



STREAMING THE FIRST CENTURY

SESSION 1: Slavic Sensibilities

FEATURED CAST AND LIBRETTO EXCERPTS: *Pikovaya Dama*, 1975

PIKOVAYA DAMA (THE QUEEN OF SPADES)

(in Russian)

Music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Libretto by Modest Tchaikovsky, based on a story by Alexander Pushkin

War Memorial Opera House

October 24, 1975 (Broadcast)

CAST

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Gherman | Peter Gougaloff** |
| The Countess | Regina Resnik |
| Lisa | Galina Vishnevskaya |
| Prince Yeletsky | Ryan Edwards |
| Conductor | Mstislav Rostropovich** |
| Director | Michael Hadjimishev** |

**United States opera debut

Clip 1: Act I. Gherman, who has been hiding outside Lisa's bedroom on the balcony, enters the room and surprises her. He implores her not to fear him, but to pity his hopeless love for her.

GHERMAN

Forgive me for coming here . . .

Do not reject my love.

Have pity on me.

As I die, I beg of you:

See how my heart is tortured by love.

Have pity on me, and warm my soul
with a single caress.

Clip 2: Act I. Gherman hides as the Countess enters and asks why Lisa is not in bed yet. When she leaves, Gherman emerges, consumed by the secret that only the Countess holds: the three winning cards.

COUNTESS

Lisa, open the door!

LISA

The Countess! Hide!

COUNTESS

Why aren't you asleep? You're still dressed.
What's all the noise?

LISA

I was pacing, Grandmother . . .
I couldn't sleep.

COUNTESS

Why is the window open?
What's all this foolishness?
Stop it at once, and go to bed.
Do you hear me?

LISA

Yes, grandmother.

COUNTESS

"Couldn't sleep."
Who ever heard of such a thing?
What times these are.
Go to bed now.

LISA

I will . . . forgive me.

COUNTESS

I heard noise . . . you disturbed me.
Let's have no more nonsense.

GHERMAN

The man who, filled with passion, comes
to wrest from you the secret of the three cards.
I felt the coldness of the grave just now . . .
Death, I do not want you!

Clip 3: Act II. Prince Yeletsky sings of his tender love for his betrothed, Lisa

YELETSKY

I'm so in love with you . . .

I can't imagine a day without you.

I'll do anything for you,
at any time.

I don't want to put any restraints
on your freedom.

I'm prepared to curb my jealousy—
to please you.

I want to be not just your husband,
but your servant . . .

. . . and your friend,
ready to console you.

Clip 4: In trying to coax the secret of the cards from the Countess, Gherman has frightened her to death. Lisa enters and finds Gherman seemingly unconcerned with the woman's death and only obsessed with having lost her secret. Lisa calls him a murderer and sinks to the ground, weeping.

GHERMAN

She is dead

LISA

What are you talking about? Dead . . . my God, did
you kill her?

GHERMAN

I didn't want her to die.

I only wanted to know the three cards.

LISA

That's why you came here . . .
not for me, but for the three cards!

And I loved you . . .

I ruined my life for you.

Get out, you bastard!

GHERMAN

She's dead...

LISA

Go!

Clip 5: Act III. Lisa waits for Gherman by the canal. She muses on how the happiness she once felt in life has been replaced by sorrow and despair.

LISA

Life promised me everything—
and then came the storm.

Everything I loved . . .
my happiness, my hopes . . . destroyed.

How tired I am.

Day and night . . .

. . . I think only of him.

Where is the happiness that once was mine?