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 fir trees, 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 fins. On the other side of the river, the town of Berendeyoff, the capital of the Tsar 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 Berendeyoffs; 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 Snegurotchka, 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 lead. 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 clutches 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 Snegurotchka. She, however, As long as she is pure and innocent. Need never fear the burning sun. Listen! No girl can ever be too straightforward guarded. Bobyl, 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 Snegurotchka, 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 o’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 Le!
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 Le! who’ll teach me them.
And I’ll be quick to learn.

KING WINTER
This handsome Le!, 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 Le!
You charming Le!, Oh Le! beloved!

FAIRY SPRING
This Le.
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
sublimes.
Enchantress of profoundest night;
but I love Le!’s songs best of all.
Yes, I love best the songs of Le, 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 Le!, 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 Le!, 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!

SNÉGUROTCHKA
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 Le!, 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-
bags!

THE FAUN
I shall, my master!
Crossing his arms above his head he
appears in the hollow trunk. The
Berendeyes are celebrating the
carnaval, off stage.

CHORUS
Oi, oï, Oï,
Oi, fair Carnaval, Carnaval!
Oi, fair Carnaval, Carnaval!

FAIRY SPRING
They are the joyous songs sung by the
Berendeyes.
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 carnaval
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
Berendeyes. Some are pushing the sleigh
bearing the man of promise, Carnaval:
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, Babyl, Bobylicka,
Berendeyas.

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

CHORUS I
The cocks have crowed since dawn
began.
Announcing merry carnaval.
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
Oi, oï, oï!
Oi, fair Carnaval, Oï, fair Carnaval oï!
A whole year long there you shall sleep.
And when next year comes awake again.
Farewell!

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CARNIVAL
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 Carnaval again!
He disappears. Bobyl catches hold of
the empty sleigh, his wife clings to him.

BOBLYK
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.
Bobyl, 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 do I go now 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.

BOBYL
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, pointed 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 are heard. The
inhabitants of the suburb gather together, among them Bobyl.

SCENE I
Bobyl, Lele, 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 Leel 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 Leel, good-day!
Come closer!
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, flies 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 Mızguir
Will hasten hither, seeking his betrothed
Among the other maidens. Lo, here he comes!
Mızguir makes his appearance in the distance, with two servitors. The Young Maidens and Lei re-enter.

SCENE IV

Snégurotchka, Koupava, Mızguir, Lei, Servitors, Young Maidens and Young Men. Mızguir 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!

No 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 dwelling-place
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 my midst.
Give us a rouble, a half a rouble, quickly.
And you shall have Koupava.

MIZGUIR

Taking money front 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 choral, 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 maidens 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 choral
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.

Mızguir 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 Lei 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 Babylicka coming behind her.

MIZGUIR

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

SCENE V

Snégurotchka, Koupava, Mızguir, Lei, Bobyl, Babylicka.

KOUPAVA

Without Lei, Snégurotchka will be very sad.

MIZGUIR

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

KOUPAVA

But Mızguir, what of me?

MIZGUIR

O well, then Lei 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, Babyl, Leļ, Koupava, Berendey, and Wives of the Berendey.

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 pledged
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 despair!
She loses consciousness, Let supporting her.

End of act one.

ACT II
An open ante-room 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 peace!
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 father!

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 Mizguir seen
among us
Treacherous 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 whereeto 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, Let among them. Mizguir is led in. Bermiate orders the rank's of the Courtiers. At the end of the procession appears the Tzar Berendezey 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?
BERMIAIT
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?
BERMIAIT
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.

KOUUPAVA
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 Bobilycka.

SCENE VI
The Tzar, Bermiate, Koupava, LeL,
Mizguir, Snégurotchka, Bobyl, Bobilycka,
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
Bobilycka, 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.

BERMIAIT
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 silvery tears of dew;
So subtle and profound a perfume this flower exhales.
It charms each sense and stirs the very soul!
MIZGUIR
Illustrous 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 decrees. 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 Berendey 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. Babyl plays the
shepherd pipe while he dances. Babylicka
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, my 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!
your 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.

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To Come, Lead me, Little Snégurotchka, entering. Mizguir, my stage is forgotten. Snégurotchka, Faun. Off. Chorus passing Snégurotchka. She moves with handsome hands. She does not choose 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
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 handsome. She must be handsome, alas, than it? 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 begin’s 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 somuch 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 thickest 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 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.
SNÉGUROTCHKA
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 Snégurotcka’s forehead.

SNÉGUROTCHKA
In ecstatic.
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 suffice 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!

SNÉGUROTCHKA
Ah, whom do I see?

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

SNÉGUROTCHKA
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 gushi-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 Berendey. 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.
Oi, did Lado, you have sown it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

II.
And there will be one less of us,
Oi, 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?

SNÉGUROTCHKA
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