his shepherd pipe. Bobyl signs to him to enter his hut.
For your kindly greeting
Poor Lel has naught to offer you,
He only has his music and his songs.
Say, friend, would you have him sing?

BOBYL

For music I have no great liking.
Sing for Snégurotchka rather than for me;
But watch out lest your songs be sung in vain.
She is chary of her favors,
And cold as the snow,
You'll get but a word of thanks and — farewell!
Off.

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Good-day, handsome Lel, good-day!
Come closer !

LEL

Shall I sing?

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Ah, Lel, I hardly dared to beg you to.

LEL

Little maid, there is a price
Which I prefer to others for my songs.
Little maid, with a little kindness
Poor Lel, the shepherd
Fain would be paid, or with a kiss.

SNÉGUROTCHKA

In truth, is that the price you ask?
A kiss is it so dear?
A kiss is not enough to pay your songs.
And therefore I'll not kiss you, Lel!

LEL

Then pick a flower 'mid the grass,
And offer me it for my song!

SNÉGUROTCHKA

picking a flower.
Here, take it then!

LEL

If any ask
Who offered it to me I shall say 't was you!
Snégurotchka stands, wellnigh in tears, her hand resting on Lel's shoulder.
The forest gaily awakens
And yonder the herdsman sings;
Ah, how sweet it is to live!
The sun shines radiantly
Among the branches, the silver birches
Quiver when blows the breeze.
Ah, how sweet it is to live!
Amid the bushes, in the distance,
By the narrow woodland path,
A maid comes running hurriedly;
She runs and runs, fast and ever faster.
She bears two bouquets of flowers.
For her lover and herself!

CHORUS OF YOUNG MAIDENS

Lel, Lel, Lel, handsome Lel.
Loeli, Loeli, Lel, so kind, so graceful !
Our Lelionka, Lel, our Lel, handsome Lel,
Come join us quickly, Lelionka!
Lel casts away the flower given him by Snégurotchka, and is about to go toward the Young Maidens.

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Whither away? Do you reject my flower?

LEL

What shall I do with it? It has already faded!
Where do I go? Behold, on yonder branch.
That perching- bird. He'll pipe a snatch of song
Then fly away. Say, can you hold him?

SCENE II

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Alone.

Ah, how ill I feel, and how my poor heart suffers!

Like some heavy stone the flower
Lel cast aside has bruised this heart of mine!

The other girls know how to charm him.
With laugh more kindling, and with warmer voices.

Alas, I stay alone here and I weep.

For Lel disdains me, flees afar from me!

O Father Winter, what evil you have done me?

O Mother Spring, be kind, and give to me
A bit of ardent sunshine and of flame.

To warm again this poor cold heart of mine!

SCENE III

Snégurotchka, Koupava.

KOUPAVA

Snégurotchka, I am happy,

I'm happy, and would like to throw my arms around

The neck of every passer-by, and shout my joy aloud.

Hearken, Snégurotchka, and share with me the joy I feel!

At dawn I gathered flowers on the hill
Amid the sunshine; when I saw appear
A handsome youth with long and curly hair.

His glance was kind; and well you know yourself.

That without friendship it were vain to live.

Some one day or another we must love...

He swore and meant it honestly,
At dawn, the day held holy to god Yarilo,
Before the tzar he'd crown my brow with flowers,

And make of me his wife.

Snégurotchka, soon my dear Mizguir
Will hasten hither, seeking his betrothed
Among the other maids. Lo, here he comes!

Mizguir makes his appearance in the distance, with two servitors. The Young Maidens and Lel re-enter.

SCENE IV

Snégurotchka, Koupava, Mizguir, Lel, Servitors, Young Maidens and Young Men. Mizguir and his two servitors enter bearing bags. Koupava hastens to hide among the Young Maidens.

KOUPAVA

Young maidens, my comrades dear,
Alas, here comes the lover who would bear me off

From my loved parents and my village home!

Do not yield up your sister, comrades mine!

Or if needs must, let there be ransom paid!

MIZGUIR

O fair young maidens, of more use than to you

Koupava is to me. I have no one

To care for me and for my dwellingplace

No one to comb my long and curling hair.

CHORUS OF YOUNG MAIDENS

He must pay ransom who would gain the beauty

Whom you come seeking in our midst.

Give us a rouble, a half a rouble, quickly.

And you shall have Koupava.

MIZGUIR

Taking money from a bag which a Servitor holds, and giving it to the maidens.

Here, take this gold, you handsome maidens.

It gladdens me to pay the ransom to you.

He hands them a bag full of walnuts and gingerbread.

Here are some bags of spiced cake for you,

Accept them, pray!

the Young Maidens begin to sing a wedding chorus, while the Young Men surround Koupava.

CHORUS OF YOUNG MAIDENS

Filled with pride, he struts superbly,
Just like a peacock when he spreads his tail;

Yet golden are the feathers he is moulting.

It is the bridegroom by Koupava chosen,
Him to follow, him to follow

She is ready to desert her comrades!

CHORUS OF YOUNG MEN

You shall not have Koupava, we'll protect her!

We'll defend her, nor yield her up for naught,

Or everyone may think that they can come and take

Our loveliest village maids if so inclined.
they hold out their hats.

MIZGUIR

to the Young Men.

To you, I'll speak in quite another tone!

KOUPAVA

my dear love, my dearest love,

I leave my parents and my village home,
I leave them both for you, my wellbeloved.

Bid not Koupava sorrow, nor break her heart so faithful and tender.

My dear sisters, now sing a festive chorus

And let us dance gaily in the meadow!

CHORUS OF YOUNG MAIDENS

Ah, in the plain, ah, in the plain,

Stands a linden-tree ;

Beneath the linden, beneath the linden-tree

Is a tent.

Mizguir and Koupava draw near to Snégurotchka.

KOUPAVA

Snégurotchka, to please me, once again;
For the last time come dance with us!

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Go dance then, let Lel follow us!

I'll lay my spindle down and quickly join you.

she goes into her izba.

KOUPAVA

My dear love, let us go, and they will follow!

MIZGUIR

O wait! Do wait!

KOUPAVA

The village girls are waiting for us yonder.

Snégurotchka returns, Bobyl and Bobylicka coming behind her.

MIZGUIR

This little maid is Snégurotchka; but Lel, Say, who is he?

SCENE V

Snégurotchka, Koupava, Mizguir, Lel, Bobyl, Bobylicka.

KOUPAVA

Without Lel, Snégurotchka will be very sad.

MIZGUIR

You think so, eh? With Mizguir, I am sure
That she would be far happier.

KOUPAVA

But Mizguir, what of me?

MIZGUIR

O well, then Lel shall have you!

KOUPAVA

My well-beloved, I am your own;
The grave alone can part us twain.

MIZGUIR

Go where you choose!
For my part, here I stay.

BOBYL

I greet you!

KOUPAVA

A flood of burning tears

Now blinds my eyes,

The mill-stone of his scorn

Crushes this heart of mine.

Go, love another woman, since mine eyes

No longer can behold the wrong you do;

Nor my heart feel the agony you cause!

Oh, Snégurotchka, cruel one.

Return to me my well-beloved!

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Koupava, hapless friend, and you, mad
love of hers,
Depart in peace. Snégurotchka would no
longer know you.
she endeavors to leave them.

MIZGUIR

Holding her back.

Ah, no! Snégurotchka, remain.
Tell me what is your happy lover's name?

SNÉGUROTCHKA

I have none!

MIZGUIR.

Then I shall be your lover!

To Koupava.

Look yonder, Koupava, do you see the
sun

Already seek the shadows, soon to
vanish?

Will he again illumine the skies?

KOUPAVA

Suns that have set have lost their flame!

MIZGUIR

A dead love is not born again!

Vainly you would rekindle it, Koupava!

KOUPAVA

Misfortune is my fate!

SCENE VI

*Snégurotchka, Mizguir, Bobyl, Lel,
Koupava, Berendeys and Wives of the
Berendeys.*

KOUPAVA

Re-enters.

Aid me in my distress!

CHORUS OF THE PEOPLE

hapless friend, how he has outraged you!

What an unworthy insult, what an
unworthy insult!

What an affront for our young maidens!

KOUPAVA

Tell me, cruel one, before all the people.

Did your heart then betray the faith you
plighted

At the same time when you declared you
loved me?

Or this one day, has it made you a
perjurer?

Answer!

MIZGUIR

I might have loved you always, now I love
another:

Snégurotchka!

CHORUS OF THE PEOPLE

His cowardly betrayal insults us all!

O shame we all must suffer!

Such a misfortune we have not yet
suffered!

MIZGUIR

Your eyes plunged into my eyes' very
depths,
All unafraid, your voice was ardent;
And I thought, seeing you thus lack
restraint.

Some day some other lover

Might take my place!

KOUPAVA

Ah, my father, ah, my father!

Who will defend me?

CHORUS OF THE PEOPLE

The just protector of all those who suffer

Is our tzar. Go see the tzar, Koupava!

KOUPAVA

Mizguir! O wretched fate! My heart
despairs!

*She loses consciousness, Lel supporting
her.*

End of act one.

ACT II

*An open anteroom in the palace of
Berendey. At the back, behind the
balustrade of the gallery, tree-tops as
well as towers and wooden balconies,
ornamented with carvings, are visible.*

SCENE I

*The Tzar Berendey is seated in a golden
chair, occupied with painting one of the
columns in colors. Somewhat further on
may be seen blind gusli-players with their
instruments; the Tzar's pages stand at
the doors opening on the gallery.*

CHORUS OF BLIND GUSLI-PLAYERS.

The vibrant and prophetic voice of the
gush

Sings, O tzar of ours, thy grandeur and
thy glory!

Our sightless eyes are turned toward the
earth,

They are closed forever in a night that
knows no dawn.

Glory, glory through the ages, to the wise
tzar,

To the protector of the peac!

Ceaselessly upon our guslis we will sing

O sire and tzar, thy grandeur and thy
glory!

*The Tzar thanks the blind men with a
gesture, and they are led off.*

SCENE II

*The Tzar, Bermiate, a Page, later
Koupava.*

A PAGE

Entering.

A young girl prays

In tears, that she

Be given an audience.

THE TZAR

To the children

Of my people, my door

Is never closed!

SCENE III

*The Tzar, Bermiate, Koupava, Pages. The
Page introduces Koupava.*

KOUPAVA

O tzar, my fater!

THE TZAR

Raising her, kindly.

Speak, I am listening.

KOUPAVA

May I tell all?

THE TZAR

You must tell all!

KOUPAVA

Deign to reply :

When a youth looks at one and speaks to
one of love.

When one believes that one could live
with him happily,

When, finally, one loves him, is one at
fault?

THE TZAR

No, my dear daughter.

KOUPAVA

'Tis my sole crime.

May I tell all?

THE TZAR

You must tell all!

KOUPAVA

For him I had forgotten all the universe.

The tenderest love possessed me, life
and soul.

In the deep forest our two hearts were
happy.

Lost in each other's gaze, we were in
ecstasy.

THE TZAR

My heart is moved by this your honest
grief.

KOUPAVA

Great tzar, my father, tell me.

Happiness, is it naught but an empty
dream?

THE TZAR

O simple, hapless child!

KOUPAVA

O great tzar, to the meadow...

THE TZAR

Speak, I am listening.

KOUPAVA

I had gone, taking my comrades with me,
And there no more had Mizgnir seen
among us
Treachorous Snégurotchka...

THE TZAR

Go on, go on!

KOUPAVA

Than he rushed up to this fair thief of
hearts;
Forgets me, mocks me and insuks me,
too!
All strength forsakes my body, which
grows cold;
Suddenly, as falls a sheaf of grain
I totter; ah, look at me, I fall,
I fall, I fall, my senses flee...
She is about to fall, the Tzar supports her.

THE TZAR

Go, and straightway seize within his
home
This felon vile! Let him be haled at once
Before his tzar. And then let there be
called
From all the towers my people
wellbeloved.
That they make haste to come to the
tribunal.
*He goes off into his own apartments.
Two heralds mount the gables.*

SECOND HERALD

Sonorously.
Hark to my words!
Most valiant boyards.
Most powerful and noble.
Majestic boyards,
With your long, flowing beards,
Lords of fair castles
And of bare-foot serfs!

FIRST HERALD

Hear, all of ye, the summons of your tzar.
Know the expression of his sov' reign will!

THE TWO HERALDS

Draw near his throne magnificent.
Draw near that throne sublime
Of the palace whereto your tzar you
summons!
Come to the courtyard of the tzar,
Come all unto his tribunal of justice,
Where he gives judgment!
*they descend from the gables. From the
inner rooms of the palace issue forth
Courtiers, Wives of the
Boyards, Pages; through the outer door
and by way of the staircase the people
enter, Lel among them. Mizguir is led in.
Bermiate orders the rank's of the
Courtiers. At the end of the procession
appears the Tzar Berendey himself.*

SCENE V

*The Tzar, Bermiate, Lel, Koupava,
Mizguir, Wives of the Boyards, Heralds,
Pages, the People.*

THE TZAR

I thank you, children! The culprit, where
is he?

BERMIATE

Great tzar, Mizguir awaits your
judgment.

THE TZAR

And is his crime known unto all?

CHORUS OF THE PEOPLE

Aye, it is known!

THE TZAR

And you, do you admit your fault?

MIZGUIR

Yes, tzar!

THE TZAR

Speak, how shall he be punished?

BERMIATE

Command he take Koupava for his wife!

CHORUS OF THE PEOPLE

O tzar, let him implore her to forgive.
Or else let him be punished!

THE TZAR

Mizguir, would'st ask her to forsgive
you?
Do you wish her for wife?

MIZGUIR

Mizguir has but one love within his soul,
Snégurotchka.

KOUPAVA

O tzar sublime,
There is naught but scorn for him now in
my heart!

THE TZAR

Then we will leave
The task of vengeance to the august
gods.
Therefore do I, his judge, condemn
Mizguir to exile from his native land;
Let him live with the wolves in forest
wastes,
Wolves cruel as himself; their savage
hearts
Will understand your own, Mizguir!

MIZGUIR

I have no word to say in my defence;
And yet, O tzar, if you had ever seen
Snégurotchka appear —
Enter Snégurotchka, Bobyl and his Wife.

Chorus of the People

There comes Snégurotchka, with Bobyl
and Bobylicka.

SCENE VI

*The Tzar, Bermiate, Koupava, Lel,
Mizguir, Snégurotchka, Bobyl, Bobylicka,
Wives of the Boyards, Pages, the People.*

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Looking about the palace.
How fair a palace! How splendid all
things are!
Look, mother mine, all shines and
sparkles, look!
*She crouches on the ground to examine a
flower painted on a column.*

BOBYLICKA

Do I not look like a lady?
Do they see my handsome bonnet?

WIVES OF THE BOYARDS

Bobylicka, see her! Look at her
handsome bonnet!
'Tis one with horns of ribbon and a pearl!

SNÉGUROTCHKA

They admire and look at you.

THE TZAR

This beauty could be useful to us.

BERMIATE

To appease Yarilo.

BOBYLICKA

Come, say "good-day!"

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Forgive me, I beg of you!
She bows.
Good-day, dear friends, good-day to all!

BOBYLICKA

The wives of the boyards all are here;
Yet my bonnet is of all the handsomest.

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Yours is the handsomest!
Yet who is that? Yonder,
In a robe with golden girdle.
And that long beard of white?

BOBYL

Why that's the tzar! Go to him without
fear,
Bow to him, little one!

SNÉGUROTCHKA

Greetings, O tzar!

THE TZAR

Solemn and kindly nature, O holy power
and mystery divine.
My heart rejoicing worships all the
wondrous gifts you give to us;
Your hidden purposes and goodness. Far
from the sight of all,
Deep in the savage woods you bade for
us unfold
This fresh and humble flower, this little
mayflower white.
You made dawn weep o'er her his silvery
tears of dew;
So subtle and profound a perfume this
flower exhales.
It charms each sense and stirs the very
soul!

Snégurotchka, lo the time has come,
So choose the bridegroom whom you
may desire!

SNÉGUROTCHKA
Whom shall I choose, O tzar! I know not!

THE TZAR
Your heart will tell you!

SNÉGUROTCHKA
But my heart has not spoken.

THE TZAR
Be not afraid,
For age, my child, it brings the old man
near
To the young maiden. Wherefore should
you blush
Before these faded and paternal eyes?
So tell me all, for whom then, do you
wait,
At night, upon the doorstep,
tremblingly?
The one who ever, ever comes too late,
the one
Whom your lips welcome with a cry of
joy.
A\`ith laughter and with kisses and with
tears?
AA'ho is it? Tell me. daughter!

SNÉGUROTCHKA
There is no one.

BERMIATE
Her candid heart as yet knows naught of
love.

THE TZAR
Know naught of love when one is fair as
she?
'Tis an offence to Yarilo the great!
Because of that the god is angry with us.
He who before another dawn will wake
Love in the frozen heart of this fair
child—
I vow and swear — with a most roval gift
Shall take her for his wife!

BERMIATE
There's no one says a word!

WIVES OF THE BOYARDS
O lord and tzar! Among the youths
Of this place there's only one who knows
With but a word to move a woman's
heart.
And waken it to love, 'tis Lel!

THE TZAR
How great an honor waits you,
shepherd!

LEL
My ardent passion shall embrace her
soul.
And thanks to god the sun, our lord
omnipotent.
She too shall love!

MIZGUIR
Illustrious tzar! Recall my banishment.
And this I swear to you, 'tis I
Who'll gain the love of that young virgin
heart!

THE TZAR
Mizguir and Lel, your promise I accept;
Hopeful am I, and without fear will wait
What fate decree. Into the sacred wood
This evening we shall all together go;
your songs
And dances they shall while the hours.
The sweet spring night will pass as does a
dream.
And on the morrow, when the first dawn
pales.
To-morrow with the people I myself
Shall go to meet you, O sun-god, lord of
flame!

CHORUS OF THE PEOPLE
Honor and glory be thine,
Most mighty and sagacious tzar!
O father of thy people!
Master beneficent!
O tzar most wise!
That we may happy be,
O live forever,
Most mighty and sagacious tzar!

End of act two.

ACT III
*A vast glade in the forest; to the left and
to the right a thick growth of timber
which rises like a wall behind the brush.
In the distance, among the bushes, may
be seen splendid tents. The sun is about
to set.*

SCENE I
*The young Berendeys are dancing their
rounds. The youths and maidens wear
crowns of flowers upon their heads. The
old men and women are seated in groups
among the bushes, drinking beer and
eating gingerbread. Among the first
group of dancers is Koupava, in the
middle of the group Lel and
Snégurotchka, Mizguir, who takes no
part in the merriment, now show's
himself amid the crowd, now moves off
toward the forest. Bobyl plays the
shepherd pipe while he dances. Bobyllicka
and some of her neighbors are seated
near by, drinking beer. The Tzar and his
suite watch the people amuse themselves
from a distance.*

YOUNG MEN AND YOUNG MAIDENS,
SNÉGUROTCHKA, LEL
Ah, a linden-tree grows on the plain!
Beneath the linden-tree a white tent
rises,
Beneath the tent stands a girl.
In the prairie, ah, the fair one
Has gathered flowers and made a crown
of them.

For whom is the crown? Happy the youth
who wears it!
The crown is for her well-beloved!
*Snégurotchka places the crown on the
head of Lel.*

BOBYL
Dancing and imitating the beaver.
A beaver
Bathes in the water,
And ducks about,
Ai, Loeli, Loeli, Loeli!
Then leaves the stream
And climbs a rock.
And dried himself-
Ai, Loeli, Loeli, Loeli!
From the top of the rock
He looks all around.
To see if anyone is coming.
Ai, Loeli, Loeli, Loeli!
The merry huntsmen,
And their swift hounds
Are trailing the beaver.
Ai, Loeli, Loeli, Loeli!
Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, Loeli, Loeli, Ai!

THE TZAR
Entering the foreground with his suite.
I greet you, O my children! I give thanks
to all.
Thanks for your songs, and for your
merry dance.
My heart rejoices in the joy you feel!
Yet you would like to laugh a little
longer,
Buffoons, now dance and show the tricks
you know!
The Buffoons hurry up, they dance.

LEL
Blowing his horn.
One day the cloud said to the thunder:
Growl, growl. 'Tis I who pour down rain
That the earth may be refreshed;
And the flowers may be happy, thanks to
us.
The maidens they shall gather
strawberries,
And the young men shall follow them.
Lel, my Lel, mv Loeli, Loeli, Loeli, Lel!
Through the woods an old man slowly
passes
Who, seeing the young maidens says to
them:
My children, tell me why so hard you're
weeping?
The naughty girl now hiding from you
yonder,
Will she not answer to the calls you
utter?
Behold her laughing at you 'mid the
bushes!
my Lel, my Lel, Loeli, Loeli. Loeli, Lel!

THE TZAR
Thanks, handsome Lel! Children, this
story
I disbelieve! Among the fair young
maidens
Pick out the one you think most
charming,

Lead her before me, and this very moment
Let her, before the people here assembled
Give a kiss to pay you for your song!
Lel moves toward the young girls. Snégurotchka arranges her hair. In passing before her, Lel stops a moment as though undecided.

SNÉGUROTCHKA
Take me, handsome Lel! Take me, take me, dear Lel!
Lel passes her by and goes on to Koupava. Snégurotchka, in tears, conceals herself in the bushes. Lel chooses Koupava, and leads her across the entire stage to the Tzar Berendey: then drawing her to him, embraces her.

THE TZAR
Come, my friends, night closes round us;
Come, take your part now in the festival.
The while together we await god Yarilo.
Let us make haste!
My children dear, I pray that joy attend you!
Off with his suite.

CHORUS OF THE PEOPLE
May joy fill all your soul as well!
Come, we will see our kind tzar's festival!
Little by little, they go off. It is night. The stage is empty.

SCENE II
Snégurotchka and Mizguir, then the Faun.

SNÉGUROTCHKA
Enters.
How is it, dear Lel, your heart is so cold
To Snégurotchka, the poor orphan girl?
Is she not pretty? Yes, indeed!
Yet you, you choose Koupava, lead her to the tzar,
And kiss her. She must be handsomer.
She must be handsomer, alas, than I?
My handsome Lel, listen to me!
The daughter of the snow will love you too, some day!
Come, give me your hand, and let us go together
To see the rising sun break from the shades!
She takes off her crown.
But I am alone, by Lel already I'm forgotten.
Me he abandons, he is with another.
She begins to sing, pensively.
Ah, it is not to please me.
No, it is not to please me,
Alas, that he doth sing his songs.

MIZGUIR
Entering.
Snégurotchka, long have I looked for you!
He seizes her hand.

SNÉGUROTCHKA
Terrified.
No, no, begone!

MIZGUIR
Ah, speak the word which bids my hope rekindle!
Upon my knees, behold, I beg that you will say it!
Ah, shall I be loved by you some day?
Reply!

SNÉGUROTCHKA
Your jewels and your wealth keep for yourself.
For my poor heart is not worth so much treasure;
Yet it is not for sale, my heart,
It only craves a little bit of love,
But not your love, Mizguir!

MIZGUIR
I am your master!

SNÉGUROTCHKA
Mercy, mercy! O save me, my handsome Lel!
Hasten to save me. Handsome Lel!

MIZGUIR
If Lel should hear you, let him come!
Yet he would come too late to save you now.
Snégurotchka struggles to release herself. The Faun appears.

THE FAUN
Clasping Mizguir from behind.
Wait, wait, now wait a bit, Mizguir!
Snégurotchka disengages herself, and runs across the glade to hide in the forest.
The Faun changes himself into a dead tree. Mizguir attempts to pursue Snégurotchka, but a forest spring is up from out of the ground and stops him. He endeavors to make his way through the thickset trees.

THE FAUN
Reappears.
In woodland depths pursue her shadow still!
A vision of Snégurotchka appears beyond the trees, beckoning to Mizguir.

MIZGUIR
'Tis you, 'tis you I see once more!
'Tis you, whom I will follow everywhere!

THE FAUN
The clear sunlight alone can drive away his dream.
He disappears underground.
The glade resumes its previous aspect.
Lel enters.

SCENE IV
Lel, then Koupava, later Snégurotchka.

KOUPAVA
Seeing Lel, she hurries to him.
At last once more I find you, whom I love.
My dearest friend, my Lel, my only joy!
My heart once more can feel, for you have saved me
From insult cruel, and from deepest chame.
You have restored to me my pride in life,
And with your kiss made me the equal of the happiest!

LEL
Well did I know which heart would overcome me!
In your sweet eyes my ravished glance is lost;
At last my soul its place of refuge finds!
Snégurotchka shows herself among the bushes, watching Lel and Koupava.

SNÉGUROTCHKA
In despair.
O mother, they've deceived me!
mother, O Fairy Spring,
I weep and I implore you ;
I want to love!
give me, mother mine,
A heart like other maidens have!
I want to love I I want to love!
mother, O Fairy Spring!
I want to love, or else I want to die!
Off, running.

End of act three.

ACT IV
The valley of the god Yarilo: at the back a lake covered with aquatic plants and flowers; along its border, flowering shrubs whose branches overhang the water to the right of the lake, the mountain of Yarilo, a bare rock, with pointed summit. The sun is rising.

SCENE I
Snégurotchka, coming down from the mountain, then Fairy Spring, followed by Flower-Spirits.

SNÉGUROTCHKA
O mother, my eyes are full of tears.
My heart weighed down with anguish and with sorrow!
You, whom my call brought from beneath the waves.
Hark to my plaint and take pity upon me!
Fairy Spring rises from the lake, surrounded by Flower-Spirits.

FAIRY SPRING
Snégurotchka, oh my child, what do you ask of me?
Tell me what sorrow moves you?
I have a single moment only to appease it.

SNÉGURITCHKA

Oh grant me the gift of love, for I would love or die!

FAIRY SPRING

O my child, your wish is granted!

FAIRY SPRING AND CHORUS OF FLOWER-SPIRITS

Flower of the springtide dawn.
White lily of the sombre woods.
Fier face illumine
With your reflection kind and sweet!
Flower of dreams, black poppy-bloom,
You magic flower,
Lull her, and enchant her thoughts!
Golden flower o' the hop. your exaltation
Spread through her heart!
She places the crown upon Snégurotchka's forehead.

SNÉGURITCHKA

In ecstase.

Ah, mother, what a miracle, how great my joy!
How lovely all on earth and in the skies,
What soft reflections on the waves, what kindly shadows!
How calm the forests! How pure and fair the dawn!

FAIRY SPRING

Dear daughter, hide your love from Yarilo the god;
Back to your dwelling, child, now quickly haste,
Nor lag to watch the dawn suffuse the sky.
Farewell, my daughter, and be faithful now
To your great vow supreme!
She disappears in the lake, together with the Flower-Spirits.

SCENE II

Snégurotchka and Mizguir.

MIZGUIR

Enters running.

Wait, wait for me, Snégurotchka!

SNÉGURITCHKA

Ah, whom do I see?

MIZGUIR

Snégurotchka, in vain I sought you
Last night in the forest; say, do you fear me?

SNÉGURITCHKA

Nay, my heart knows fear no longer.
Let me look into your eyes!
No longer terror troubles and vexes my soul,
I see your open glance, I hear your ardent voice!
Dear one, I am your own!
Take me in your arms and carry me away!

I want to love you, know no other law
Than your own wish! For ever I am yours!

Hide me where deepest woodland shadows lie.
From Yarilo, the sun-god's mortal fires!
Snégurotchka and Mizguir place themselves in the shade of a bush. The crowd descends from the mountain, moving across the forest. In the van come the gusli-players playing upon their instruments, and the shepherds blowing their horns; behind them the Tzar and his suite. Following the Tzar, in pairs, come the Young Men and Young Maidens who are betrothed, in holiday attire; further on the rest of the Berendeys. Reaching the valley, the crowd separates into two groups.

SCENE III

Snégurotchka, Mizguir, the Tzar, Lel and the People.

GENERAL CHORUS.

I.
We have sown the millet in the plain.
Oï, did Lado, you have sown it.

II.
We will thresh the millet on the floor,
Oï, did Lado, we will thresh it.

I.
And how will you thresh the millet?
Oï, did Lado.

II.
We will put the horses to it,
Oï, did Lado.

I.
The horses, we will take them,
Oï, did Lado.

II.
We will pay the ransom for them easily,
Oï, did Lado.

I.
What is the ransom offered us?
Oï, did Lado.

II.
We will give you a young maiden,
Oï, did Lado.

I.
And there will be one more of us,
Oï, did Lado.

II.
And there will be one less of us,
Oï, did Lado.
During this song the two groups have slowly drawn nearer each other, moving in cadence to the rhythm of their singing. When the song is ended, the Young Men take their sweethearts and bow to the Tzar.

THE TZAR

May your marriage be blessed!
Live lovingly, live happily.
And in abundance. And at last.
Surrounded by your children end your days!

MIZGUIR

Leading Snégurotchka before the Tzar.
O tzar august, you have commanded me
To win this heart, and I have done your bidding;
And now I ask that you will bless us here!

THE TZAR

Is it by your own wish that you confide
In Mizguir's love? My daughter, with your hand
Do you give him your heart?

SNÉGURITCHKA

O Lord tzar,
A hundred times I'll tell you, if you wish
He is my well-beloved! Before the dawn,
I fondly had confessed to him
The love I feel, and given him my life!
A dazzling ray pierces the clouds and alights on Snégurotchka.
How I am moved! Is't ecstasy or death?
What fire profound penetrates all my being!
O Mother Spring, thanks for this exaltation,
This joy divine given me, to know love!
My heart, my blood, the fibre of my being
Takes fire and burns! I die and melt away
In love and happiness ! Farewell, all ye
Companions mine! Farewell, farewell,
my well-beloved!
Oh love of mine, I am all yours.
In this last glance receive my soul!
She sinks to earth.

CHORUS

Ah, marvel strange and most mysterious!
Thus, as the snow melts in the sun's clear fire.
She has perished — Snégurotchka is no more!

LEL

O sun, radiance and power,
Sun, splendor of the world,
Glory to thee, god Yarilo!

CHORUS

Glory to thee!
At a sign from the Tzar, servitors lead in cattle and sheep with gilded horns, barrels of hydromel, plates and dishes and all the paraphernalia of a banquet.

End of act four.

THE END