

# CHEREVICHKI

## COMPACT DISC 1

### Act 1

#### Scene 1

##### Solocha's meeting and duet with Bes

- 1 *A winter's night; in the clear, starry sky the moon is shining. A road in the village of Dikanka: we see the roofs of the houses of the Ukrainian peasants, all covered with snow; fences, little gardens and trees are all frozen. On the left, Solocha's house with its chimney-pipe rising above the roof and a little gate leading onto the road: on the right Cub's house with a patio; the windows are shuttered. In the background the road divides into two roads leading right and left; at the fork there is an inn with lighted windows. Solocha steps out of her gate into the road and looks round, listening.*

##### SOLOCHA

- 2 Ah, how silvery the moon shines,  
how clearly and far we can see!  
I would stay awake all night and amuse myself,  
but I'm frightened of being seen.  
Ah, if the storm had burst over the open field  
I would have lit the stove at home and attached  
a guest...  
Be a good little chap, and help me open the gate  
and stay with me a while, if you feel like it!  
*(The imp leaps out and approaches Solocha furtively.)*  
Ah, how silvery the moon shines,  
how clearly and far we can see!  
I would stay awake all night and amuse myself,  
but I'm frightened of being seen.  
*(Suddenly Solocha turns round)*  
Keep away from me!  
You mustn't shock me like that!  
You've put on a mask with thorns,  
you've blackened your face with soot...  
You look like a real devil!  
How was I to recognise you...?

##### BES

Your beautiful eyes are not as sharp as they  
used to be, eh?  
Are you growing old, my dear Solocha?

##### SOLOCHA

Ha ha ha...  
From the front, look and look again  
there's nothing good, nor bad, about you,  
but from behind, believe me, you look like a  
devil... Ha ha...  
What makes you think I've grown old?  
The same blood, the same eyebrows,  
maybe a little thicker...  
Everybody is fond of me,  
they all want my caresses...  
Even the moon warms me, the frost tickles me...

##### BES

I've never met such a hot woman!

##### SOLOCHA

What nonsense are you speaking now?

##### BES

Cheer up, my lass, you're just what we needed!  
We'll have a good time tonight!  
I feel like spending the night with you!

##### SOLOCHA

But I'm not a witch.

##### BES

Aren't you? Oh yes, you are.

##### SOLOCHA

And how do you know?

##### BES

There are all the signs: big bones, high breast,  
grasping hands, strong legs – there you are in all  
your beauty, it's just that in your dark locks  
there's a white hair, a hint of a moustache above  
your lip, and there's another clue – your voice is  
a little hoarse, and then a little defect – a tail,  
just a little one, like a hook... a little tail!

##### SOLOCHA

And when did you see it?

##### BES

I am a little imp, you know.

##### SOLOCHA

Well... if that's the way it is,  
I can see you're no fool, you could be useful,  
there's no sense beating about the bush with  
you.

Just wait now, and no peeping.

I'll go and light the fire.  
You look up there, you'll see the smoke coming  
out of the chimney pot, and behind it,  
I'll go up. I'll fly up to the bright stars,  
and then dive down into the blue air!  
I'll ride my broomstick!

##### BES

I've been lucky with the woman and I'll be her  
ruin.

##### SOLOCHA

Bes will never catch me, he'll never catch me!

##### BES

But I'll follow her!

##### SOLOCHA

I'm still young whatever my age is.

##### BES

She's quite a girl, she really is!

##### SOLOCHA

I'll fly higher and higher,  
I'll fly up and dive down into the air!

##### BES

I don't need a broomstick, I'll fly after you!

##### SOLOCHA

Bes will never catch up with me  
even if he follows me...  
I'm still young whatever my age is,  
I'm really quite a girl.

##### BES

I will catch up with you.  
Solocha, you are a youngster!  
You're quite a girl!

##### SOLOCHA

I'll ride my broomstick  
and be carried off like a whirlwind.  
I'll fly higher and higher,  
and I'll dive down into the blue air.

##### BES

I've been a lucky little devil with Solocha,  
even though she doesn't want me.

*Snowstorm. Solocha hurries back to her house.  
Bes follows her movements.*

##### BES

- 3 She's got really warmed up, she's shaken, she's  
on fire!  
*(He rubs his hands in delight, but then stops  
and remembers something.)*  
But I was forgetting why I've come sneaking up  
here from hell! The witch's son, Vakula the  
blacksmith, played a dirty trick on me: he drew  
a picture of me, the villain, such a black picture  
that all the silly devils split their sides laughing  
at me! I can't forgive an insult like that.  
Just you wait, damned blacksmith!  
Just you try to go and see Oksana on her own,  
without her father. I'll steal the moon on the  
spot, and all the spirits of the wind, free from  
their chains, will start whisking around and  
heap up mounds of snow.  
On a night like this Cub won't dare set off to go  
and drink with his friend!  
Her father will see to it and keep him away  
from his daughter, he'll douse your spirits! He'll  
give you such a thrashing that you'll remember  
this devil's name!  
Hey you, wild winds, wintry storms!  
Shake off your icy chains, fly towards the sea  
over the steppes, cover the ravines with snow,  
the merchants' carts, the houses, the peasants'  
shelters, cover everything you come across with  
snow, you won't have to answer to anybody.

*A distant rumbling is heard in the air. The stars  
become pale. Bes looks up at the chimney pot.  
he sees sparks flying out, the witch appears  
wearing only her nightshirt, her head thrown  
back, her hair flowing free as she rides her  
broomstick. She holds a little broomstick in her  
hand.*

SOLOCHA *(howling)*  
Follow me!

##### BES

I'm coming, wait for me!

*Bes runs into the house and immediately  
afterwards, now in his real appearance, he  
comes out of the chimney pot and flies after the  
witch. Noises and hissing sounds grow louder in  
the air. The snowstorm rages. The black  
silhouettes of the devil and the witch fly swiftly  
across the sky covering the full disc of the  
moon.*

CHORUS OF SPIRITS (*behind the stage*)  
Light has become dark, darkness has become light.  
The clouds, like fog, pass slowly over the clearings.

*Cub and Panas come out of the house.*

CUB  
What the devil!

PANAS  
What is it?

CUB  
Look, Panas, just look. Where is the moon?

PANAS  
Well, really, I'll be damned.  
Where can it have gone? It was there before!

CUB  
It was but it isn't there now.  
The devil's behind all this.  
Cursed dog, you can't even find a glass of vodka in the morning!  
It must be a joke: I looked out of the window before and it was as bright as day!  
I just went to get my bearskin hat and...  
It's pitch black... Hadn't we better go back?

PANAS  
All right then, let's go back.

CUB  
But how can we? What about our booze-up?  
And our mate?

PANAS  
Ah yes; the booze-up... Right, come on, let's go, I suppose we'll find the way somehow.

*They move towards the back of the scene, their voices come from different directions.*

CUB  
Come on then! Where are you, my friend?

PANAS  
Hey, Cub, where are you?

CUB  
What a storm!

PANAS & CUB  
The inn!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS  
The merchants are freezing in the fields, there's no road and no way on...  
Only the houses are lit up, in honour of the Christmas star.

*Banks of snow cover the whole stage, which stays like this until the scene changes.*

Scene 2

Oksana's aria

*Cub's house. The inside of a little Ukrainian house with windows looking out onto the road, a stove and a low dividing wall behind which we call see Oksana's casquet and bed. The table is laid out for the feast, there is an oil-lamp, a wooden bowl and biscuits ready for the koljadki singers. A towel is hanging on the wall, near the stove a poker, an oven fork and a shovel. Oksana comes out from behind the dividing wall wearing her best dress. Her hair is tied lip with ribbons and she is holding a mirror. She listens to the sound of the wind for a while, then places her mirror on the table, standing it up against the bowl. She glances out of the window, but she is in a bad mood.*

Oksana  
4 Just look at the snowstorm!  
Only a fool would go out singing the *koljadki*! My father is the only one who's gone to the deacon, because he's drunk. Even in this terrible weather he didn't want to stay and celebrate Christmas with his own daughter, in the bosom of his family.  
5 A little apple tree was blossoming in the garden, it was in flower but it has withered; the mother cuddled her daughter, she prepared her dowry, but then she went away.  
Where are you, mother. Look at me, look at me from the other side, at least a glimpse through a crack,  
look at your little girl, your dear daughter, look at her, mother!  
Your daughter has a new blouse with pretty patterns,  
your daughter's hair is plaited with silken ribbons,  
on her white neck she wears a gold necklace, but the daughter like this is so ugly,  
look mother, look how ugly she is!  
Ah, who will ever fall in love with her?  
Who will caress her?  
Look well at me, mother, who will caress me like I am, who will love me?

*(She sits down on a stool pensively and picks up her mirror.)*

And yet people say that I'm as beautiful as a bright dawn, as a white swan,  
that none other is as beautiful as me!  
What do wicked people say about me!  
Oh no, they tell the truth.  
*(Vakula enters without Oksana's noticing him.)*  
Who has eyes like mine?  
Who has plaits like mine?  
My eyes are stars, my plaits are sinuous...  
Oh, how black my plaits are,  
how thick they are!  
Who has eyes like mine?  
Who has plaits like mine?  
My eyes are stars, my plaits are sinuous!  
People tell the truth:  
such beauty is nowhere to be found!

Scene with Vakula and Oksana

VAKULA  
6 She never takes her eyes off herself, and then she even praises her own beauty out loud! What a girl!

Oksana  
Who will take me as his wife?  
With whom will my father settle a marriage contract?  
No, it would be better never to get married, so I won't be unhappy if I find myself with an arrogant husband.

VAKULA  
I could stay here for ever  
and never take my eyes off her.

Oksana  
Who is there? Vakula? Who invited you?  
If you want I'll give you a smack with the shovel!  
You're all very good at playing tricks on the girls!  
I know you! Well, is my trunk ready?

VAKULA  
It's almost ready.  
Don't be cross, sweet little dove.  
I've been working on it day and night.  
My fair Oksana, sweet sun, dove, little swallow!  
I would give the world for a kiss!

Oksana  
Nothing of the sort! What cheek.  
He's found the honey, and now he wants a spoon!  
Keep away from me, off you go! You've got hands like iron...

VAKULA  
If I have to force you, it's not worth it...  
All she thinks of is enjoying herself and making herself pretty,  
but I love her, I love her so much!

Oksana  
But is it true what the people say?  
That your mother, Solochka, is a bit of a witch?  
Eh?

Vakula's Arioso

VAKULA  
I couldn't care less about mother or father.  
You are father and mother for me,  
you are everything that is best in the world!  
The Tsar himself could call me,  
could promise me half his reign,  
could give me a golden workshop with two silver hammers,  
could order me an anvil in precious stones!  
And I would say to the Tsar:  
my lord Tsar, I don't need anything.  
My lord Tsar! There's nothing in the world I need,  
I don't need gold, silver, precious stones,  
just give me Oksana.

Scene for Vakula and Cub

Oksana  
7 Just look at you!  
Yet my father knows what he's about.  
remember my words, he will marry your mother!

*Oksana retires behind the dividing wall with her candle. Vakula stands still, thunderstruck by her words. Cub comes into the house all covered with snow; he stops, incredulous, when he sees Vakula, who does not recognise him.*

CUB  
I must have come to the wrong house...

VAKULA (*disguising his voice*)  
What do you want?

CUB  
I want to sing the *koljadka*...

VAKULA  
The *koljadka*? Get out...  
*(He hits him on the throat and on the back of his neck.)*

CUB  
Hey, hands off.

VAKULA  
Go on, get out...

CUB (*coming to himself again*)  
My friend,  
I'll go of my own accord, I'll take my leave.

VAKULA  
Out!

CUB  
Just look how bold the devil's smith has become!  
Not surprising, he thinks he really is someone!  
I'll show you, just you wait. You'll see...

#### Scene and duet for Oksana and Vakula

*Oksana comes rushing out from behind the low wall without her candle.*

8 OKSANA  
What's all this noise?  
Perhaps my father has come home,  
(*Vakula enters. Oksana thinks it is her father and goes to greet him.*)  
Father! It's not my fault. I'm sorry...  
(*Realising the mistake she has made, she steps back.*)  
Vakula, who did you drive out?

VAKULA  
I didn't recognise him...

OKSANA (*opening the front door*)  
Hey, father!  
Where are you going in this weather?  
There's a storm!  
(*She comes back inside*)  
He's gone away... He didn't hear my voice!  
Oh, Lord!

VAKULA  
There's devilry in this...  
What should I expect? I've lost my mind!

OKSANA  
Sent my father away! The owner of the house!

VAKULA  
I didn't recognise him, Oksana.

OKSANA  
On your way now,  
If you don't want to be sorry later... go...  
(*She steps up to the window and looks out. Vakula stands with bowed head.*)  
The storm is calming.  
Go now, people will come  
and see you here, and you'll be sorry...  
How tedious it is to wait. What does this mean?  
It's time to begin the *koljakdi*,  
but the girls still haven't come...  
What a bore!

VAKULA  
Forget about the girls.  
Forget them, Oksana.

OKSANA  
I certainly will not.  
They won't come alone but with the boys;  
they'll make me laugh with all their little tales...

VAKULA  
You mean that you're happy with them?

OKSANA  
It's not much fun being with you.  
You can imagine what a pleasure it is to chat  
with a dolt like you. I'm fed up with you.  
You stand about like a door-post all day,  
and all you do is sigh and moan...  
It really is boring to be with you, why don't you  
get off home?

VAKULA (*ready to leave*)  
Very well, I'll go...

OKSANA  
No, stop...  
Wait, my dear, wait, hateful man!  
The other man is quite something else!  
I won't tell you his name, but I'll talk to you  
about him.  
He is quite something else!  
I'm so fond of him, that young man with the  
bright, fair face,  
he has a brave gaze, noble words,  
he's not an old man like you.

VAKULA (*stricken*)  
Don't joke with my love for you,  
don't make fun of me.  
You can keep this nonsense for somebody else,  
I know that there's no room for love in your  
heart.

OKSANA  
The other man is quite something else, sweet,  
dear!  
His gaze is so bold, his words so noble and  
passionate...

VAKULA  
Have pity on me, Oksana!

OKSANA  
I love him, I love this young man.

VAKULA  
There is no more beautiful face than yours in all  
the world!

OKSANA  
Don't expect anything from me, hateful smith.

VAKULA  
But your heart is wicked,  
you enjoy tormenting me.

OKSANA  
There's another that I love  
and will love all my life, with all my heart and  
soul!

VAKULA  
You reward my love with bitter insults  
and betrayal, wicked girl!  
But enough of this torture now!

OKSANA  
I have waited so long for my love.

VAKULA  
I'm going, farewell.

OKSANA  
You can lose your temper with me,  
you can scold me, but go now.  
You can be as angry as you like,  
farewell, hateful smith,  
farewell for ever!

VAKULA  
I'm going now, farewell, insolent girl,  
farewell for ever!

#### Last scene

*Oksana laughs. Vakula stops in astonishment.*

9 OKSANA  
If only people were a bit more intelligent,  
a bit more perspicacious, a bit braver,

VAKULA  
Oksana, are you joking?  
Or are you speaking the truth? Wait...

CHORUS OF YOUNGSTERS  
The moon walks the sky.

OKSANA (*with a sly wink at Vakula*)  
If only boys could hear the truth, if only,  
fools that they are, they could understand a  
joke...

VAKULA  
Oksana, you're making fun of me!

OKSANA  
If only people were more intelligent...

CHORUS  
The angels flew softly down from heaven.

VAKULA  
Oksana, my dear, really... I love you.

CHORUS  
They sang a sweet song, pure angels.  
The bright little star twinkled up in heaven.  
The star has seen a holy baby!

OKSANA  
Away! Away with you! Cursed smith!  
Do you think a pretty girl like me  
could fall in love with a bear like you?  
Off you go, quick now. They're about to arrive!

VAKULA  
You're a serpent, a viper, not a girl!

OKSANA  
I've teased him enough,  
in the end I even feel a bit sorry for him.  
And if he stays angry with me and leaves me?  
What will become of me?  
I feel like crying... and laughing,  
but I feel more like crying.  
(*She sits down at the table and covers her face  
with her hands.*)

THE GIRLS  
The star calls the dawn to itself,  
glory to thee! Glory to thee!  
(*The girls are heard laughing off stage. The  
door opens suddenly and few girls run in.*)  
Here we are, Oksana, we've come for you,  
hurry up, the girls are all waiting for you.

OKSANA (*almost in tears*)  
Go away!

THE GIRLS  
Why are you crying?

OKSANA  
Leave me alone...  
Don't call me, go in peace, God be with you,

THE GIRLS  
We've been singing the *koljadki* for a while,  
you know, but we get bored without you,  
Anyway, as you like: goodbye, Oksana!

OKSANA  
What a bore, oh, what a bore,  
my spirit is heavy! I'm bored!  
I don't even know what's happening to me!  
My spirit is heavy, I'm bored,  
I know I love him, but I torment him,  
How I'd like to caress him, show him my  
fondness, but I can't.  
I love you, my dear!  
Yes, I love you, you...  
(*She runs off in tears.*)

## COMPACT DISC 2

### Act 2

#### Scene 1

#### 1 Intermezzo

##### Scene for Solocha and Bes

*Solocha's house, similar to Cub's: in the place of the low dividing wall, a large stove with a pallet on one side and a bed on the other, Dishes on the walls and sacks of coal. The table is full of food and bottles. Near the window a tub and a barrel. As the curtain rises, Solocha buttons her collar up slowly, She has just thrown a cloak over her shoulders, her hair is unkempt. Bes creeps out of the stove.*

SOLOCHA  
2 The storm has swept my broomstick away,  
the wind is howling in the ravines.  
Let it fill this dog's throat with snow...  
I've just come down and look, my broomstick's  
broken – I nearly fell off!  
And this little imp, curse him, came behind me  
with such vigour, so hotly, that he fell down too.  
I got into the flue, and he was behind me...  
This is no good!

BES  
It's not worth getting angry about it.

SOLOCHA  
It's no good, it's so stupid,  
because I'm a mortar for you.

BES  
I've got horns like a fork,  
and what does a fork do? It pricks!

SOLOCHA  
Well, tell me when?

BES  
When I put the pots in the oven.

SOLOCHA  
Am I supposed to be an oven pot?

BES  
No, you are a little gift glass!  
Dear Madam, just think: we are quite a couple!  
You fly in the flue, and I'm on your heels,  
you get home, I'm behind you...  
Why be so stubborn?  
Aren't you an old witch?

SOLOCHA  
I feel really tired!  
Let me rest a while.

BES  
Don't be such a crosspatch,  
give a kiss to the little lad, in the service of the  
devil!

SOLOCHA  
Well then, little servant,  
why don't you dance the *gopak*?  
Gop-gop, goat's horns, goat's hooves.  
(*She takes a few dance steps. From the stove horrible faces appear, some like crickets, they hold little violins and pipes and start playing.*)

BES  
Hey, you, devils with fiddles,  
pipes and trumpets.  
Gop-gop...

SOLOCHA  
Gop-gop... pick your feet up...

BES  
Hey, you, musicians, you dandies hidden behind  
the stove.  
Don't blow, pluck. Gop-gop...  
(*Solocha and the devil set about a dashing dance. There is a knock at the door. Bes stops. The musicians hide behind the stove and stop playing. Silence.*)  
Someone's knocking!  
My nose smells someone breathing behind the  
door!

SOLOCHA  
Who's there? I won't open!

BES  
I bet the witch will open!

SOLOCHA  
I'll turn my broomstick on you!

BES  
If it's Cub she'll let him in for sure!

SOLOCHA  
Go to the devil! Who is it? Is it you, Vakula?

BES  
Oh, Madam Solocha.  
If it isn't a bear, it's Pan Golova.  
Things aren't going right,  
for we won't find room here for Pan Golova.  
Listen, good woman, if this Pan is with a  
woman and he's drunk, he's sure to make the  
sign of the cross!

SOLOCHA  
And what am I supposed to do?  
I'll open the door.  
Golova, the dolt, won't go away,  
towards morning he'll propose to marry me!  
I'll open...

BES  
Wait before you open, let me get away  
or at least find somewhere to hide!  
I'll jump into the sack, I'll fold myself in three;  
and so, if I want I'll make a hole with my finger,  
old Pan might need my help! Or...

SOLOCHA  
The devil is good at guessing, he'll spy on me!

BES  
At least I can spy, I'm good at guessing.  
(*He hides in the sack*)

#### Scene with Solocha and Golova

GOLOVA (*entering*)  
3 Now that's what I call snow!  
Look, my bearskin's completely covered.  
I was on my way to drink some brandy, I was  
out on the road,  
when, just think, the storm broke and covered  
my nose,  
my mouth and my beard with snow.  
And it never stopped!

SOLOCHA (*looking out of the window*)  
But it seems to have calmed now, it's even  
brightened up...

GOLOVA  
Oh my! Aren't you pleased to see Golova?

SOLOCHA  
Pan Golova, you know I'm a poor widow;  
I don't let just anybody into my house,  
I've got a kitchen fork ready for some!

GOLOVA  
And the fork is just what some rascals need,  
but you needn't be frightened of me.  
Aren't you at all happy to see me?

SOLOCHA  
You see, Pan Golova, I haven't had time to put  
a nice dress on.  
(*Solocha offers Golova a glass of pepper-flavoured gorilka.*)  
I drink to your health!

GOLOVA  
My lovely one, you are pretty enough without getting dressed up.  
*(Golova drinks, then he starts to Sing beating the rhythm with his foot.)*  
Your skirt is colourful, you are still young, you're very comely and so attractive.  
My dear Solocha, pour me some honey and wine and cheer my head up!

SOLOCHA *(hears someone knocking)*  
There's someone at the door again!  
The devils are here!

GOLOVA  
Hide me, Solocha,  
I'm frightened I'll die if they find me here!

SOLOCHA  
And where could I hide you?

GOLOVA  
Wherever you want, even under the bed.

SOLOCHA  
Just a moment, I'll empty the sack.  
*(She empties the coal into the barrel. Golova hides in the sack.)*  
There you are, get in it!

GOLOVA *(in the sack)*  
Just look how things have turned out!

**Scene with Solocha and the Schoolmaster**

*The schoolmaster enters and looks around.*

4 SCHOOLMASTER  
Is anyone in?  
Now, my good Solocha, how are you?

SOLOCHA  
What are you doing here?  
If your wife finds out she'll be angry!

SCHOOLMASTER  
I don't care! She's as old as the devil,  
I'm fed up with looking after her!

SOLOCHA  
And if I turn you out...

SCHOOLMASTER  
Oh, no, don't send me away, have pity on me!

SOLOCHA  
I'm never left in peace!

SCHOOLMASTER  
Offer me something...

SOLOCHA  
I never will! Hands off, don't ask for anything.

SCHOOLMASTER  
Just a little bit.

SOLOCHA  
Go away!

SCHOOLMASTER  
I'm going... But wait, kind lady!  
I can't see very well!  
May I?  
*(pointing at her hand)*  
What's this?

SOLOCHA  
It's a hand.

SCHOOLMASTER  
A hand, really? And this?

SOLOCHA  
A neck!

SCHOOLMASTER  
A neck! Good heavens, what a neck!  
Then kindly permit me, my splendid Solocha,  
to ask something else.  
What sort of thing is this?  
Is it a shoulder? Or...

SOLOCHA  
Go to the devil!  
Shame on you!  
You have a wife...

SCHOOLMASTER  
I'm not interested in that old bag.  
But listen now, my dearest Solocha,  
I've written a song for you!

SOLOCHA  
Sing it and then be off with you!

**The schoolmaster's song**

5 SCHOOLMASTER  
A woman runs after the devil,  
she has made friends with the accursed.  
She begs him: 'Let the loving sickness come into my sinful soul!'  
'So be it', replies the devil and sets to work.  
Oh, how ill I feel, woe is me!  
I am tumbling down into sin.

I call you in vain, Solocha, to love's banquet!  
My old woman is as bad as the devil,  
her tongue is always sharp.  
She'll swing her fists without a thought,  
she uses the mallet, the poker, the pan and the cushion.  
I keep humble silence, I don't want to reply.  
Oh, how ill I feel, woe is me! I am tumbling down into sin.  
I call you in vain, Solocha, to love's banquet!

*Knocking at the door.*

SOLOCHA  
That's enough now, listen, someone's knocking.

SCHOOLMASTER *(scared and astonished)*  
Knocking? I can't hear...  
Oh Lord. An outsider!  
Woe is me, I'm damned.  
Oh, shame, shame, only shame!  
My hour has come!  
Solocha, hide me for heaven's sake!

SOLOCHA  
I won't hide you.

SCHOOLMASTER  
Have pity on me, Solocha!

SOLOCHA  
But where?

SCHOOLMASTER  
Even under the bed!

SOLOCHA  
Everybody under the bed, what a fine idea!  
And what about a sack?

SCHOOLMASTER  
Anywhere will do, Solocha.

SOLOCHA *(emptying the sack)*  
Get in then!

*The schoolmaster hides in the sack. Solocha opens the door and Cub comes in.*

**Scene with Solocha and Cub**

*Solocha throws her arms around Cub's neck.*

6 CUB  
Greetings!

SOLOCHA  
Oh, my dear, my treasure!

CUB  
Weren't you expecting me?

SOLOCHA  
You're cold, my dear.  
Have a little glass, drink this!

*Cub drinks.*

SOLOCHA  
I've been here all alone all evening,  
thinking of you! I missed you.  
I tried to imagine if you'd come and see me;  
maybe he'll come.

CUB  
So you expected me?

SOLOCHA  
And who else should I have expected, my love?

CUB  
I thank you. That's how I'd like you to be,  
always true to me!  
Give me a kiss now!

*They kiss. Someone knocks at the door.*

CUB  
What's going on, there's someone knocking?

SOLOCHA  
Ah, they're knocking...

VAKULA *(from behind the door)*  
It's me, mother, open the door!

SOLOCHA  
Vakula!

CUB  
Don't let him in.

SOLOCHA  
How can I keep him out?  
He could knock the door down.

VAKULA  
Mother! What's going on?

SOLOCHA  
Just a moment, dear.

CUB  
This looks like an empty sack.



SOLOCHA  
Stop, where are you going?  
What am I to do with them?  
*(Cub gets into the sack where the schoolmaster is hiding.)*  
They've all hidden in the sacks!

Quintet

SCHOOLMASTER  
*(poking his head out of the sack)*  
7 I don't feel well...

SOLOCHA  
Don't come out, you'll feel much worse if my son knocks the door down!

*The schoolmaster hides, but now the devil looks out of the sack.*

BES  
Good lady, send him to the inn!

GOLOVA *(poking his head out of the sack)*  
Solocha, the sack is cramped!

SOLOCHA  
Pan Golova, don't come out of hiding!

BES  
I'd like to have a look at the schoolmaster, Cub and Golova!

SOLOCHA  
Will you stay where you are, you little devil!

SCHOOLMASTER *(getting out of the sack)*  
I'm really ill.  
*(Hiding again)*  
Pan, Cub, I'm suffocating!

GOLOVA  
I'm suffocating!

CUB  
Solocha, I can't breathe!

BES  
What a woman! She's tricked the lot of us!

SOLOCHA  
Be quiet, Vakula's knocking at the door!

SCHOOLMASTER  
I feel ill!

CUB  
I can't take it any more, I'm suffocating!

SOLOCHA  
And now I've got to sort things out!

SCHOOLMASTER  
I feel ill, I feel ill...

SOLOCHA  
Quickly now, all of you get in, come on, quickly...

BES  
What a woman, oh what a woman!  
She's tricked the lot of you!

GOLOVA & CUB  
Solocha, this is no good.  
Isn't there anywhere else?

SOLOCHA  
Quickly now, all of you get in, come on, quickly...

GOLOVA & CUB  
We will all choke in there, for sure...

BES  
What a woman, oh what a woman!  
She's tricked the lot of you!

*Loud knocking at the door.*

VAKULA  
Well, mother, are you going to open the door or not?

*Solocha opens the door. Vakula comes in, sad and thoughtful. Everybody hides quickly in the sacks...*

SOLOCHA  
Why the devil have you come back?

VAKULA *(sadly and sweetly)*  
Perhaps I'd better get away.

SOLOCHA  
I thought you'd have stayed and slept at the smithy.  
*(She steps away)*

VAKULA  
Yes, the smithy's all right, why not.  
What's more, I'd better take these sacks away, and tidy them up for the feast day, the birth of Jesus.

Vakula's Arioso

VAKULA *(becoming thoughtful)*  
8 A year has gone by and here they are calling me again to go and sing the *koljadki*, but I can't find any peace even at home. Passion has consumed me, like a viper's bite! Melancholy ruins me! What has become of me? I can't even lift these sacks!  
And yet I used to be able to bend coins with my bare hands and snap horseshoes. I really was strong... And now? I can't even drag a couple of coal-sacks out! I can't lift them onto my back...  
How fed up I am with this house, I'd like to die and stop suffering!  
Every day I yearn, I can't sleep at night, passion has worn me down, dried me up! Melancholy, why do you keep on drying up my heart like the venom of a viper? Why do you poison my soul?  
Oh no, what the devil!  
If I want, I can still carry five hundredweight! *(He picks up two sacks.)*  
And I'll carry another sack in my hand with my tools in.  
God help me! I'll need my strength!  
*(He starts to move his voice is heard behind them)*  
Mother, let me in!

*Curtain.*

Scene 2

*The scene is the same as the first scene in act one. On the road, beyond the crossroads, a song is being sung in chorus, first in the distance, then coming closer.*

CHORUS I  
9 Good evening! Good evening!

CHORUS II  
Good evening! Good evening!

CHORUS I & CHORUS II  
Little birds have come, they've broken all the cups... they've pecked the bread, they've drunk up the wine.  
Wake up, Arina!  
We have to find a wife for your brother and a husband for your sister...  
Good evening!

CHORUS III & OLD MEN AND WOMEN  
Quiet night, bring health to the good!  
A soft pillow for the sick!  
Little presents for the children!  
Little glasses for the old and flowers to decorate the icons.  
Good evening! ...

CHORUS I  
Hey there, grey whiskers, don't be stingy with the snacks!  
Offer us the smoked fish, pour us a drink.  
Good evening!

*The second group of singers enters from the left.*

CHORUS I, II & III  
Swallow, little swallow...  
More singers!  
Hello there! Where have you come from? It's come to our window...  
Where have you come from?  
We can't be split up, let's all sing another *koljadka* together!  
Open the window, good lady, give us two loaves of bread...  
You can't split up, sing together!  
So you too will be happier!

*(The girls greet each other, looking for Oksana.)*

CHORUS I & CHORUS II  
Give us a spoonful of *kasha*, add some salame!  
But where's Oksana?  
Doesn't she want to join us?  
Is she still lazing in bed, or is she still getting ready?  
*(They start singing the koljadki outside another house.)*  
The little swallow has come to our window.  
Open the window, good lady, give us two salames, two loaves, a spoonful of *kasha*, and some more salame.  
*Toc Toc...*

CHORUS III  
A beautiful viburnum has grown near the fence...  
Quiet night, bring health to the good...

CHORUS I & CHORUS II  
But more beautiful still is the fair Arina.

CHORUS III  
A soft pillow for the sick...

CHORUS I, II & III

The fair maid Arina was awaiting her guests.  
She poured the wine out into the jugs, but then  
fell asleep.  
For the little ones, presents, for the old, little  
glasses.  
Some flowers to decorate the icons.  
Good evening!

Scene and song of the little shoes

*Two boys pull Oksana along on the sledge,  
sitting next to another girl, Odarka; they stop  
among the group of people.*

CHORUS

10 Oksana, why are you so late?  
Why did it take you so long to get ready?

OKSANA

Have you any idea boys, who has just been here  
to play his fiddle, despite the freezing cold, at  
my window, till he cried?  
His strings broke, his voice became hoarse,  
he could hardly move his fingers.

CHORUS

Was it you?...  
No, it wasn't me ...

*Vakula enters. He stops in the middle of the  
road, throws the two sacks down and puts the  
third one all his shoulders. He looks admiringly  
at Oksana.*

OKSANA (*noticing Vakula*)

Have you heard, boys, about the lad who  
sneaked into the girl's house?  
He came in without being asked, and that's not  
all,  
he threw the girl's father out and punched him.

*Oksana gets off the sledge, which is then taken  
away. She stares at Odarka's shoes with obvious  
admiration. Vakula steps closer.*

CHORUS

We've never seen anything like that,  
never heard such a thing, but slander would be  
a sin.  
You can see that when a man falls in love  
his head is all in a whirl!  
A man in that condition is quite laughable.

OKSANA

Odarka, oh, how marvellous your shoes are,  
even more beautiful with these decorations.  
And they're new!  
You really are lucky, Odarka!  
You've got someone who buys you all the right  
things!  
And I haven't got anybody to buy me such nice  
things.

VAKULA

Don't be sad, pretty girl.  
I'll find you a pair of shoes that not every girl  
can have, coloured ones from Kazan.

OKSANA

And you'll find them for me?  
I want to see how you'll do that.  
Unless you bring me a pair of little shoes  
like the Tsarina's!

CHORUS

Have you heard what shoes the proud girl  
wants?

OKSANA

The very same shoes! You are my witnesses!  
If Vakula the smith can find me the shoes...  
that the Tsarina herself wears, I give you my  
word,  
I'll marry him on the spot, yes I will!

CHORUS

Let's go now, come on, flighty Oksana, come  
on...

OKSANA

Where? I don't feel like singing *koljadki*.  
Let's go and have a snowball fight,  
come along if you want.

*She runs to the back of the scene, followed by  
laughing boys and girls.*

VAKULA

You can laugh! I feel like laughing at myself too.  
Have I lost my wits? (*He becomes thoughtful.*)  
What is the matter with the girl, with Oksana?  
All she thinks about is getting dressed up, and  
making fun of people...  
Isn't there another girl like her somewhere in  
the world?

CHORUS

The ball's flying! Look out, Oksana.

OKSANA

Good throw, but you missed...

CHORUS

Dash it all, I've sunk, I've fallen.  
Dash this cursed little hill.  
It's sunk in the heap of snow...  
(*They all laugh heartily.*)

VAKULA

Listen to her laughing.  
her voice peals out like a little bell!  
My head is all a-whirl, my heart is broken!  
If! were a toper I'd go and hide at the inn!  
She's coming here, again, her eyes are sparkling,  
she looks like a Tsarina.  
Wait, don't come any closer, little charmer!  
Let me get away...

*They all come back to the edge of the stage.*

OKSANA (*with a sly look at Vakula*)

11 My shoes aren't very big,  
one step to the right, one to the left,  
and here and there  
My shoes aren't very big,  
they leave prints in the snow:  
one on the right, the other on the left,  
and here and there!

CHORUS

One on the right, the other on the left...

OKSANA

Don't go beyond the haystacks,  
don't go into other people's houses,  
don't seek your destiny by following the  
footprints!

CHORUS

Don't go, don't seek your destiny by following  
the footprints!

OKSANA

Destiny follows its own laws!  
My destiny, my destiny!  
She sees Vakula and stops in front of him.

Last scene

OKSANA

12 Ah, Vakula, you're here again.  
Were you rewarded for your *koljadki*?  
But look, what a little sack!  
And the shoes?  
If you can find me the Tsarina's shoes, I'll marry  
you!

VAKULA

Oh Lord!

CHORUS

Leave him in peace, Oksana!  
Stop teasing him! He's not himself any more!

VAKULA

No! I can't take any more,  
I haven't got any strength left,  
I haven't got the strength to breathe.  
Oh, Lord! I can't take any more, my heart is  
crushed.  
Lord, don't let my enemy suffer as I have  
suffered.  
Her smile, her voice, her look,  
all burn and wound my soul and my heart.  
Farewell, Vakula is more dead than alive.  
Friends, I beg you to weep over my sinful end.

OKSANA

No, he won't go away, he won't forget me!  
How could that happen?

VAKULA

It would be easier for me to ruin my soul  
than to suffer and love like this!

OKSANA

No, it isn't possible...  
If he could fall in love...  
then how could he stop loving me?

CHORUS I

Are you crazy, it's a sin, Vakula, stop it now,  
Oksana is joking, she's just making us laugh,  
you'll fall into sin if you complain.

CHORUS II

Are you crazy, it's a sin, Vakula, stop it now,  
Oksana is joking, she's just making us laugh,  
poor boy, it isn't right to be so upset,  
there's no real offence meant here.

OKSANA

No! It isn't possible!

CHORUS I & CHORUS II

The girls are really fond of you.  
You mustn't die.

VAKULA

Farewell to you too, farewell for ever, Oksana!  
You will not weep for me, may God be with  
you.  
Don't cry, give your love to others, confuse  
them.

OKSANA

No, he won't go away,  
he can't forget me,  
that simply can't happen!  
He's just talking nonsense.

VAKULA

It doesn't matter what happens to me,  
give your love to others, it's all the same to me,  
farewell, we'll never meet again!

OKSANA

If he could fall in love...  
then how could he stop loving me?

VAKULA

Brothers, go to church in my place  
to weep over my sinful end.

CHORUS

Vakula, what is the matter with you?  
This is a sin!  
Have you gone mad, may the Lord be with you.

VAKULA

It will be easier for me to ruin my soul  
than to suffer so for love...

CHORUS

Oksana is joking, she laughs about it.

VAKULA

I can only suffer, loving her so much.  
Farewell, Oksana, farewell for ever!  
(*He moves away.*)

CHORUS

It's a sin, Vakula...

*The chorus of women withdraws.*

OKSANA

He's getting ready to die,  
he's thinking about death and God...  
but, if we look in these sacks  
that he's left on the road...  
he's really earned a lot with the *koljadki*.

CHORUS (*feeling the sacks*)

It's hard to believe,  
but there are live pigs in them!

OKSANA

Can there be, really?

CHORUS

Call the others to see what's inside!  
Hey you, boys and girls! What is it?  
Come here, boys, quick now!  
Faster, untie the sacks, let's see what's inside!  
Something to eat? Get a move on!  
(*As the sacks are untied Golova, Cub and the  
schoolmaster step out. Everybody is astonished.  
Golova steps out with dignity. The schoolmaster  
looks terrified and runs off.*)  
Cub! The schoolmaster and Pan Golova in  
person!

OKSANA

Father, is it you?

*Cub steps forward.*

CUB

I've played a fine trick on you all!

*They all laugh.*

*Curtain.*

COMPACT DISC 3

Act 3

Scene 1

1 Intermezzo

Scene of the Undines

*The river bank. A wintry landscape. A mill.  
Some undines, covered with ice, emerge from  
the frozen river, their shadows appear on the  
scene. Everything is illuminated by moonlight.*

2 CHORUS OF UNDINES

It is dark, too dark,  
we are in the dark as though we were shut up in  
a prison cell.  
The moon is high above the river, but softly  
tinted with pink.  
A cloud is floating across the sky, softly tinted  
with white...  
Ah, it is dark, too dark!

WOOD SPIRIT

Why are you complaining?  
Why do you disturb the spirit of the wood?

CHORUS

It is cold, too cold!  
As though we were lying in frozen coffins.  
The noise of the night wind can just be heard,  
no noise comes from the swamp near the river.  
Ah, it is cold, too cold!

WOOD SPIRIT

Stop moaning.  
Do you want the spirit of the wood to come  
and see you?

CHORUS

Break, break, blue ice!  
In the joyous light of golden rays,

WOOD SPIRIT

Why are you weeping,  
are you joking perhaps? Why do you knock on  
the ice?

CHORUS

Like the little river fish,  
we will start to tremble...  
Through the mist we will appear to the  
fishermen!

WOOD SPIRIT

Near the bank  
the water is not frozen, a boy is passing.

CHORUS

Break, break, blue ice!

WOOD SPIRIT

The boy cannot stand,  
he seems to be coming to meet you,  
It's cold, cold as in frozen coffins!

Vakula's scene and song

*Vakula enters carrying the sack on his  
shoulders.*

VAKULA

3 Where have I come to? To the river?

ECHO

River...

VAKULA

The evil spirit, drives me to commit a sin...  
If only the cock would crow!  
(*He listens*)

ECHO

Crow...

VAKULA

4 Who knows, my girl, if your heart can feel  
my pain, my terrible pain?  
And can you see, at least in your sleep, my  
dove, my suffering, how I suffer,  
as though I were burning in the flames,  
I can take no more, my soul, you will be ruined!  
My soul, Oksana, farewell!  
An old musician will sing a sad song,  
he will sing it all round the Ukraine,  
telling of how my loved burned for you,  
he will relate how I ruined my soul for love ...  
My soul, Oksana, farewell!  
I shall go where my gaze takes me,  
I shall be happy if I end up in the river...  
[*Words by N. Caev*]

*He puts the sack down on the ground. Bes  
jumps out of it.*

Scene for Vakula and Bes

BES (*jumping onto Vakula's back*)  
You are mine now, I will never leave you...  
You will end up with the undines in the river,  
accursed smith.  
Or if you like, you can sell me your soul  
and Oksana will be yours.



VAKULA  
I agree, I'll give it to you...

BES  
Swear then, sign in blood!

VAKULA  
Wait! I need the nail that's in my pocket.  
(He pretends to take the nail, grabs Bes by the tail and hurls him to the ground.)  
I've got you now.

BES  
That's enough of this joking! Let me go...

VAKULA  
No, you wait, now I'll show you,  
you only need to make fun of people!

BES  
Mercy! Mercy!

VAKULA  
Shout now, damn you!

BES  
I'll do whatever you want!  
Ask me for anything you like.  
You can even have Oksana!  
Anything, anything you want!

VAKULA  
Faithless wretch!  
All right then, take me to the Tsarina!

BES  
To the Tsarina, very well, jump on my back.

VAKULA  
Off we go now!

*Bes and Vakula rise up into the sky.*

BES  
Hold on tight!

## Scene 2

### In the palace

*A reception hall in the palace. Vakula enters astride the devil and jumps off.*

5 BES  
We are there.

VAKULA  
Where am I? I'm not dreaming, am I?

BES (*biding behind the fireplace*)  
You are in the palace!

*Vakula looks around. The Cossacks of Zaporozhe come in. They too look around.*

VAKULA  
Good evening!

AN OLD COSSACK  
And who are you?

VAKULA  
I am the smith, Vakula, a fellow-countryman.  
Don't you recognise me?

COSSACK  
We will talk tomorrow.  
Now the Tsarina is expecting us for the banquet.

VAKULA  
The Tsarina?  
Would you be so kind as to take me with you?

COSSACK  
You? No, it isn't possible.  
My brother, we will talk about our business with the Tsarina,  
no, it isn't possible...

VAKULA  
Take me with you. Devil, you ask him!

*Bes steps out from behind the fireplace.*

BES  
Why don't you take him with you?  
He could be useful!

COSSACK  
What do you think?

(*A guard enters*)

CHORUS  
Why not, he might be useful!

GUARD  
His Serene Highness has ordered me to show you into the great hall  
This way please!  
His Excellency has ordered that you be given green caftans for the journey, coloured smocks and silver coins for everyone.

VAKULA  
Thank him, cossacks.

CHORUS  
Thank you, thank you.

*The Cossacks leave. The stage is empty for a few moments, then it changes suddenly.*

## Scene 3

### The reception

#### Polonaise

*A ball in the palace with columns, lamps and candelabras. A crowd of guests and courtiers in period costume. They are dancing in couples to the rhythm of a polonaise. The Cossacks from Zaporozhe, and Vakula, stand by the columns. A master of ceremonies approaches.*

VAKULA  
Have I reached heaven?  
Or is all this wonder just a dream?

MASTER OF CEREMONIES  
(*approaching the Cossacks*)  
Are you all here?

CHORUS OF COSSACKS  
Yes, we are all here, father.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES  
Then don't forget to address his Highness exactly as I taught you.

CHORUS OF COSSACKS  
We won't forget, father.

*The doors on the left open. His Serene Highness enters, accompanied by courtiers, ladies and gentlemen. A sentry at the door stands to attention. The guests and gentlemen hold their hats on their chests and take low bows; the ladies curtsey.*

MASTER OF CEREMONIES  
Here, he's arriving.  
At my signal you step forward and I will introduce you.

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS  
Her majesty has ordered that it be proclaimed that the enemy has surrendered and his fortresses have been taken!

CHORUS OF COURTIERES  
Hurrah! Long live the Tsarina!  
Let the strings be played, let the pipes sound, here she is approaching the throne; her purple garments translate wisdom into strength and law.  
The glory of your days, Tsarina, will be immortalised by the song of the lyre. The mountains, the steppes and the woods, the sound of the seven seas all echo with the songs of glory for your heroes.  
Glory to the wise Tsarina, glory forever!  
The world does not sleep, the west watches carefully over the east, the north listens carefully to the south, the peace we desire is not far away!  
Take the palm leaf, Tsarina, place the laurel wreath at your feet, glory to you, wise one, glory for ever!  
(*Celebratory cannon shot are heard from the fortress.*)  
Our struggle and our glorious acts of bravery will be passed on to our grandchildren, but posterity will count your deeds among divine works; glory to you for all centuries!  
Glory! Hurrah!

### His Serene Highness's Song

*Waiters bring in trays with cups filled with fruit and sugared almonds. The Prince addresses the people near him. The others slowly gather around and listen carefully.*

#### HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

6 Before we start the dances, allow me, my friends, to declaim an ode or, simply, the fruit of the poetic zeal of this poet.  
(*The poet bows and hands a folded sheet to the prince.*)  
It will sing of the glory of the act of heroism of the Russian army that has been announced to you.  
(*The poet bows again.*)  
Even though it is far from perfect, like the skill of Derzavin strumming the strings of the gilded lyre, I like the rhythm of panegyric verses!  
Now I shall read it to you!

#### CHORUS OF COURTIERES

Hurrah! Your Excellency, prince, please read, we are anxious to hear it!

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

The mighty voice of glory has announced to St Petersburg the fresh victory of our Russian heroes over the enemy. Hearing the battle cry, following destiny, the voice of glory has swept over the distant shores of the Black Sea. Oh, what a happy lot is ours! We are first in the battle and the Russian Minerva points to glory!

CHORUS

Oh, what a happy lot is ours!  
We are first in the battle and the Russian Minerva points to glory!

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

Our army knows no bounds when it is led against the enemy by a bold leader who commands the respect of all. People of Russia, rejoice from the banks of the Niva to the town of Altaj, we have amongst us soldiers from Cesmen and the lands beyond Dunaj. Oh, what a happy lot is ours! We were first in the battle and the Russian Minerva points to glory!

CHORUS

Oh, what a happy lot is ours!  
We were first in the battle and the Russian Minerva points to glory!

Minuet

Scene for Vakula and his Serene Highness

*Noise, exchange of greetings. When all is silent the master of ceremonies signals to the Cossacks that they should approach his Serene Highness. The Cossacks approach. In the background, people are dancing a minuet.*

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

7 Did you have a good journey?

CHORUS OF COSSACKS

Yes, thank you, Sir!

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

As for your request, I will soon give you a response.

*He is about to move away. The Cossacks start nudging one another. One of them pushes Vakula forward and whispers to him: 'Get us out of this embarrassment, friend!'*

VAKULA (*bowing*)

Your Highness!

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

What do you want?

VAKULA

I dare to ask if the Tsarina wears gold or silver shoes. I think no similar shoes exist in all the world! Your Excellency, if only my fiancée could put on a pair of shoes like these!

*Everybody laughs. The prince smiles.*

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

Arise!  
(*He whispers something to one of the courtiers who leaves the hall.*)  
I have heard that in the Sec, where you live, nobody gets married!

CHORUS OF COSSACKS

Oh no, Sir.  
We are not monks, for goodness' sake, my Lord!

*A pair of golden shoes with high red heels are brought in on a silver tray. The Prince gestures that the shoes be given to Vakula.*

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

May the Lord permit all brides in the Ukraine to wear shoes like these.

*The Prince leaves.*

VAKULA

Oh, my Lord! What splendour!  
If the shoes are like these, what sort of feet can wear them?  
They must be made of pure sugar.

*Everybody laughs.*

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

I am touched by this simplicity.  
Let us enjoy ourselves. Ask someone, Princess Miroslava or dear Temira to dance a Russian dance, so they can dance the *kascok*.

8 Russian dance

9 Cossack dance

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

10 In the Tsarina's family theatre they are about to start a play with a song...  
'The Tsarevich Chlor, or the rose without a thorn'.  
Please, take your seats if you wish to hear the work.

*The hall empties slowly. Vakula is left alone. He wraps the shoes up in a handkerchief. The devil appears.*

Scene for Vakula and Bes

BES

Before the cock crows three times, hurry!

VAKULA

A curse on you! How dare you?  
If they catch you here you'll get a thrashing.

BES

Nobody will notice.  
I've thrown powder in their eyes.  
Climb on! Fly to Oksana!

VAKULA

Wait, devil. Couldn't we take his Excellency's present on our trip?

BES (*pointing at the bundle*)

I've already seen to it!

VAKULA (*climbing onto the devil's back*)

It seems like a dream!

VAKULA & BES

Away! We'll fly to Oksana!

Act 4

Solocha and Oksana's Duet

*A bright, sunny winter's day. A square. The bell tower of a church. At the centre of the stage, two columns with an architrave from which two bells are hanging. In the background we can glimpse the roofs of the village of Dikanka and, nearby, a road. The people crowd the area outside the church doors. There are lute players and blind beggars on the church steps. In the foreground, Vakula's workshop. Solocha is sitting on the doorstep, striking her breast and moaning. Oksana is beside her.*

SOLOCHA

11 Some say he threw himself into the river!  
Others say he hanged himself!  
My child, golden apple, golden apple, sweet sugar apple!  
Where have you rolled away, my little apple?  
My sun, where have you set?  
My son, my dear son! My soul!

OKSANA

Day is no longer day for me,  
the feast is no longer a feast, I can feel no joy!  
It is as though I had drunk a poison that is choking my heart  
I couldn't sleep at all last night,  
I couldn't sleep, I was so agitated.  
My heart was burning, as though I had loved only him all my life!  
As though I had been waiting only for him all my life!  
Oh, Solocha, my Solocha!

SOLOCHA

Oh, my child, little golden apple,  
sweet apple, sugar apple!

OKSANA

Oh, Solocha, my Solocha!

SOLOCHA

Where have you rolled away, my little apple?

OKSANA

Had I only known... Oh, how bad I feel!

SOLOCHA

My sun, where have you set? My son.

OKSANA

What sorrow, I can feel no joy.

SOLOCHA

My dear son! My soul!

OKSANA

As though I had drunk a poison  
that is choking my heart in my breast.

SOLOCHA

My son! Beautiful eagle, my soul!

OKSANA

Oh, Solocha, my dear ...

SOLOCHA

My son! Beautiful eagle, my soul!

OKSANA AND SOLOCHA

My Solocha, console me!  
My son! Beautiful eagle, my soul!

Finale

*Festive bells ring out. The people go home after the mass.*

CHORUS OF WOMEN

12 We invite you to our house,  
there will be *vareniki*, there will be *galuski*,  
there will be *vatruski*, there will be all sorts of  
things,  
we invite you to our house!

OKSANA (*bitterly*)

Don't call for me, girls,  
I'm not going anywhere!

CHORUS

Why are you so proud, my girl?

OKSANA

I'm not going anywhere!

CHORUS OF MEN

Greetings, Oksana!

OKSANA

Greetings to you, too!

CHORUS

Why are you so sad, why are you so downcast?

OKSANA

It has not been a happy feast-day for me!

CHORUS

You look as though you have been crying,  
perhaps they have promised you to a man that  
you don't love.  
Why don't you say something?  
Just say a word, girl, open your heart! Marry  
the man you love...

OKSANA

There was an eagle, but he flew away  
and I shall never manage to catch him again!

CHORUS

If the eagle flew away,  
then pick up a little dove!

OKSANA

Stop it, boys!

CHORUS

Don't be angry, beautiful girl!  
Let everything be as it was before.

OKSANA

I made my beloved angry,  
and I have caused his end!

*She cries and goes away. They boys watch her walk away and shake their heads.*

CHORUS

13 If you want to drink honey,  
come with us to the Jewess's house!  
The Jewess has got black eyebrows,  
as high as horseshoes.  
Come on, let's go to the inn,  
we can loosen our purse-strings there.  
The hostess of the inn has lit the lamp  
and warmed the house, she has set the table.  
The Jewess is rich!  
She's got honey, she's got brandy, beer...  
Come on, let's go to the inn,  
we can loosen our purse-strings there.  
You ask and you drink, there's salame too,  
all you need do is open your purse!  
Honey, brandy, beer, ask and drink your fill!  
Come on, let's all go to the inn  
to drink honey and beer!  
The table is set, let's all go to the inn!  
Come on, if you want honey, let's go to the  
Jewess's.  
Let's go to the Jewess's, she's got black  
eyebrows, as high as horseshoes!  
Let's go to the inn,  
we can loosen our purse-strings there,  
everybody to the inn!

*Cub, Golova and Panas enter.*

CUB

Where are you going, boys? This is a shame!  
Please, come to me! I've got everything:  
I've got *gorilka* and *pirogi*, I've got lard and  
salame,  
and they've brought me beer from the brewery.  
Whatever made you think of going to the inn?  
And where's Oksana? I told her to invite you to  
our house.  
What a scatter-brained girl!  
Bother her! Pan Golova, Panas!  
Come to my house!

GOLOVA

We'll be there.

PANAS

We know the way well enough.

CHORUS

We are grateful, too.  
But we'll look after ourselves. We'll go to the  
inn!

*(Vakula enters.)*

Vakula, is it you? Is it really you?  
Is it really him? Come here, all of you!  
Boys, it's Vakula, Vakula himself!  
But where have you been? Where the devil have  
you been?  
*(Solocha gets up too.)*  
You didn't hang or drown!

SOLOCHA

He's alive! Thank God!  
What a stupid woman I am, I cried and  
moaned!  
I wept for your death, I was torn apart with  
sorrow!

*Vakula greets everybody, he hugs and kisses the boys.*

VAKULA

Hello, boys!  
I'll tell you later where I've been.

CHORUS

To the inn! Let's open our purse-strings!

CUB

Well, boys, I'll expect you all at my house...  
the table is already set!

VAKULA

I wanted, your grace, I wanted...  
to wish you all the season's best!

CUB

You wanted to greet me?

VAKULA

Yes, you father! Don't be angry on the day of  
Christ's birth. Be merciful!  
*(He takes the presents and lays them at Cub's feet, then he kneels before him.)*  
Accept these with my repentance, here's the  
bearskin hat,  
the gloves, here's the belt and the whip.  
If that's not enough, beat me father, as hard as  
you like.  
I repent before you, it was all my fault!  
*(He looks around proudly.)*

CUB

That's enough now, get up!  
Let's forget what happened!  
I forgive you! Let it be... But what do you  
want?

VAKULA

Father, give me your Oksana as my bride!

CHORUS

Look at the smith! He's a good lad!

VAKULA

Cub, let me marry Oksana as soon as possible!

CHORUS

Cub, we'll all come to your house!

*Oksana enters.*

CUB

Very well. Send for the officials.

VAKULA

Look at the shoes I've brought you!  
The very shoes that the Tsarina wears!

OKSANA

I don't want them, I don't need them...  
Even without them...

CUB

Why don't you hold your tongue, silly girl?  
I can see you're happy! Well, I had noticed!  
Come here now and give each other a kiss with  
my blessing!  
We'll marry you, and you'll live in love and  
prosperity.  
Hey, musicians, what are you doing sitting  
around there?  
Hey, sing, come here and honour the bride and  
groom!

CHORUS

Look at the smith, Vakula! He's a good lad!  
*(The singers step up. Solocha stands beside them.)*

14 Strong winds, do not blow in the thick woods.  
Blow, dear winds, down the road that our girl  
takes.

OKSANA, SOLOCHA, VAKULA & CUB  
Untie your plait, let it fall down to your waist  
like dew falls on the earth, on the green  
meadow.  
In the distance you can hear the horses neighing.  
The enemy must stand aside  
if he doesn't want to be trampled down.  
Here they are bringing the clear-eyed bride!  
Get up, good morning,  
good morning to the bride and groom...  
Good morning to all good people,  
to the peasants and strangers, good morning.