

MOUSSORGSKY

BORIS GODUNOFF

(ABRIDGED)

IN RUSSIAN



VICTOR Recordrama

ALEXANDER KIPNIS

with ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS conducted by NICOLAI BEREZOWSKY

VICTOR RECORDS *presents*
Alexander Kipnis

in excerpts from Moussorgsky's

BORIS GODOUNOFF

with the Victor Symphony Orchestra
 and Chorus conducted by

Nicolai Berezowsky

Robert Shaw, choral director

(ILYA TAMARIN, TENOR, AS PRINCE SHOUISKY)



ALEXANDER KIPNIS as the Czar Boris

ALEXANDER KIPNIS . . . Vocally, the career of this famous Metropolitan Opera star has gone from one end of the musical scale to the other. While still a boy, Kipnis earned recognition in his native town as a coloratura soprano. In manhood, he has won world wide acclaim as a bass-baritone.

Born in Zhitomir, in the Russian Ukraine, Kipnis displayed his exceptional musical gifts at an early age. Encouraged by his father, he entered the Conservatory of Music in Warsaw (then under the direction of the Russian Imperial Department of Education) and was graduated with highest honors as a conductor. Fortunately for concert and opera goers who know him through his many recordings as well as on the operatic stage and concert platform, Kipnis soon discovered that his greatest interest lay not in conducting but in singing. His is the unique distinction among musicians of having begun a singing career in a German prison camp.

At the outbreak of World War I, Kipnis was studying music in Berlin. The Germans immediately interned him as an enemy alien. One day, while idly singing in camp, Kipnis was heard by a German colonel who at once ordered him to report for duty at the local opera house. For the next five years, Kipnis led a double life. In the daytime, he was a prisoner under strict military surveillance; in the evening, he was opera star under the public's artistic supervision.

Although a European by birth, Mr. Kipnis is an American by choice. He has long been a resident of the United States, and married an American girl. His home is in Westport, Connecticut, where he lives with his wife and young son, Igor.

Excelling in opera, lieder and folk music, Alexander Kipnis has enjoyed sensational success on four continents. Before World War II, he appeared as star of the Wagner Festival in Bayreuth, at the Vienna State Opera, the Mozart Festivals in Salzburg, at Covent Garden,

London, at the Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires, and at opera houses and concert halls in Australia.

When Hitler came into power, Kipnis, protected by American citizenship, could have continued to fulfill all his European engagements. Instead, he chose without hesitation to withdraw his services from any Nazi dominated or influenced musical organization.

Today, Alexander Kipnis sings stellar roles in the great operas of many lands, at the Metropolitan and other opera houses. His favorite role is one which has met with highest professional and public praise, that of the Czar Boris in Moussorgsky's Russian music drama, *Boris Godounoff*. Mr. Kipnis has said: "In my opinion, *Boris Godounoff* is the greatest of all operas. Its words, written by Russia's magnificent poet, Pushkin, by her foremost historian, Karamzin, and by the highly cultivated and humanity-loving composer, Moussorgsky, reach the summit of Russian literary art. In the music, Moussorgsky attained the peak of his genius. *Boris Godounoff* is truly a people's opera, realistically and nobly expressing mankind's spiritual and democratic ideals."

★ ★ ★

NICOLAI BEREZOWSKY . . . composer-conductor, was born in Leningrad, Russia. He is a descendent of Maxim Berezowsky, famous Russian church music composer in the time of Catherine the Great.

When he was eight years old, Berezowsky entered Russia's oldest music school, the Imperial Capella. He was graduated at sixteen with high honors. On coming to the United States, in 1922, Berezowsky pursued his musical studies and won scholarships at the Juilliard Graduate School of Music in New York City. In 1928, he became an American citizen.

Biographical sketches, historical notes, synopsis of the opera,
 and translations from the Russian text by Alice Berezowsky.

NICOLAI BEREZOWSKY, *Conductor*



As conductor, Berezowsky has appeared with the Boston Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the National Symphony in Washington, D. C., and other musical organizations both in the United States and abroad, including the Dresden Philharmonie and Deutscher Tonkünstlerfest. Since the inception of radio broadcasting, Berezowsky has been well known to radio listeners. As early as 1924, he conducted radio's first outstanding symphonic concerts, the Atwater Kent Hour. He has since directed orchestras on all the major networks.

In the field of creative music, Berezowsky occupies an important place. He is a member of the executive board of the League of Composers, and of the governing boards of the American Composers' Alliance and the United States Section of the International Society for Contemporary Music. His compositions, which include four symphonies, several concerti, other orchestral pieces and many chamber music works, have been performed by every major symphony orchestra in the United States.

★ ★ ★

WROTE MODEST MOUSSORGSKY: "To delineate the finer features of human nature and of the mass of mankind . . . to penetrate resolutely into unexplored regions and to conquer them: that is the mission of the genuine artist. Man is a social animal and cannot be otherwise. In the masses, just as in the individual, there are characteristics that escape observation, that are as yet untouched. To discover and study them by reading, observation and conjecture, to fasten upon them with innermost powers of perception and thus provide a new diet for the nourishment of mortals . . . a healthy strengthening food as yet untasted . . . there is the task! It is rapture, everlasting rapture!"

These words are his artistic credo. In all the history of music, no composer set forth more clearly his aim and ideals. In all the history of music, no composer set for himself a nobler purpose. To accomplish it, Moussorgsky suffered throughout his short life from the criticism, ridicule, official and unofficial persecution inflicted upon him by so-called superiors, in reality wretched inferiors. But even more he suffered from early misdirection of creative energy owing to the circumstances of his birth and position in society, and from the metaphysical and physical problems arising in his own heart and soul, his artistic and truly Slavic temperament. That temperament was not what is popularly and mistakenly dubbed "artistic temperament;" it was the natural product of his God-given ability to see, think, feel, hear and touch the immensely complex but fundamentally simple truth which is at the core of mankind and Nature. Moussorgsky's work was his life. But unfortunately, his life was not his work.

Modest Petrovitch Moussorgsky was born March 28, 1839, at his father's country estate in Karevo, Government of Pskoff, Russia. For ten years, Modest lived in the country with his parents and elder brother. The family's daily life was typical of that led in the nineteenth century by the landed but not very wealthy small nobility.

At first, Modest learned to know the world mostly through feminine revelation: that of his loving, cheerful and poetic Mother, who gave him his first piano lessons, that of a governess who developed his early pianistic ability to a remarkable degree, and that of his dearly beloved peasant nurse, "Nyanya," who so stimulated his imagination with the tales and songs of Russian folk lore that he later wrote in an autobiography:

Of Modest Moussorgsky



THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Modest Moussorgsky: After the painting by Repin

"Influenced by the Russian fairy tales and legends told me by my nurse, I proudly sympathized, from early childhood, with the people's poetic fantasy. Even as a mere baby, I spent many sleepless nights. Out of them was born my passionate desire to tell the world in musical sounds all about Man, to incorporate mankind in musical forms . . . no more, no less! As a small child, I tried to improvise on the piano, without knowing even the A-B-C-s of its mechanism."

Having completed most of his primary education in the country, Moussorgsky was sent to the SS. Peter and Paul School in St. Petersburg (Leningrad). There he was taught music in a way deemed appropriate for a nobleman: he received excellent amateur training. At the age of twelve, he went on to military school, the Guards' Cadet Academy, where he wrote his first musical composition, a trivial piece, "Ensign's Polka." At the Academy, a priest, Father Krupsky, taught divinity. He partially succeeded in leading Moussorgsky into the ways of God and wholly succeeded in leading his pupil into the rewarding fields of church music: Byzantine, Russian, Catholic and Lutheran. Later on, Moussorgsky attributed his profound understanding and mastery of the spirit and essence of Russian church music to the teachings of his "little Father."

As cadet, Modest attempted his first opera, but abandoned the task. "Nothing came of it," he wrote in a catalogue of his works. "It was impossible that anything should . . . for the composer was seventeen years old."

Upon graduation from the cadets' school, and in accordance with family tradition, Moussorgsky entered in 1856 the famous Preobrazhensky Guards, in which many of his ancestors had

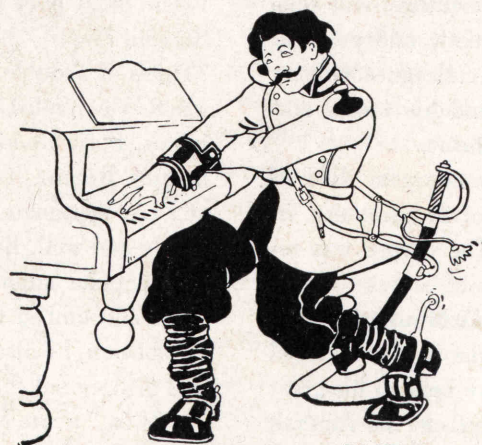
served. One day, while on guard duty at a military hospital, Moussorgsky met by chance a surgeon interested in music, Alexander Borodin. That night, both were invited to a party. Moussorgsky entertained the guests, at the piano. Many years later, Borodin, an established composer, described the young guardsman:

"There was something absolutely boyish about Moussorgsky at that time. He was very elegant and looked like a lieutenant in a picture book. His uniform was spick and span, his small feet turned neatly outwards, his hair was carefully curled and scented, his exquisitely manicured hands were those of a model 'grand seigneur.' Moussorgsky's manners were refined and aristocratic, and he spoke with a slightly nasal twang, using many French expressions . . . He was not without a touch of foppery, kept well within bounds, but unmistakable. His good breeding and courtesy were outstanding. All the ladies smiled on him."

Compare this verbal picture with the portrait of him at the age of forty-two, painted by Repin. There Moussorgsky sits, three weeks before his death, robed in a shabby, second-hand dressing gown. From the middle of his face bulges a drunkard's red nose. Above it are the sad, illimitably perceptive eyes of the visionary. In the difference between these two portraits lies the whole story of mortal travail to develop and fulfill immortal genius.

What were the causes of this metamorphosis?

A great change occurred in Moussorgsky's material life when he was twenty-two. In that year, 1861, the Czar Alexander II, "the liberator," freed the serfs. Most owners of small country estates were financially ruined, including the Moussorgskys. However, personal loss did not influence Moussorgsky's political attitude. He was wholeheartedly, even passionately, on the people's side. Loss of fortune did not prevent Moussorgsky from adopting still another attitude. Courageously, even foolhardily, he decided to forsake a military career for music.



THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

A cartoon of himself by Modest Moussorgsky. Claimed Debussy, "What Shakespeare was in dramatic poetry, that was Moussorgsky in vocal music."

The turning point in his musical and spiritual life had come during the season of 1856-57, when he met the most important musical personality of the older generation then living in St. Petersburg, the composer Dargomizhsky, co-founder with the great Glinka of Russia's nationalist school of music.

At Dargomizhsky's home, Moussorgsky came into contact with creative musicians of the younger generation: Cui, Balakireff, Rimsky-Korsakoff and again Borodin. Together, they formed the famous "five." Following Glinka's inspiration, these men founded the neo-Russian school of music. In company with a few lesser figures, they freed Russian music from the domination of foreign musical culture and formal traditions. In defiance of all possible professional and amateur criticism, and despite vast technical difficulties, they established a music based on Russia's heritage and history, its own folk and religious traditions. In other words, these men discovered themselves, their own atavism, and so doing, gave Russia a position in the foreground of international musical art.

From the moment Moussorgsky quit military life, his material existence was miserable. Unable to earn money with his music, he spent years of drudgery trying to earn a modest living as clerk in an obscure bureaucratic government position, then gave up in despair and attempted to support himself as accompanist to purely interpretive musical artists. In addition, he was constantly hounded by the authorities of the government for being a people's artist. Serfdom abolished, Russia nevertheless remained a land ruled by Crown and Censor. Because of the texts, several of Moussorgsky's vocal compositions were prohibited by the Censor from being performed in public.

At rare times, Moussorgsky was happy and aided by friends, by Rimsky-Korsakoff with whom he shared rooms for a while, by V. V. Stassoff, librarian at the St. Petersburg Public Library, and by his brother at whose home he was sometimes restored in body and spirit and where he did much of his finest work. For the most part, Moussorgsky lived alone, enduring the disappointments of his career and the tortures of morbidness induced by hyper-sensitivity, his illnesses, his poverty, and the terrible results of his trying to find security and release in that physical and spiritual nemesis: drink.

More than any other of the "five", Moussorgsky nourished himself with the yeasty bread of Russian national culture. He became the greatest of them all. He assimilated his native culture so thoroughly, that with awe, humor, compassion and infinite understanding, he immortalized in music every Russian human being . . . from the prophet inspired by God to the innocent simpleton, from the Czar on the throne to the peasant infant lying in a crude wooden cradle. With a sure hand, Moussorgsky drew the physiognomy of his native land . . . from the bald mountain peak to the lowly clump of nettles. With mysticism, tenderness and a pinch of salty wit, he even pursued the winged creatures in the Russian air . . . from the sphinx to the flea.

In becoming musical lord of all Russian creation, Moussorgsky developed into a musical revolutionary, and, in the highest sense, a naturalist. But he paid a dreadful price for supremacy. Venturing into the true domain of the creative genius, the future, and consequently disagreeing more and more with his contemporaries on artistic and political matters, he was at first belittled, then deserted by most of his friends and colleagues. One by one, sometimes intentionally, more often through failure to understand his ideals and make allowance for his weaknesses, they abandoned him and broke his heart.

On the morning of his forty-second birthday, March 28, 1881, Moussorgsky died of physical ailments brought on by alcoholism, at the military hospital of St. Nicholas, in St. Petersburg. Only professional male nurses were at his bedside. The corpse was removed to the hospital morgue.

Forty-eight hours later, conscience stricken friends and colleagues gave Moussorgsky an elaborate funeral. Its cost would have sustained him for many months in the material comfort he so urgently needed during his illness. He was laid in a grave near to his great predecessor, Glinka, in the Alexander-Nevesky cemetery. Coming home from the funeral, Moussorgsky's friends discussed raising money for a monument to him. Since the government would not tolerate the idea of honoring Moussorgsky in any public place, the monument was erected at his grave.



Boris Godounoff, who became Czar in 1598

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Historical Notes on Boris Godounoff

FROM the time Moussorgsky began to write music, he felt that his true vocation was as operatic composer. He once wrote to Rimsky-Korsakoff: "Whenever I hear people speaking, no matter who they are and what they say, my brain immediately sets to work to translate what I have heard into music."

During an evening spent with friends, V. V. Nikolsky, a professor of Russian history in St. Petersburg, suggested to Moussorgsky that Pushkin's romantic tragedy, *Boris Godounoff*, could be made into an excellent libretto for an opera. Moussorgsky showed such quick and earnest enthusiasm, that his hostess (Glinka's sister) later sent him a volume of Pushkin's writings. Among the pages of *Boris Godounoff*, she placed blank leaves for a libretto. Soon they were filled with literary and musical notes in Moussorgsky's handwriting.

The great poet Pushkin had drawn material for the tragedy from "A History of the Russian Empire" by Karamzin. The period Pushkin chose was the initial phase of Russia's "Times of Trouble," at the end of the sixteenth century. Ivan the Terrible's heir, Feodor, was feeble-minded and sickly. During Feodor's brief reign, his ambitious, scheming brother-in-law, Boris Godounoff, actually directed government affairs. On Feodor's death, Boris became Regent. Then he contrived the murder of young Dmitri, Feodor's step-brother and last legitimate offspring of the reigning family. Boris became Czar in 1598. He ruled wisely and well. But an intriguing monk, claiming to be the murdered Dmitri, eventually won popular support as Pretender to the throne. Hearing of the Pretender's activities, Boris succumbed to a guilty conscience. Half-mad, remorseful and in terror of heavenly retribution, he died, in 1605. The Pretender became Czar. He murdered Boris' son, Feodor, and dishonored the daughter, Xenia.

"Thus," wrote Karamzin, "did the crime of Godounoff bring down vengeance on himself, his children and his country."

Pushkin had handled this material in Shakespearean fashion and made of Boris what many authorities call "the Russian Macbeth." However, Moussorgsky found the poem

as it stood insufficient for a complete opera libretto. In seeking additional material, he was invaluablely assisted by an admiring and devoted friend, V. V. Stasoff, librarian at the St. Petersburg Public Library. Together, they did much historical research and even found an authentic description of a big chiming palace clock . . . which furnished the idea for the famous "Clock Scene."

Having completed a first version of the libretto, Moussorgsky began to compose the music in the fall of 1868, when he was twenty-nine. Though he had sought inspiration as well as historical information in authentic people's songs: religious, political, military and nursery, Moussorgsky nevertheless seldom used them in the original. By far the major part of the thematic material for *Boris Godounoff* is Moussorgsky's own.

Composing the Coronation, Death and other religious scenes, and rendering in musical terms the various monastic characters, such as Pimen and Varlaam, Moussorgsky was so deeply absorbed in the religious atmosphere that he even wrote letters to his friends in the formal style of a learned deacon in olden times. Peopling the opera, he drew on personal observation and experience to such an extent that the character of the Simpleton originated in the memory of having once witnessed, from a window, a village simpleton's pathetic attempts to win a young girl's favor. But it was in the central character, Boris, that the composer found fullest subjective expression. "While I was writing Boris, I *was* Boris."

In 1870, Moussorgsky finished the opera. Accordingly, he submitted it to an advisory committee at the Imperial Theatre. The work was rejected. Hurt to the quick, Moussorgsky was for a time wholly discouraged. Then, throwing off depression, he began the first of several revisions of the libretto and the musical score. During the period of revision, which took a few years, parts of the opera were performed at private hearings in the homes of friends and colleagues. Finally, after great effort and persuasion on the part of the composer and a few believers in his ability, the work was scheduled for production with official consent. *Boris Godounoff* was given a first public performance (conducted by Napravnik) at the Maryinsky Theatre, January 24th, 1874. Of this premiere, Stasoff wrote:

"It was a great triumph for Moussorgsky. The old men . . . the indifferentists, the routinists and the worshippers of banal operatic music sulked and raged (that, too, was a triumph!); the pedants . . . of the Conservatoire . . . protested with foaming mouths . . . the critics vied with one another in pulling Moussorgsky to pieces.

"The younger generation paid no attention to all this . . . With fresh unspoiled feelings they were aware that a great artist had created and was presenting to our people a wonderful national work, and they exulted and rejoiced . . ."

Supported principally by youthful audiences (who often understand better than so-called intellectuals the purport of a "modern" work), the opera was given several successful performances that season. But owing to harsh professional criticism and governmental disapproval of its political implications, *Boris Godounoff* was soon dropped from the repertoire of the Russian State Theatres, and was at one time banned by the Czar himself.

After Moussorgsky's death, all his manuscripts and sketches were legally entrusted to Rimsky-Korsakoff, who once confessed: "I hated *Boris* and yet I worshipped it." Rimsky-Korsakoff organized and revised or re-orchestrated one after another of Moussorgsky's finished and unfinished compositions and made them available for publication. Notwithstanding his friend's labors in his behalf, Moussorgsky was all but forgotten for twenty years.

Strangely enough, a group of French musicians and writers resurrected Moussorgsky's works, rendering them full homage. While in Russia in 1874, Saint-Saëns obtained a piano score of *Boris* and took it to Paris. Debussy later saw this very same score, expressed boundless admiration, and was himself influenced by the music. But chiefly responsible for introducing Moussorgsky's music was a singer residing in Paris, Madame Olenine d'Alheim, and her husband, Pierre, a writer. They undertook what amounted to a musical crusade in Moussorgsky's favor.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, many opera houses in Europe and Russia gave performances of *Boris*. Gradually, it became part of the operatic repertoire everywhere. Today, *Boris Godounoff* is universally acknowledged as a masterpiece, portraying what

Moussorgsky intended when he wrote: "It is the people I want to depict: I sleep . . . and see them; I eat . . . and ponder about them; I drink . . . and they appear in a vision before me. They alone are great and real . . .".



Prologue: Scene I

Prologue

Scene I: *The courtyard of the Novodievitch Monastery, near Moscow. To the front of the stage is a stone wall pierced by a gateway into the monastery. A high tower surmounts the wall.*

A crowd of dispirited, solemn-faced peasants stands motionless in the somber courtyard of the monastery in which Boris Godounoff, Regent of Russia, has secluded himself. A police constable, having received orders to prod the people into making a demonstration, shouts at the crowd. Obeying him, they begin to clamor for Boris to become their Czar. The constable, enraged at the people's obvious lack of enthusiasm, shouts at them to get down on their knees and raise their voices. The people repeat their entreaty to Boris, this time louder. A clerk of the Duma (nobles' Council) appears and, playing on the people's emotions, tells them that Boris is unwilling to ascend the throne.

As the rays of sunset light the scene, the voices of an approaching band of pilgrims are heard, warning of anarchy in rulerless Russia. Arriving on the scene, the pilgrims distribute religious amulets to the people, who clamor still louder for Boris Godounoff to become Czar.

First Record Side

CHORUS: To whom dost Thou abandon us, our Father?
Ah! Unto whom dost Thou leave Thy people, O Provider?
We are all Thy poor orphans,
Poor and defenseless.
Ah! Yes, we entreat Thee,

Implore Thee with tears
With hot, burning tears:
Pity us, pity us, pity us!
Master and Father!
Thou, our Father!
Thou, our Provider,
Thou, our Master, pity us!

POLICEMAN: Hey, there!

Don't go easy on your gullets!

CHORUS: All right!

POLICEMAN: Hey!

CHORUS: To whom dost Thou leave us, our
Father?

Yes, to whom dost Thou abandon us,
Dear Father?

We are all Thy poor orphans.
We implore Thee, beseech Thee
With hot, burning tears
Pity us! Pity us! Pity us!
Master and Father,
Thou, our Father! Our Protector!
Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-Ah!

Coronation Scene (2): The courtyard at the Kremlin, in Moscow. Facing the spectators, in the background, is the grand staircase leading to the Czars' royal apartments. On the right is the Cathedral of the Assumption (where Czars were crowned) and that of the Archangel (where they were buried). The porches of both cathedrals are in view.

On their knees, the people wait in front of the Cathedral of the Assumption to see the new Czar, Boris. There is a great pealing of bells, and a procession of Boyars wends its way into the cathedral. At last, Prince Shouisky appears on the porch and bids long life to the new Czar. The imperial procession comes out of the cathedral. The crowd gets out of hand, but the police constable restores order and forces them to make way for the procession. The people, the Boyars and the constable hail the Czar:

Second Record Side

PRINCE SHOUISKY: Long life to thee, Czar Boris Feodorovitch!

CHORUS: As the sun is resplendent in heaven with glory,
Glory! Just so is Czar Boris in Russia.
Glory! Glory!

Long life and good health,
Our Czar and Master.
Sing, rejoice, ye people.
Sing, rejoice, ye true believers!

Let us extol our Czar Boris.
Hail! Our Czar Boris Feodorovitch!

BOYARS: Hail to the Czar Boris Feodorovitch!
Glory! Glory! Glory!

The newly crowned Boris appears on the cathedral porch and addresses his people. From his very first words it is apparent that Boris is greatly troubled:

Third Record Side

BORIS: My soul is rent!
Against my will, ill omened dark forbodings
Oppress my heart.



Prologue: Coronation Scene

NEW YORK TIMES STUDIO

O blessed One!
O Thou, my reigning Father!
Thou seest in heaven Thy faithful
subjects' tears.
Look down on me and send a blessing
from on high
Upon my kingdom,
That I may be benign and just as Thou
And with glory rule my people.
Now let us go and kneel in prayer
Before the tombs of Russia's sovereigns.
And the people all shall feast,
All, from Boyar to lowliest beggar.
All shall find room, all are welcome
As my honored guests.
CHORUS: Glory! Glory! Glory!
Long life and good health, our Master.
As the sun is resplendent in heaven with
glory,
Glory! Just so is Czar Boris in Russia.
Glory! Long may he reign.
Glory! Glory! Glory!

When Boris finishes the address, the Coronation procession moves on towards the Cathedral of the Archangels. Again the people surge forward, but the constable controls them. Then, going quietly towards the cathedral, the people joyfully hail their new Czar.

A C T I

Scene 1: A cell in the Monastery of the Miracle.

An aged monk, Pimen, is seated at a desk, writing a history of Russia. The task almost completed, Pimen stops writing and soliloquizes on his services in the interests of truth and justice. As dawn comes, a young monk, Gregory, who shares the cell and has been fast asleep, wakes and hears Pimen recite a tale of Russia's ancient glory. Gregory regrets that owing to religious seclusion he has not experienced a hero's life.

As Pimen bemoans Russia's present state, he tells Gregory that Russia is now ruled by a regicide, Boris, who contrived the murder of the rightful heir to the throne, the child Dmitri. Pimen further explains that if Dmitri were alive, he would be the same age as Gregory.

His imagination and ambition fired, Gregory inwardly resolves to proclaim himself the lost heir and become Pretender to the throne.

Scene 2: An inn on the Lithuanian border.

While singing gaily at her work, the hostess at an inn is interrupted by the arrival of three monks, Varlaam, Missail, and the young Pretender, Gregory, who calls himself Dmitri. The Pretender is trying to cross the Lithuanian border to further his plots against Czar



THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Dmitri I, usually called the False Dmitri, who held power for about a year and was then murdered.

Boris. At the monk's request, the hostess serves them wine. Making merry, Varlaam, bottle in hand, sings a heroic folk tale of the times when Czar Ivan the Terrible made war against the Tartars and drove them from Russia:

Fourth Record Side

VARLAAM: Once upon a time in the city of Kazan,
The Terrible Czar made merry and feasted:
He had unmercifully beaten the Tartars
So that once for all they would not dare
To set foot in any part of Russia.
Slowly, cautiously, the Czar had approached the city of Kazan;
He dug a tunnel under the Kazan River.
Meantime, the Tartars strode the ramparts of the city,
Keeping watchful eyes on the Czar Ivan.
Oh! the cruel Tartars!
The all powerful Czar became sorrowful,
His head sank to his right shoulder.
Then he gave word to call the gunners,
The gunners and all the fusileers, the fusileers!
Holding a smoking, burning wax taper,
A young gunner crept towards a barrel.
Filled with powder, the barrel began to roll.
Oh! it rolled down into the tunnel,
Yes! and exploded!
The cruel Tartars shrieked and yelled,
With inhuman cries they burst out screaming.
An innumerable host of Tartars was wiped out,
Wiped out were forty and three thousands of them.
That is the tale of the city of Kazan,
Aye!

His song ended, Varlaam questions young Gregory as to why he does not join in the merriment and has such a gloomy face. Gregory begs the questions away, and asks the hostess for information as to the best means of getting across the Lithuanian frontier. Agreeably, the hostess supplies directions and happens to mention the fact that the guards have orders to look out for an escaped monk who is plotting against the Czar.

Suddenly, guards enter the inn, searching for the Pretender. They have authority to arrest him on sight and hang him without trial, but their only information about him is a written description which they are unable to read. The guards ask who is literate among those present at the inn. Gregory steps forward and offers his services. But on reading the paper, he learns that it bears a description of himself. Cunningly, he alters the wording to describe Varlaam. The guards seize Varlaam, who protests, manages to free himself, snatches the paper, and begins haltingly to decipher it. As he spells out the real words, Varlaam scrutinizes Gregory, recognizes him as the Pretender, and creeps towards him. Gregory draws a knife and escapes through a window.

A C T II

Scene: *The entire act takes place in the royal apartments of the Czar in the palace of the Kremlin, Moscow.*

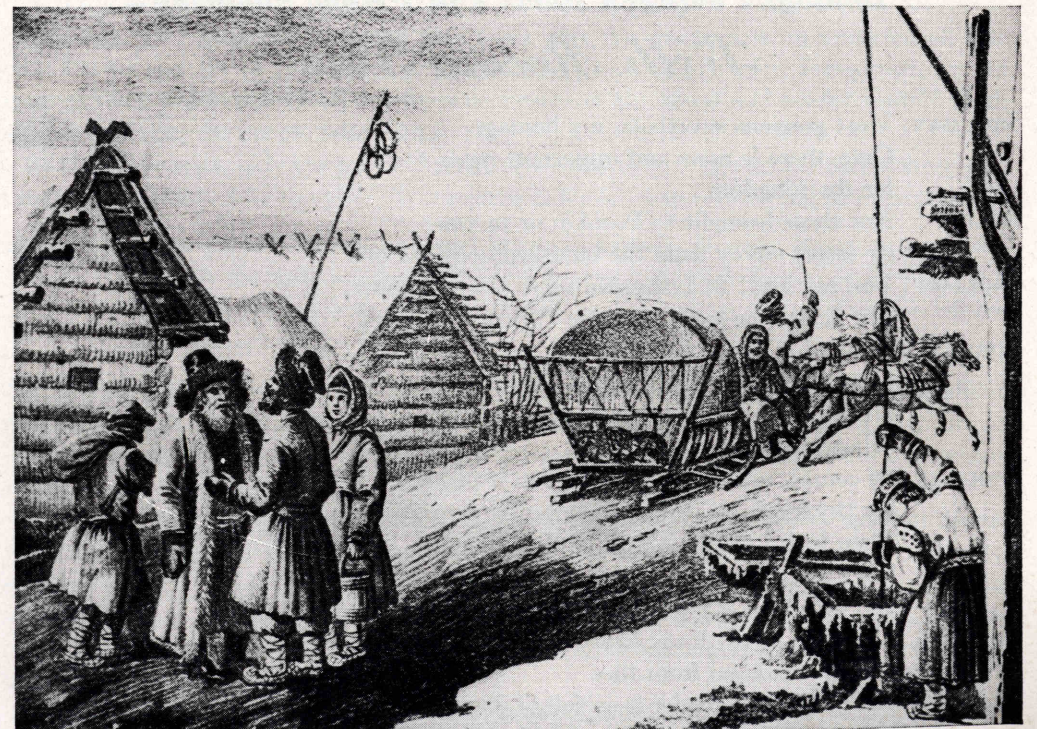
The curtain rises disclosing the Czar's two children, the Czarevitch, Feodor, and the Czarevna, Xenia, in the company of their old nurse, Nyanya. Xenia is weeping over the portrait of her dead fiancé. Trying to comfort and distract her, the nurse sings a folk song about a gnat. The Czarevitch complains that the nurse's song is too sad, and begins to sing

a merrier tale accompanied by gay hand-clapping. The nurse joins in, but as she and Feodor come to the song's end, the Czar Boris enters the room. Frightened, the nurse curtsies low.

Seeing his daughter unhappy, Boris comforts her, saying that her sorrow is his most dreadful burden. The nurse and Czarevna leave the room, and Boris remains with the Czarevitch, who is studying an atlas. Feodor points with pride to the principal regions and cities of Russia. Pleased at his son's knowledge, the Czar expresses a wish to live long enough to see his son rule over all Russia. Then, with heavy heart, Boris begins a monologue on the facts of his own rule and the state of the nation. But tormented by his guilty conscience, he strays from the subject:

Monologue by Boris—Fifth Record Side

BORIS: I have attained the highest power,
Six years I have reigned peacefully,
But there is no happiness in my troubled soul,
In vain the soothsayers promised
Long life and long reign, unmolested.
Nor life, nor power, nor illusion of glory,
Nor mob acclaim can rejoice me.
In my family I sought consolation,
I prepared for my daughter a bridal feast,
For my Czarevna, my pure dove.
As by a tempest, the bridegroom was carried off . . .
Thus the heavy hand of Justice
Is dreadful on the guilty soul . . .
Impenetrable darkness enfolds me,
If only there were a ray of comforting light
My heart is full of sorrow, grieving,
Beating in weariness.
What is this palpitation?
What does it anticipate?
With fervent prayers I implored the Saints,
I hoped to subdue the anguish of my soul.



Russian Village in Winter

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

In all my glory and limitless power,
 I, the ruler of Russia, I begged in tears for solace.
 And then the reports:
 The Boyars' sedition, Lithuanian plots
 And underground intrigues;
 Famine and plague, and perfidy and ruination.
 Like wild beasts the people stalk through the land.
 Hungry, helpless, Russia groans.
 And in this bitter agony inflicted upon us by God
 To test us for our grievous sins,
 For all the guilt, they name me
 And curse on every square this name: Boris!
 And even sleep brings no rest:
 In the darkness of night,
 The blood-stained child arises, with eyes burning
 And clenched little fists,
 Begs for pity and there is no pity.
 A ghastly wound gapes!
 A last cry of death is heard.
 Oh, my God!

Boris' monologue is interrupted by the sound of cries uttered by nurses and servants outside the room. Calling for them to hush, Boris sends the Czarevitch to find out what is the matter. A Boyar enters and announces the arrival at the palace of Prince Shouisky, who craves an audience. The Boyar whispers in Boris' ear that a serf, sent by Prince Pushkin from Poland, has brought tidings of a revolt and secret conclave of the Boyars and nobles.

Awaiting Shouisky's entrance, Boris fondly caresses his son, who sits on his father's knee and, wishing to console him, sings a symbolic song about a parrot which, mistreated by a nurse, flies in her face and scratches her. Delighted at the Czarevitch's song, Boris expresses hope that he will live to see his son and heir as Czar of Russia. At that moment, Prince Shouisky comes into the room to give Boris news of the conspiracy on the part of the Pretender. When Shouisky says that the people are acclaiming the Pretender under the name of "Dmitri", the Czar, horrified, commands the Czarevitch to quit the room:

Duologue between Boris and Prince Shouisky—

Sixth Record Side

SHOISKY: Most gracious sovereign, my homage.
 Czar, there is news and important news
 for thy kingdom . . .

BORIS: Not those brought to Pushkin or to you
 by secret envoy from the banished conspirators?

SHOISKY: Yes, my lord! In Lithuania there is a Pretender,
 The King, the lords, and the Pope are for him!

BORIS: With what name does he think
 to arm himself against us?
 Whose name has this rogue stolen . . .
 Whose name?

SHOISKY: Of course, my lord, thy dominion is powerful:
 By thy kindness, thy clemency, thy generosity,
 Thou hast won the hearts of thy subjects,
 They are devoted to thy throne with all their souls.
 But although it pains me, my lord,
 Although in truth my heart bleeds and breaks to say it,
 I cannot conceal from thee
 That if the Pretender is so full of daring
 that he crosses our border at Lithuania,
 To him a mob might be attracted . . .

To the resurrected name Dmitri . . .

BORIS: Dmitri! (*to son:*) Czarevitch, begone!

FEODOR: O, Sovereign, permit me to remain with thee
 To learn the ill, the great peril that threatens thy rule.

BORIS: Czarevitch, Czarevitch, obey me!—(*Czarevitch leaves.*)
 (*to Shouisky*) Take measure this very instant
 That Russia be barred by guards from the Lithuanians,
 That not one soul steps across the frontier.
 Begone! No! Remain, remain, Shouisky.
 Hast thou heard at any time
 That children long since dead have risen from the grave
 To question living Czars, true Czars and lawful,
 Chosen by the people, crowned by the ancient patriarchs?
 Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
 Well! Funny? Why don't you laugh? Eh?

SHOISKY: Forgive me, noble Sovereign!

BORIS: Listen, Prince!

Terror-stricken on hearing Shouisky's news, Boris, to reassure himself, questions his accomplice about the murder of the true Dmitri:

Duologue, continued—Seventh Record Side

BORIS: When that appalling evil deed was perpetrated
 When the little child met with an untimely death,
 That child . . . done to death . . . was Dmitri?

SHOISKY: Yes!

BORIS: Vassili Ivanitch!
 In the name of God and the Cross,
 I do adjure thee, on thy conscience,
 Tell me the whole truth.
 Thou knowest my clemency:
 But now if thou deceivest, I swear to thee
 I will devise a torture, such a torture,
 That Czar Ivan himself will quake with horror in his grave!
 Now answer me!

SHOISKY: Not death I fear, so much as thy displeasure.
 In the church at Ouglitch, before the people,
 Five days and more I looked upon the young child's body.
 And lying round were thirteen other bodies,
 All mutilated with wounds, in blood-stained filthy garments,
 And in them decay was already apparent.
 But the Czarevitch's childish countenance
 Was radiant, clear and pure,
 Though deep and ghastly the wound was gaping.
 But on his lips all innocent,
 A most beautiful smile was playing.
 It seemed as though he were peacefully sleeping
 In his cradle.
 His hands were folded as if grasping a toy
 With which he played . . .

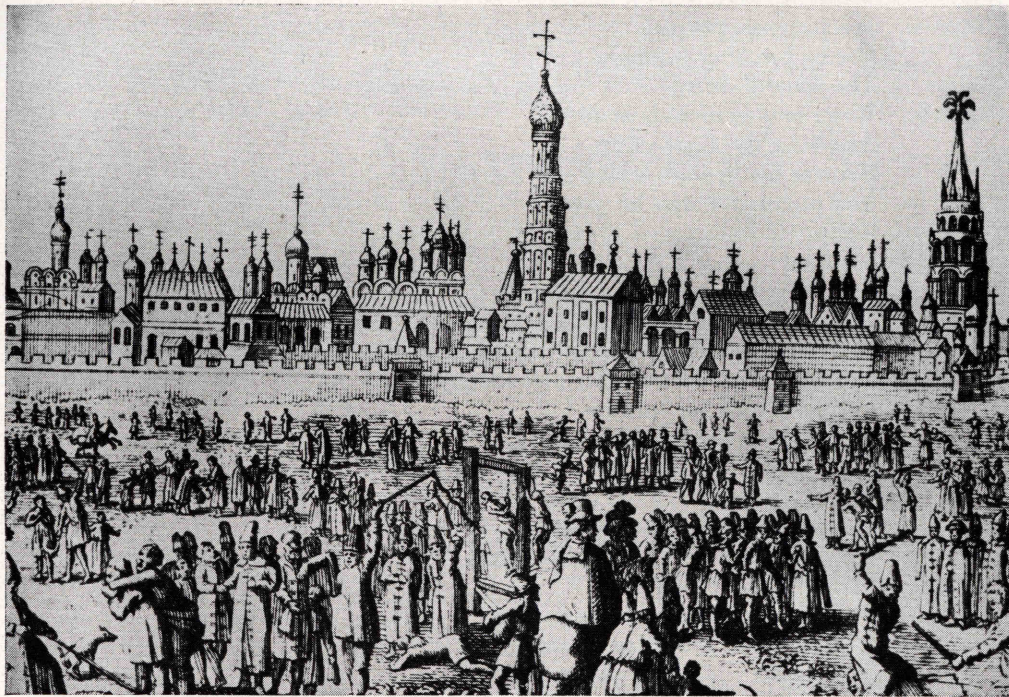
BORIS: Enough!

Unable to endure Shouisky's words, Boris orders him out of the room.

Shouisky gone, Boris sinks down into an arm chair. Once master of intrigue, but now victim of plotters, once all-powerful but now cringing with fear, once wise and just, but now half-mad with consciousness of the crime he committed, Boris is overcome with terror and guilt. As a big clock chimes, it seems to be striking the hour of his doom. Struggling to gain his breath, and succumbing wholly to his conscience, Boris sees in hallucination the murdered child, Dmitri:

Clock Scene—Eighth Record Side

BORIS: Ouf! I need air . . . scarce can I draw a breath . . .
I feel that all my blood is rushing to my head
And painfully descends again.
O Conscience, thou art cruel, merciless thy vengeance!
And if on thee a spot . . . a single spot . . .
One single spot perchance establishes itself
The soul is consumed,
The heart is filled with poison.
So weighty, weighty it grows:
With a hammer beating in the ears,
It reproaches and curses



City of Moscow and Tribunal outside the Walls

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

And strangles somehow . . . and chokes . . .
And one's head spins around . . .
I see the ghastly, bloody child
There! Look there! What's that?
There in the corner!
He is shuddering, gets bigger, comes closer . . .
Quivers and moans . . . Hence! Hence!
Not I . . . not I thy murderer!
Hence! Child, hence! The people . . . not I . . .
'Twas the people's will! Hence, child!
Oh, my God! Thou dost not want a sinner's death,
Oh Lord, have mercy upon the criminal Czar Boris!

A C T I I I

Scene 1: The Castle of Mnishek. Boris does not appear in the drama's third act, which takes place in Poland, at the Castle of Mnishek, in Sandomir.

Marina Mnishek is in her boudoir, dressing. As she adorns herself with diamonds, ladies-in-waiting and servants sing to her, comparing her beauty to that of snowflakes. Marina chides them for offering her feminine songs when she is eager to hear only patriotic songs of conquered Poland's former glory. Sending all away, Marina then complains of her daily existence, of her unworthy suitors and admits that only a youth from Moscow, the Pretender Dmitri, has set her heart beating faster. Craving power, and finding a tool in the

Pretender, Marina visualizes herself as Czarina of Russia and resolves to suborn the Polish nobles into aiding the Pretender's schemes.

A Jesuit, Rangoni, visits Marina in the boudoir, and, knowing of her attraction for the Pretender, seeks to persuade her to further Jesuit ideals. Rangoni tells Marina of Russian neglect of the Roman Catholic Church. He urges her to convert Gregory (Dmitri) to Catholicism and, if she should gain regal power, to propagate the faith among the Greek Catholic Russians. At first, Marina rejects Rangoni's requests, saying that she is avid only for worldly pomp and power. Threateningly, Rangoni reminds Marina of her spiritual duties, and falling on her knees, Marina implores forgiveness and agrees to do as Rangoni bids.

Scene 2: A moonlit garden at the Castle of Mnishek, Sandomir, Poland.

The young Pretender, Dmitri, waits beside a fountain to meet his beloved Marina. Rangoni seeks him out and ingratiatingly endeavors to gain spiritual and emotional ascendancy over him. Dmitri and Rangoni are interrupted by the sound of music: a Polonaise.

A procession of Polish lords and ladies approaches. Rangoni persuades the Pretender to conceal himself among the trees. Marina enters, on the arm of a Polish nobleman. All present vow to make war on Russia and dethrone Boris Godounoff.

After the nobles quit the scene, the Pretender comes out of hiding. Alone Marina returns to the garden to meet him. They sing a long duet, during which Marina makes plain to the Pretender that she will not become his bride until he has ascended the throne of Russia.

A C T I V

Scene 1: A forest clearing near Kromy, a town on the outskirts of Moscow. To the right is a slope beyond which can be seen the town walls. At the base of the slope is a huge tree stump. A road runs across stage; beyond it is the forest.

A crowd of vagabonds rushes onstage, carrying a nobleman whom they have seized and bound because he received and accepted from Czar Boris a high government appointment. The vagabonds place the struggling nobleman on the tree stump, stuff a gag into his mouth, and begin to beat him with sticks. A crowd of old women stands around, taunting the victim with words of vindictive sarcasm. A village simpleton, wearing an iron pot for a hat, sits nearby on a stone. Urchins tease him and play a mean trick on him with a penny. The monks, Varlaam and Missail arrive and publicly inveigh against Czar Boris, calling him a regicide. They urge the people to recognize the Pretender Dmitri as rightful Czar. The people clamor: "Death to Boris!"

A troop of soldiers in the pay of the Pretender and a group of Jesuits arrive. Fearful of the Jesuits, the vagabonds seize and beat them. But the troops pass on unmolested. The false Dmitri appears on horseback, proclaiming himself: "We, Dmitri Ivanovitch, by the grace of God, Czarevitch of all the Russias, Prince of the blood and lawful ruler!" With wild enthusiasm, the people follow him.

As the scene ends, only the poor old simpleton remains on stage. Seated on the stone and swaying from side to side, he wails: "Woe to Russia! Weep, weep, ye starving Russian people!"

Death Scene (2): The great reception hall in the Kremlin, Moscow. Benches are at either side. On the right is a door leading to the grand staircase. Nearer on the right, is a table with writing materials on it. The Boyars' Council is in special session. At the left is a seat for the Czar.

The Boyars are discussing which punishment to mete out to the Pretender. A realistic minded member of the Council reminds them that before a hare is roasted, it must be caught. Disregarding this, the Boyars dictate to a secretary a lurid description of the various tortures they will inflict on the criminal.

Prince Shouisky arrives late. He tells the Boyars that only yesterday he spied on Boris, who, unaware that he was being observed, acted as one demented. Shouisky vividly describes Boris' pale face, the sweat on his brow, his incoherent babbling and loud groaning which seemed to come from undivulged knowledge of some dark and deadly secret. Before Shouisky can finish, the Czar enters, crying out to an unseen spectre: "Hence! Hence, child, hence!"

Shouisky hails the Czar, who, recollecting himself, mounts the throne and speaks to the nobles. Shouisky informs Boris that an old man, a person of truth and wisdom, waits

outside, begging for an audience. Hoping to hear news that will give him peace of mind and reassurance, Boris grants the audience. The monk, Pimen, comes in. Standing before the Czar and looking him directly in the eye, Pimen relates the occurrence of a miracle:

A child appeared to Pimen in a dream and bade him go to the grave of the Czarevitch Dmitri in the church at Ouglitch. On waking, Pimen, although blind, undertook the journey. At the grave, Pimen wept and his sight was miraculously restored.

As Pimen ends the tale, Boris cries aloud and falls senseless into the Boyars' arms. When consciousness returns, Boris knows that death is upon him and calls for his son. A few Boyars hasten away to fetch the Czarevitch while others go to call for monks at the Choudov Monastery. Boris commands all present to depart.

When his small son comes running across the stage, Boris grows instantly calm and rational. He clasps the child to his breast. Then, in a voice poignant with disillusion and deep with belated wisdom, he begins a final filial exhortation and a last prayer:

Prayer of Boris—Ninth Record Side

BORIS: Farewell, my son
I am dying,
Forthwith thou wilt begin thy reign.
Seek not to know the path I took to become Czar,
For thee it matters not.
Thou wilt be Czar by thy own rights,
My lawful heir, my first begotten son.
My son! Child of my flesh and blood,
Do not trust the slanders of the seditious Boyars,
Watch with a hawk's eye
Their secret intrigues with Lithuania.
All treason wipe out mercilessly without clemency!
Strictly examine the people's justice,
Judge without prejudice.
Stand on guard as Defender of the Faith,
Honor all the saints of God with devotion.
Thy sister, the Czarevna, is thy charge, my son,
For thou remainest alone her only protector,
Our Xenia, our sweetest, pure dove.
O dear God! O dear God! Look down, I pray,
Accept a sinful father's tears.

Not for myself, I plead, not for myself,
O God!

Dispense from Thy unapproachable heights
Thy blessed heavenly light
Upon my innocent offspring,
Gentle and pure . . .

O Guardian Angels, shield with your luminous wings,
My own, my very dear son . . .
From suffering, from evil and from temptation.

Boris embraces and kisses his son. The sound of bells and of choristers chanting is heard, and Boris cries:

Tenth Record Side

BORIS: Hark! 'Tis the funeral knell!

CHORUS: Weep, weep, people,
For he breathes no more.

BORIS: The funeral dirge!

CHORUS: Wrap him in monk's attire
And bear the Czar away.
Forever his lips are sealed
And no answer may he give.
Weep,
Alleluia!

FEODOR: Sovereign: be calm! God will help . . .

BORIS: No! no, my son, my hour has come . . .

CHORUS: Before my eyes a little child expires and sobs aloud;
And he weeps, he trembles and struggles,
And he pleads for succour
And there is none to save him . . .

BORIS: O God! God! Woe is me!
Verily, cannot I expiate a sin?
O evil Death! What torment is thy cruelty!
Wait for a little . . . I am still Czar!
I AM STILL CZAR!!
God! Death! (*spoken:*) Forgive me!
Here! Here is your Czar, Czar . . .
Forgive me . . . forgive me . . .

BOYARS (*in a whisper*): He's dead!



The Boyars await Czar Boris—Act IV, Scene 2

NEW YORK TIMES STUDIO