EUGENE ONEGIN

.ACT ONE

NO. 1. DUET AND QUARTET

Garden on the estate of the Lárins. On the left a country house with a terrace; on the right, by a flower bed, a heavily branched tree. In the background a dilapidated wooden fence. Behind it, through the foliage, one sees the church and the village. It is early evening. Mother Lárina sits by the tree cooking jam over an open fire and listening to the singing of her daughters. The nurse, Filipyevna, stands near her and helps with the cooking. The French doors of the terrace are open and singing is heard from inside.

TATIANA AND OLGA

Do you recall? We heard the nightingale

Sing in the grove his song so sweet and tender;

And when the dawn appeared in all its splendor,

its splendor,
The shepherd's pipe so artless and so sad do you recall?

Was it a sigh? Was it the nightingale? Was it a moan the echo would recover? When in the wood you chanced upon your lover

And saw his eyes, his sad and pensive eyes,

Was it his moan? Was it his sigh?

(With the second stanza, Lárina and the nurse begin their conversation.)

LÁRINA

How sweet the song! How sweet the singing!
How like the days of long ago!

The very song I once was singing!

NURSE

It must be thirty years or so . . .

LÁRINA

Romantic novels were the fashion, And though I never read Rousseau, Princess Eileen, my older cousin, Said Moscow read him by the dozen... She often quoted him to me!

NURSE

Yes, I remember. That was the time Your husband tried to court you, But you were unwilling. It was another love you sought Whose mind, whose heart, whose every thought Seemed perfect in a man and thrilling!

LÁRINA

Oui, c'est la vie! Yes, it it true! He was so gay, played cards, And served as sergeant in the guards!

NURSE

Those happy days of long ago!

LÁRINA

Those were the days of real traditions...
The latest fashion was so smart!
And then, not asking my permission...

NURSE

They made you wed against your heart...
So that to ease and reassure you,
Your husband brought you here to cure you!

LÁRINA

At first, I wept in deep resentment, I wept and tried to run away, But keeping house from day to day Consoled me and became a habit!

вотн

Our habits are by heaven sent! They keep us happy and content!

LÁRINA

And then, in time, those youthful passions —
Romantic notions of the past — were gone and done with!

NURSE

Soon enough you turned to more provincial fashions.

Instead of new and modish clothes . . .

LÁRINA

Yes, I looked for comfort and repose!

EUGENE ONEGIN

ROTH

Our habits are by heaven sent! They keep us happy and content!

LÁRINA

And yet my husband loved me blindly . . .

NURSE

He trusted you and used you kindly!

вотн

Our habits are by heaven sent, etc.

NO. 2. CHORUS AND DANCE OF THE PEASANTS

(A chorus of peasants is heard from the distance and gradually comes closer.)

CHORUS LEADER

Rejoice! At last our work is done! our work is done!

PEASANTS

Rejoice! Say farewell to labor under

LEADER

Rejoice! For at last, my weary friends, the broiling sun!

PEASANTS

... To labor under the broiling sun!
All trouble, all care is for ever
banished, thrust away!
For nothing may spoil our joyous
holiday!

(The peasants come in, carrying a sheaf decorated with flowers.)

Noble lady, we greet you...
We have come to entreat you:
Join in our gay celebration,
Sharing our jubilation!
This is the harvest home!

LÁRINA

Friends, I thank you! That was lovely! But now perhaps you'll sing us something gay And full of life!

PEASANTS

Ah, that is one request that gives us happiness!
A song will soon be ringing!
Come, lasses, start the dancing, start the singing!

(During the next song, the peasant girls dance around the sheaf. After the dance begins, Tatiana and Olga appear on the terrace.)

In the sunshine warm and mellow Goes a young and handsome fellow! Maiden, tell us why you're sighing! Can it be that you are crying? Are you grieving for a lover? Did he leave you for another? It there no one to condole you? Is there no one to console you? Can it be that someone's coming. What a joyful tune he's humming! It's the fiddler drawing nearer ... Surely he will calm and cheer her! Maiden, hear the strings a-ringing, Hear the merry fiddler singing! Listen well to what he's saying, To the magic of his playing: "Dearest maiden, I adore you, Stop your weeping, I implore you! Oh, my darling, how I missed you, It's so long since I have kissed you!" Now the maiden is enchanted, All her wishes have been granted! Who is there among the flowers, Down among the shady bowers? It's the maiden and her lover! How they worship one another!

no. 3. scene and olga's aria

TATIANA

(holding a book in her hands)

Oh, how I love to hear their artless singing!
It carries me away on wings of song
To dreamland far away!

OLGA

Oh, Tania! You live in clouds, my dear! I'm not at all like you! Their merriment It makes me feel like dancing... "In the sunshine warm and mellow Goes a young and handsome fellow!"

(Olga takes a few dance steps and then caresses her mother. The others surround her.)

I am not made for tender yearning, I do not like to dream all day, Or all night long 'til early morning To read, to sob, and sigh my heart away! Why should I languish, be sad

and fearful When all is happiness and bliss!

Our life is pleasant! Our life is cheerful!

I hope 'twill always be like this! When I was born the fates looked down and smiled:

"Let her remain a happy, carefree child!

Like a gazelle so swift and nimble And like a nymph unspoiled and wild!" I am not made for tender yearning, etc.

NO. 4. SCENE

LÁRINA

Oh you, my little tomboy!
You're always looking out for gay
adventure...
You'd like to spend your life in merry
dancing...
Now, wouldn't you?

NURSE

Tatiana! Listen darling! Look at me! Are you quite well, my child?

TATIANA

Why, Nyanya? I'm all right!

LÁRINA

(addressing the peasants)

I thank you, my dear friends, for your attentions!

Go to the kitchen, now. Enjoy yourselves!

We have refreshments there for you! I'll see you later.

PEASANTS

You're much too kind, Madam...
(The peasants leave, followed by the nurse. Tatiana sits down on the steps of the terrace and becomes lost in her book.)

OLGA

But mother, will you please look at Tatiana!

LÁRINA

Indeed! You look so pale, you're ill, my darling!

TATIANA

I am quite all right, dear! There is no need to worry...
I am just excited reading this story...

LÁRINA

You are not serious, Tania?

TATIANA

How can I help it? You would feel it also
If you would read about their suffering And their tragic passion!
Oh, how their hearts are breaking in despair and longing!

LÁRINA

Yes, Tatiana! I used to feel that way!
I read this book and felt the same
excitement!
But as the years went on I found,
my dear,
That in real life, outside of books,
There's little reason to get excited!

OLGA

You'd better get excited!
Just look at you, you're wearing your old apron!
What if the neighbors came to visit us?
(Lárina hastily removes her apron.)
Wait! There are people coming! Yes, it is he!

LÁRINA

It must be Lensky!

TATIANA

(looking off from the terrace)
There's someone else...

LÁRINA

Who can it be?

NURSE

(entering hastily with a servant boy) My lady, dear...it is

Vladimir Lensky

And there's his friend, Onegin . . .

TATIANA

Oh . . . I'd better . . . run away!

EUGENE ONEGIN

LÁRINA

(Tatiana tries to leave. Lárina holds her back.)

Come, come, Tatiana! Your manners, darling!

Gracious me! My cap is all on one side! (The nurse adjusts Tatiana's dress and then leaves, motioning her not to be afraid.)

OLGA

We mustn't keep them waiting!

LÁRINA

(to the servant boy)

Go, ask them to come in!

(The boy runs off. General excitement over the arrival of the guests.)

NO. 5. SCENE AND QUARTET

(Lensky and Onegin enter. Lensky kisses Lárina's hand and bows politely to the young girls.)

LENSKY

Mesdames! I hope you will forgive me... I brought a guest with me... May I present to you Onegin, my good friend!

ONEGIN

It is an honor!

LÁRINA

(somewhat embarrassed)

Believe me, sir ... you're welcome here! My daughters ... Tatiana, Olga ...

ONEGIN

Accept my compliments!

LÁRINA

We'll fix some tea for you. (pointing to the house)

There! Or perhaps outside here? You might prefer it in the garden? I beg you to feel at home with us... We're simple people and quite unused to formal ways!

LENSKY

It's charming here; it is a lovely spot So quiet and so pleasant! Yes, so delightful!

LÁRINA

I beg you...
Forgive me while I go and see about the supper...
Come girls and set the tea things...

I'll be back!
(Tatiana and Olga busy themselves

with the tea service. Lensky and Onegin converse on the opposite side of the stage.)

ONEGIN

Do tell me, which one is Tatiana! I wonder if I guessed it right...

LENSKY

The one that seems a trifle shy.

And yet so charming in her sadness...

ONEGIN

How strange that you prefer her sister!

LENSKY

Why strange?

ONEGIN

It seems to me, Tatiana would be my choice if I were you!

Her eyes have an expressive light that's quite unusual!

The other is also very nice,

But there is something in her eyes

I find a little cold and less appealing . . .

They seem devoid of deeper feeling!

LENSKY

Splendid! My friend, I'm so delighted! You two will make a perfect couple! I know that Olga loves me dearly And I love her with all my heart

BOTH

There is a girl for every man And each must choose as best he can!

TATIANA (aside)

Can it be true? Yes, yes, I know it!
Be still, my heart! Be still, I say!
Alas, I must control my feelings,
I must not give myself away!
Be silent, oh my aching heart!
I know, I'll not recover the peace of mind I knew before...
It's vanished, gone for ever more!

OLGA

(observing Tatiana)

grow!

I am quite thrilled and thoroughly excited . . .

Just think of it! 'Twill get around ...
And everyone will be delighted ...
The neighbors will begin to talk
They'll pair him up with our
Tatiana ...

Soon they'll decide about the wedding, Discuss her gown and her trousseau, And rumors will begin to spread and

(Lensky goes to Olga. Onegin looks Tatiana over rather unceremoniously while she stands with downcast eyes; he then approaches her and engages her in conversation.)

NO. 6. SCENE AND LENSKY'S ARIOSO

LENSKY

My Olga! I missed you so! It's been so long since I have seen you!

OLGA

Vladimir! It was only yesterday!

LENSKY

I know! And yet without you, Hours seem to last forever... an eternity!

OLGA

Eternity? Don't say such words, They frighten me... All since yesterday!

LENSKY

No, you are wrong, Olga! Eternal as my love for you! (They leave for a walk in the garden.)

ONEGIN

(addressing Tatiana with cool politeness)

It's charming here! And yet, you must be bored to death To languish all year round So far away from all diversion! The countryside is not too well provided with entertainment!

TATIANA

Still, I have my novels...

ONEGIN

Novels? It's true enough we learn by reading
Much that can be useful!
But you can't spend your life in books and reading!

TATIANA

I find it quite exciting to be dreaming...

ONEGIN

What is it that you're dreaming of?

TATIANA

My mind takes off on flights of fancy And yields before its magic spell!

ONEGIN

It's clear enough you dwell in dreamland...

I know this feeling all too well...

(Onegin and Tatiana leave in the opposite direction, while Lensky and Olga return from their walk.)

LENSKY

Do believe me...Oh, believe me, Olga That my love is burning with a flame so tender That it is worship more than love!

I only want to kneel before you,
To gaze, to worship, to adore you,
To serve, to be your faithful slave!
As children we have known each other,
We shared our secret childish
schemes...

And even then, as to a brother,
You told me all your girlish dreams...
While here, beneath these friendly
bowers

We played among the fragrant flowers! Oh! I am in love with you! You're an angel!

You're the flame that burns so brightly! You're the hope that whispers lightly Words I always want to capture Words of promise, words of rapture!

(with ardent passion)
I'm in love with you!
You are my life, my own! And every

moment of the day
When you are near, when you are
far away

You are my life, my own, and all my thoughts

Are filled with you alone!

OLGA

Beneath these green and friendly We played among the fragrant flowers, We shared our childish schemes...

ROTH

And told our secret, youthful dreams!

NO. 7. FINAL SCENE

(Lárina and the nurse come out on the terrace It grows darker. By the end of the scene, the light is quite dim.)

LÁRINA

Well, here you are! But I don't see the others...

NURSE

I guess they are still walking in the garden . . . I'll go and try to find them!

LÁRINA

Yes, and tell them please: "It's getting dark outside, and supper's ready!"

So make them hurry up, my dear. (The nurse leaves.)

(to Lensky)

Go on, please. Do not wait for me!

LENSKY

We're on our way, Ma'am!

(Olga and Lensky enter the house, followed by Lárina. Onegin and Tatiana reappear in the garden. The nurse follows them, trying to overhear what they are saying.)

ONEGIN

My uncle felt his end approaching And sent for me to come out here, Into this dull and quiet village Where nothing happens year to year. And I confess I miss the city...

(from the terrace)

I miss its grand, majestic splendor, The elegance of courtly life! I miss society's noise and strife! (Onegin and Tatiana enter into the house.)

NURSE

My little sweetheart . . . She walks so gently And scarcely dares to look where she is going . . . She's shy, poor darling! Or perhaps,

She is attracted to this young and dapper stranger?

(Nurse goes off, shaking her head.)

END OF THE FIRST SCENE OF ACT 1.

NO. 8. INTRODUCTION AND SCENE WITH THE NURSE

Tatiana's room, furnished very simply. Ordinary, old - fashioned wooden chairs upholstered with chintz. Curtain draperies of the same material. Bed with a book shelf above it. A dresser covered with a runner has a small mirror on it. Flower vase. Near the window a table with an inkwell and other writing equipment. Tatiana, wearing a white negligee is sitting before her mirror. She seems lost in her thoughts. The nurse is standing near her.

NURSE

Well now, to bed, my child! It's late, Tatiana!

I'll wake you early for the mass tomorrow...

(Tatiana gets up lazily and goes to sit on the bed. The nurse caresses her.)

TATIANA

I'm restless, Nyanya. It's so warm here! Let in some air and sit by me.

(The nurse opens the window and sits down on a chair beside Tatiana.)

NURSE

Tania, what ails you child?

TATIANA

I'm weary! Let's hear some tale of

NURSE

A story, Tania? Once I knew them! Yes, once I could remember stories Of fairy princes, so young and bold; Of maidens fair with hair of gold! But now, dear, all is gone and vanished . . . The stories are forgotten. Yes, these are the evil days indeed ... I'm old now!

TATIANA

Well then, tell me Nyanya Of all those quaint, old-fashioned ways, And how you were in love those days!

NURSE

Come, come, Tatiana . . . don't be childish. We never mentioned such a word! For if my father overheard, I'm sure it would have meant a whipping!

TATIANA

Then how did you get married, Nyanya?

God must have willed it so! My Vania

was younger still than I, my dear ... I was just in my fourteenth year! He did not have to do much wooing, He was approved by all my clan . . . Yes, that is how it all began. I scarcely knew what they were doing . . . Crying, as they unbound my hair, To church we went, I bridal pair ... And then I went to live with strangers . . . But you're not listening, my child!

TATIANA

(embracing the nurse in passionate elation)

Oh Nyanya, Nyanya, how I languish, How I suffer! I'm worn with anguish And with doubts! You see, I'm crying, weeping, Nyanya!

NURSE

Tatiana, dear! Your head is burning! Oh gracious Savior, help us now! Quick, let me sprinkle you with holy water! You're ill, my child!

TATIANA (hesitating)

I am not ill! I'll tell you, Nyanya.... I am in love! Please leave me, dear Yes, leave me now! I am in love . . .

NURSE

Tatiana!

TATIANA

Please go and leave me to myself! Get me a pen and ink and paper... the table there ... I'll soon be sleeping . . . Good night!

NURSE

(does as requested)

The Lord preserve you, darling! (leaves)

NO. 9. THE LETTER SCENE

(For a while, Tatiana remains lost in thought. Then she rises with emotion and great determination.)

TATIANA

(with passionate force)

He is my destiny, I feel it! Alas, I can no more conceal it! I know the yearning of desire, I feel its sweet and burning fire! I taste the magic cup of passion, I am pursued by ardent dreams . . . He's here, he's here, in every place, I see his dear, beguiling face, I hear his voice, I see the tempter's

(goes to the table; sits down to write for a while, then stops)

No! This is wrong! Let's start it over! (tears up the paper)

How strange it is . . . I'm all upset! How am I to begin? (writes, and then stops to read it over) You must forgive this foolish letter! Please do not treat it with disdain! May I implore you to be patient For it's not easy to explain!

But though I dare to speak so freely I'm all aglow with guilt and shame . . . My cheeks are red in blushing flame! At first I thought I'd never write you! Believe me, I had hoped to keep My cruel suffering to myself! (sets the

letter aside)

I swore that I would not betray my love,

That I would not reveal my hopeless passion!

Alas! I did not have the strength to keep my word!

Now I've decided to confess it all

And to be frank with you,
And beg for your compassion!
Oh, how I wish that we had never met,
That I had never learnt to know you!
These feverish thoughts I would forget,
Forget my torture and my anguish!

These dreams that make me sigh and languish

I would forget somehow! Instead

I'd find a man whose deep emotion Would win my trust and my devotion, Whose love would soothe my troubled heart!

(She is lost in her thoughts and then gets up suddenly.)

Another? No, never any other!
To you alone I shall be true!
You were for me ordained and chosen,
As I was chosen but for you!
All of my life was but a token,
A pledge of meeting you alone!
I knew the moment you had spoken,
You were my love, you were my own!
When in my dream I felt you near me,
Unseen and silent you were near!
I sensed your presence warm and dear,
Your ardent gaze revealed you clearly!
And then ... No, no, it's not
a dream ...

You do appear, you stand before me, My heart stops beating, all my being Exclaims in ecstasy: "My loved one!" 'Twas you who like a guardian angel Watched by me in the dark of night! It was your call I was obeying And you looked on as I was praying

by candlelight!

And maybe at this very moment
You stand here watching by my side,
Then softly through the darkness glide
To promise hope and consolation,
And then with love and exaltation

You whisper: "Courage!" to your bride!

(Returns to the table and resumes her writing, then stops, lost in her thoughts.)

Are you an angel watching by me? Are you a tempter sent to try me? I beg you, drive these doubts away!

Perhaps it was but an illusion, A fancy, empty as a play? And soon will prove a mere delusion? (She rises and walks about pensively.) No, come what may! My destiny, my wretched fate I lay before you! You will protect me, you will not disdain My pleading, I implore you! Remember, dear, I'm here alone, And no one seems to understand me! You will not scold and reprimand me. This lonely maid you'll not disown! I am your own! With but one sentence revive my poor despairing Or kill my folly at the start. And let me end my days, Yes, let me end them in repentance! (Returns to the table to finish the letter. Then, gets up and seals it.) It's finished! I dread to read it over! Do not reject me, do not hurt me! For now I put my trust in you! I need your help, do not dessert me!

NO. 10. SCENE AND DUET

(Tatiana goes to the window and opens the shade. Daylight fills the room.)

Ah! The night is over!
All nature smiles and welcomes in the dawn!

(She sits by the window.)

The shepherd's piping...the world is still...

And you, Tatiana!

(The door opens quietly and the nurse comes in. At first she does not notice Tatiana.)

NURSE

It's time, wake up, my child...

Get up!
(seeing Tatiana) What's this?
My darling's up already!
The little bird has left its nest!
Your trouble robbed me of my rest!
Now, may the Lord be praised, you're calm and steady!
I do not find a trace of woe!
Your rosy cheeks are all aglow!

TATIANA

Dear Nyanya, I must ask a favor...

NURS

Of course, my darling . . . Here I am!

TATIANA

Don't think that ... really ... don't imagine ...
But listen ... Nyanya, be a lamb!

NURSE

You know, I'm always glad to help you!

TATIANA

All right! Then send your little grandson
To take this note to O... to him...
To take it to our neighbor, but make sure
That no one should discover

Who sent the note or even whence it came!

NURSE

Of course! But say, who is the neighbor?
I'm old I'm poor at guessing, Tania!
There are so many neighbors here,
I could not count them all, I fear...
And surely, my grandson will have to know his name!

TATIANA

Come, must I really tell you, Nyanya?
Alas! My guessing days are over...
Old age is cruel, Tania!
When I was young my mind was
quick...
For plotting, and planning
My wits were always ready!

TATIANA

Oh Nyanya, please believe me There is no need to plot or plan. It's just about a letter to a man...

NURSE

Of course, my darling ... surely ... But please don't be so cross, my dear, My wits are slowing down, I fear ...

TATIANA

This gentleman . . .

NURSE

Do tell me, Tania....

TATIANA

It is Onegin who should get this letter, Nyanya!

NURSE

Good Lord! You're pale again, Tatiana!

TATIANA

No Nyanya, really go ahead, And send your grandson, as I said!

(After the nurse takes the letter she stands for a while in doubt. Tatiana motions her to go. The nurse starts to go but stops at the door, hesitating. She then comes back, indicates that she has understood, and finally leaves. Tatiana sits down at the table and is lost in thought.)

END OF THE SECOND SCENE OF ACT 1.

NO. 11. CHORUS OF THE SERVANT GIRLS

Another part of the garden on the estate of the Lárins. Thick bushes of lilacs and acacias; an old bench; ill-kept flower beds etc. Maids gathering berries are seen through the shrubbery.

SERVANT GIRLS

Maidens young and dutiful, maidens fair and beautiful!

Watch us gather huckleberries, ripe and juicy strawberries!

Singing while we gather them, singing, oh so merrily!

Calling our lovers here, luring them enticing them!

But as soon as they appear, all the maidens disappear, Run away and hide away, never to be

seen again!
We will teach these naughty men not

to spy on maidens fair!

Not to watch us brazenly while we

gather strawberries!

Not to listen avidly to our songs of

merriment!

Maidens young and dutiful, maidens

fair and beautiful! Watch us gather huckleberries, ripe

and juicy strawberries!
Singing while we gather them, singing,
oh so merrily!

Filling our baskets with ripe and juicy

loveliness!

11

Sing in jolly measure songs of joy and pleasure. They're the songs we like to sing, songs

we love and treasure!

NO. 12. SCENE AND ARIA OF ONEGIN

(Tatiana runs in quickly and sinks exhausted on the bench.)

TATIANA

Heaven! Here's Onegin! Lord help me! I tremble! What did he think? What will he say?

Oh, why was I so quick to heed my aching soul,

So quick to lose my self-control? How could I write him such a letter? Yes, certainly silence had been better! It's just as plain as it can be, He will despise me, laugh at me!

Good Lord, be kind! I'm so unhappy! I'm so afraid!

A step! Still nearer... Yes, it is he, it is he!

(As Onegin enters and walks toward Tatiana, she jumps up and lets her head fall.)

ONEGIN

(calmly, somewhat coldly, and with dignity)

You wrote this letter! Please don't deny it!

Well I know the touching sound of true devotion,

The words of sweet and pure emotion! I like your candor very much! Against my will its gentle touch Awoke a long forgotten feeling! But praise from me will never do. I must be very frank with you! I'll be both honest and outspoken! Hear my confession full and free And sit in judgment over me!

TATIANA

Oh heaven! How degrading! And how

(She sinks down on the bench.)

ONEGIN

If marriage tempted me, or rather If I could bear not being free, If for a husband and a father

A kindly fate had destined me. Then I'd want no one else but you. No other bride would ever do! But I don't merit your affection And I'm not meant for wedded bliss! You waste your beauty and perfection On one who is not worth all this! Believe me when I tell you truly: Were we to wed we'd suffer cruelly! No matter how I love at first, By boredom soon my loves are cursed! You see we'd tread no path of roses Once we had ventured Cupid's way! We'd only learn to rue the day! My youthful dreams I'll not recover. My soul will never glow anew! I love you truly like a brother, And yet, who knows, still fonder too! I've no desire to speak unkindly, And yet I say: "Don't trust so blindly! Be careful! Consider well before you act!" Control your fancy and your whim, Or someday, someone surely will Betray your trust and use you ill! (Onegin offers his arm to Tatiana, She gives him a long imploring look, then rises and leaning on his arm leaves the stage. The chorus of peasant girls is heard again.)

SERVANT GIRLS

Maidens young and dutiful, etc.

ACT TWO

NO. 13. ENTR'ACTE AND WALTZ WITH CHORUS

The ball-room in the house of the Lárins lighted by a chandelier and wall sconces. Guests in old-fashioned evening dress and in military uniforms of the 1820's are dancing a waltz. The older men sit in groups admiring the dancers. Matrons with reticules occupy the chairs along the walls. Lensky dances with Olga. Onegin and Tatiana also take part in the dancing. Lárina is constantly crossing the stage with the air of a busy host-

Oh what a dance! How gay and how inviting! The music is calling us to pleasure and romance!

A lovely ball! A lovely night! Festive and exciting!

Let's not resist, let's give ourselves To pleasure and delight!

Hear the music thrill them and excite them!

Hear it whisper of love's desire.

OLDER MEN

Oh, what a bore these provincial diversions!

Crowding around in the deafening noise!

Yes, we prefer our hunting excursions! That is a sport a good fellow enjoys!

MATRONS

Husbands returning exhausted from hunting,

From searching the forests for partridge and grouse ...

We know what they're seeking is only their supper,

And all we are good for is keeping their house!

YOUNG GIRLS

(surrounding Zaretsky)

Dear Captain Zaretsky, Oh, how can we thank you for bringing the orchestra?

ZARETSKY

Don't mention it . . . I'm happy you like it!

YOUNG GIRLS

We're anxious to dance with you!

ZARETSKY

I'm here at your service, so let us begin! (Onegin dances with Tatiana. The others stop dancing and watch the dancing couple.)

MATRONS

Look at them! It's plain she adores

There'll soon be a wedding! Well, it's high time!

How sad for Tatiana! All men are ungrateful...

He'll soon be unfaithful! I think it's a crime!

(Onegin passes quietly near the matrons and overhears what they are saying.)

He has no manners!

You'd expect Tatiana to choose someone more refined!

They say that he gambles and cares for nothing

But politics, cards, and the strongest of wines!

ONEGIN (aside)

A fine opinion! How flattering! Whoever started to spread such

slander? I should never have come here! It's all Vladimir's fault! He brought me

here today! But wait . . . I'll take revenge!

He'll pay for these insults! Yes, Lensky shall watch me flirt with

Yes, that will make him furious! (Olga passes by followed by Lensky.)

Here she is! (to Olga) Allow me! (Olga is surprised.)

LENSKY (to Olga)

It is my turn! You promised me!

ONEGIN (to Lensky)

I fear you are mistaken! (Onegin dances with Olga.)

LENSKY

I can't believe it! How could she do it? Olga? No, it can't be true!

GUESTS

(drinking and toasting each other) Here's to pleasure, joy and delight! We will always treasure the memory of this night! Oh, what a dance! How gay and how

> NO. 14. SCENE AND COUPLETS OF MONSIEUR TRIQUET

inviting, etc.

LENSKY

(approaching Olga who has just finished dancing with Onegin)

What have I done to merit such a treatment, Olga?

How could you be so cruel and torture me?

OLGA

What are you saying? What have I done to you?

LENSKY

You danced all evening with him alone...

Each single dance just with Onegin.

And when I asked you, you turned your back on me!

OLGA

Vladimir, don't be childish! You take it much too seriously!

LENSKY

No! You must understand! I saw him press your hand
When he danced with you! I saw him whisper
As he held you in his arms! I saw it

quite distinctly!
You blushed and answered him ... you smiled at him!

OT.GA

Really! You must not talk this way! You should not be so jealous! We talked quite pleasantly! He's very nice!

LENSKY

So, he's nice! It's plain to see, you do not love me!

OLGA

Don't talk such nonsense! (Onegin comes closer.)

LENSKY

No, you do not love me!
Will you dance with me the next one please?

ONEGIN

You are too late! Remember Olga what you promised?

OLGA

I shall keep my promise! This shall be your punishment for jealousy!

LENSKY

Olga!

OLGA

Serves you right! But wait a moment! First we'll have to hear Monsieur Triquet!

ONEGIN

Must we?

OLGA

I think you'll find him quite amusing!

YOUNG GIRLS

Monsieur Triquet! Chantez de grace un couplet!

TRIQUET

(with a strong French accent)

I haf my present here wiz me!
But where is Tatiana, I pray?
I want to stand in front of she...
And sing for her my own couplet!
(Tatiana is placed inside the circle of girls. She is embarrassed and wants to leave, but is held back.)

GIRLS

Here she is! Here she is!

TRIQUET

Aha! Voila ze queen of zis great day! Mesdames! I ask you now to stop...
And please, you must not interrup!

Zis is a story very strange, How on siz day we haf arrange To arrive and to observe zis change! We saw it blossom in ze morn, Modest and young and so forlorn... Zen what happened, what do you suppose?

Ze rosebud, ze rosebud — it turned into a lovely rose!

You must believe, I tell it true,
Our rosebud covered wiz fresh dew...
We saw it blossom in ze morn,
Modest and young and so forlorn...
Zen what happened, what do you
suppose?

Ze rosebud — it turned into a lovely rose!

GIRLS

(to Triquest who bows and presents the couplet to Tatiana)

Bravo! Bravo, Monsieur Triquet! How kind and how obliging To sing for us your own couplet!

NO. 15. MAZURKA AND SCENE

ZARETSKY

Messieurs! Mesdames! Attention please, I beg you!

We're ready to begin the dance!

(He offers his arm to Tatiana. The guests pair off for the dance. Onegin and Olga dance down-stage. Lensky stands behind and observes them, moodily. After finishing his turn with Olga, Onegin takes her to her place, and then addresses Lensky as if having just noticed him.)

ONEGIN

Why aren't you dancing, Lensky? You seem moody and discontented! You're well, I hope!

LENSKY

I'm fine! I'm quite well!
So pleased I can admire your true and loyal friendship!

ONEGIN

What have I done to merit your displeasure?
Have I offended you?

LENSKY

(who at first answers calmly, becomes gradually angrier and more excited)

Offended? No, of course not!

I guess you are convinced that there's no harm

In using all your arts of charm and flattery

To try and turn the heads of all the girls around here?

No, you're not content to see Tatiana suffer!

You're a loyal friend,

You next must ruin Olga's happiness! So now you flirt with her, and then tomorrow

You'll laugh at her! Oh, what loyal friendship!

ONEGIN

Come! That's plain insanity!

LENSKY

Indeed sir ... you acted like a madman, And now you dare to speak of my insanity!

(The dancing has stopped gradually and now all the guests surround the two quarreling men.)

GUESTS

What has happened?
What's the matter?
What's the trouble?

LENSKY

Onegin, you are my friend no longer!
So please remember: I've no desire to know you!
Yes, I think you're mean and vile!

GUESTS

Please, won't you tell us what has happened!
What is wrong? Explain your strange behavior!

ONEGIN

(taking Lensky aside)

Now listen Lensky, that's enough, quite enough!
You know yourself, this is all
A figment of your fancy.
You must not make yourself ridiculous!
I've no desire and not the least intention

To win her heart!

LENSKY

(growing more and more violent)
Was it my fancy that you danced
with her?
And whispered to her!
She blushed when she answered you!
What, what have you been telling her?

ONEGIN

Now really ... this is silly ... all this commotion!

LENSKY

(beside himself)

Never mind all this! I feel myself insulted
And I demand full satisfaction!

GUESTS

Please tell us what has happened!

LENSKY

This gentleman offended me!
And when I made it clear that I expect
an explanation,
He did not choose to answer me!
And so, I ask him to accept my
challenge!

LÁRINA

implore you!

(who has made her way through the crowd of guests)
A challenge? No, Vladimir, I

NO. 16. FINALE

LENSKY (to Lárina)

Please believe me! In your house I have known true affection,
Here my childhood was happy and bright!

You have shown me the meaning of friendship

And the blessing of joy and delight!
But today I have found that my notion
Of true friendship was only a dream,
That the world doesn't know true
devotion,

Or the meaning of love and esteem!

ONEGIN (aside)

I must admit I went too far!
I acted rashly, foolishly!
And I have hurt him badly...
I should have known how to curb my temper,
I should have spared his tender soul, controlled my displeasure,
Or forgotten it! Quite candidly, I am ashamed!

TATIANA

But now my honor is at stake!

I cannot grasp and understand it!
This sudden quarrel seems so senseless!
It is a nightmare, I know it can't be true!
Dreadful night of disaster and anguish,
Full of horror, of pain and despair!

OLGA AND LÁRINA

Our feast that was so gay and jolly, Now, I am afraid will end in folly!

GUESTS

What a pity! What a tragedy!

LENSKY

Many things that I thought were a blessing
Are a wicked and tragic mistake!
My poor dream, that was sweet and caressing,
Now has vanished, but I'm glad that at last I'm awake!

TATIANA

Oh, what agony! My heart will surely break!
Forever I am doomed to love him!
My passion is hopeless, why should I deny it!

OLGA AND LÁRINA

Oh, who can tell what makes them fight,
What makes them quarrel day and night?
What makes them act like little children!

OLGA

Their foolish bickering is shameless, But am I so completely blameless, myself?

LÁRINA

Alas, I am afraid it is too late To stop the ruthless hand of fate!

ONEGIN

My foolish joke was quite uncalled for! I should have used more self-control, I should have spared his tender soul!

GUESTS

Oh, can it be our celebration Will end in strife and sudden death? What can we do, what can we say? Alas, I fear it is too late To stop the ruthless hand of fate

ONEGIN (to Lárina)

I've listened long enough! I beg you, Accept my deep regret and apology! (to Lensky)

I'll fight with you since nothing else Will serve to cure your madness!

LENSKY

To-morrow morning we'll see
Whose madness needs correcting!
Perhaps I am insane...
But you...you're a scoundrel, and
a liar!

ONEGIN

Stop your raving, or I shall kill you!
(Lensky is held back by the guests.
Tatiana weeps. Onegin leaves hurriedly.)

GUESTS

Aren't you ashamed of your shocking behavior?

You're causing a scandal ...

That's no way to handle your private affairs...

You've no right to make a scandal! Stop it!

OLGA

Vladimir, I implore you! I beseech you!

LENSKY

Olga! Goodbye! Good-bye!

GUESTS

What a scandal!

(Lensky rushes away. Olga hurries after him, but has a fainting spell. Lárina and the guests surround her.)

END OF THE FIRST SCENE OF ACT 2

NO. 17. SCENE AND ARIA OF LENSKY

A winter landscape with a village mill near the banks of a wooded stream. Early dawn. The sun has barely risen. Lensky sits under a tree, lost in thought. Zaretsky paces up and down impatiently.

ZARETSKY

Well, Lensky! Looks as if your friend Onegin has reconsidered!

LENSKY

He will soon be here!

ZARETSKY

I think it's very strange he keeps us waiting...

I am surprised. It's after six... He should have been here long ago!

(Zaretsky goes to the milldam to converse with the miller who has appeared in the background. The miller shows him the wheel, millstones, etc. Lensky remains pensive.)

LENSKY

Be still my heart, be still and do not falter...

The day has come, the hour is near!
(gets up and walks downstage)

What is the meaning of creation,
The goal of human destination...
That image of eternity, that mortal eye

can never see? The dawn will rise another morning, But this one is perhaps my last!

No matter!
I am quite content to bear my lot in

joy or sorrow!

Blessed is the gift of day's delight,

Welcome alike the peace of night!
The busy world will soon awaken.
To joy and sorrow, love and toil,

But I — who knows — may soon be resting

Beneath this cold and frozen soil!

My friends will mourn awhile,

My friends will mourn awhile,
I know it,

But soon they will forget the poet... They won't remember me, but you, Olga?

Will you be true to words that we had spoken,

To vows we swore would not be broken?

My Olga, you will not forget? You won't forget that hour of joy, That hour of bliss when first we met...

Your smile, your blush of sweet emotion,

And then the days of true devotion...
The flame of passion brightly burning
That sealed our hearts beyond recall?
My lovely child! You know I'm yours!
Forever yours!

My love! My life! My one and only thought! My Olga!

All of my love belongs to you And in the grave I'll still be true! My heart, be still and do not falter! The day has come, the hour is near!

NO. 18. SCENE OF THE DUEL

ZARETSKY
(approaching Lensky)

Well, here he is!

But whom has he brought with him?
Who can it be?

(Onegin enters. His servant, Guillot, who carries the case with the pistols, follows him.)

ONEGIN (bowing)

I beg you to forgive me! I overslept a trifle...

ZARETSKY

One moment! Where is your second?
Excuse me, but you understand!
In duels the rules are most important!
It's only legal if two seconds are
at hand!
One must have two.
Please, I don't want to seem pedantic,
But I insist we do it right!

ONEGIN

I did not mean to be impolite...
May I present my second:
Monsieur Guillot!

(to Guillot) My friend Zaretsky will instruct you

And show you every single thing... (aside, to Zaretsky, refering to Guillot) He may not know the rules for killing, But he is bright and very willing!

(Zaretsky and Guillot bow to each other.)

(to Lensky) Well, shall we start?

LENSKY

Indeed, I'm ready!

(Zaretsky and Guillot go upstage to discuss the conditions of the duel. Onegin and Lensky stand on opposite sides of the stage without looking at each other.)

LENSKY AND ONEGIN

How strange! How strange, and how disturbing! To plot to kill my dearest friend, The friend with whom I shared my leisure, contentment, The man I should defend instead of fighting! Yes, how senseless, in secret grief and consternation. Here, in the morning of our lives Pursue this useless demonstration! Oh, if we could only lay aside Our foolish sense of injured pride, Shake hands in friendship and forget it? No! No! No!

(Zaretsky and Guillot have by this time loaded the pistols and measured the distance. Zaretsky places the contestants and hands them the pistols. All is done in silence. Guillot is uncomfortable and hides behind a tree.)

ZARETSKY

Approach each other!

He claps his hands three times. The adversaries take four steps forward without aiming. Onegin then raises his pistol. Lensky does likewise. Onegin fires. Lensky falls and drops his pistol. Both Zaretsky and Onegin rush toward the body and examine it.

ONEGIN

He's dead?

ZARETSKY

He's dead!

(Overcome with horror, Onegin clutches his head in his hands.)

ACT III

NO. 19. POLONAISE

Ball room in a fashionable St. Petersbueg house. Elegantly dressed guests dance the Polonaise.

NO. 20. SCENE AND PRINCE GREMIN'S ARIA

ONEGIN

(entering and looking around to observe the guests) Familiar faces! Still the same display, polite and formal . . . Still the same gossip... not one refreshing thought! It seems that I am doomed to suffer The endless boredom of my life. Without a family or wife, Alone, in idleness of leisure I spend my time in search of pleasure! But all my seeking is in vain! I hoped to accomplish something useful And yet, what have I done instead? I fought a frightful, stupid duel... I killed the only friend I had! These memories drove me away from the countryside

Where every day recalled to my mind the heartless sight,

The vision of that senseless fight! In vain I hoped in distant travels To find distractions for my grief! Alas, in vain I tried to hide My agony in foreign countries. So I returned here, and I feel As useless and as bored as ever!

(The guests dance the Ecossaise. Onegin observes them from a distance. As the dance ends, the attention of the guests is drawn to Tatiana who enters leaning on the arm of her husband, Prince Gremin.)

GUESTS

The Princess Gremina! How lovely! How charming!

(Tatiana sits down on a sofa. Various guests approach her and greet her with great deference. Others observe her with interest.)

How young she looks! And yet how regal! She is, so many people say The greatest beauty of our day!

ONEGIN

(observing Tatiana from the distance)
Am I mistaken? I wonder? No!
It is she, it is Tatiana!
I did not dream I'd find her here!
What regal air, what noble bearing!
And how lovely!
A goddess visiting the earth!

(Prince Gremin approaches Onegin.)

(addressing some of the guests and refering to Onegin who is conversing with her husband)

Who is this gentleman? You see him? There, with my husband...

GUESTS

A curious fellow...A strange and moody sort of man...

He has been traveling...his name?

One moment...Yes, Eugene Onegin.

TATIANA

Onegin?

GUESTS

Have you heard of him?

TATIANA

He lived not far from our estate.
(aside) Oh, heaven! Help me to
conceal
The sudden turmoil of my feelings!

ONEGIN

But tell me, Prince, who is that girl...
The one who wears with such
distinction
The scarlet feather in her hat?

That shows how long you have been absent...

Come on, and I'll present you to her.

ONEGIN

Who is she, Prince?

GREMIN

My wife, of course!

ONEGIN

I did not know that you were married.. Since when, Prince?

GREMIN

It has been two years.

ONEGIN

Who was she?

GREMIN

A Lárina.

ONEGIN

Tatiana?

GREMIN

How did you know?

ONEGIN

Why, we were neighbors!

NO. 20a. ARIA OF THE PRINCE

GREMIN

The god of love obeys no reason!
He aims, he strikes at any season!
He wounds us all, the young, the old;
He strikes the humble and the bold!
Now he has chosen for his prey
The man whose hair has long turned
gray!
Onegin, I confess it gladly:
I love her, and I love her madly!
I lived, a sad unhappy man...
Then she appeared and once again

My heart was young with new devotion And life was glowing with the joy of pure emotion!

She moves among them full of kindness, So calm, so pure, and so sublime, Ignoring all the greed and blindness. The shame and malice of our time. Among these hearts devoid of passion, Among these slaves of silly fashion, Among these cold, unfeeling eyes, These smiling lips that utter lies... When I observe her lovely features Among these ladies of the court Who are devoted to the sport Of speaking ill of other creatures, She shines, a pure and lovely star Amid the darkness, in the distance . . . And I admire her from afar Like some celestial being That came to grace my poor existence! The god of love obeys no reason, etc.

NO. 21. SCENE AND ONEGIN'S ARIOSO

GREMIN

I am convinced she will remember you! (Gremin leads Onegin to Tatiana.) My dear, may I present Onegin, Who's just returned from far away! Be nice to him! (Onegin makes a deep bow. Tatiana

responds very simply, without the slightest embarrassment.)

TATIANA

I'm glad to see you! We are not strangers, as you know...

ONEGIN

Indeed not...far from it...

TATIANA

You've traveled? Have you been near our home, perhaps?

ONEGIN

Oh no! I have been mostly in foreign countries.

TATIANA

You're here to stay?

ONEGIN

I hope so.

TATIANA

(to Prince Gremin)

Dearest ... It's time I think ...

(Tatiana leaves leaning on her husband's arm and responding to the bows of various guests. Onegin follows her with his glances.)

ONEGIN

My mind refuses to believe it! Who can explain this startling change? The wild, romantic little girl. Who wrote to say that she adored me, And whose confession frankly bored me...

She looked at me As if she hardly could remember where she'd seen me! How simple and how calm she was, How unassuming, self-possessed ... She smiled at me before she left! Why do I seem so strangely moved? What means this sudden surge of

feeling? I wonder can it be? But yes... It almost seems that I'm in love! She is my destiny, I feel it ... Indeed, I can no more conceal it. I know the yearning of desire, I feel its all-consuming fire! I taste the magic cup of passion, Bewitched and poisoned by her charms, Wherever I turn, in every place I see her dear, beguiling face, I yearn to hold her in my loving arms! (leaves hurriedly. Guests dance the Ecossaise.)

END OF THE FIRST SCENE OF ACT 3

NO. 22. FINAL SCENE

Drawing room in Prince Gremin's house.

(Enters Tatiana, in an elegant morning dress and holding a letter in her hand.)

TATIANA

Oh, why did he return? Why must Onegin Stand in my way like some relentless, fatal specter? Why must I feel anew the old, forgotten pain? Why, oh my wretched heart.

Why must you beat again? The old Tatiana, weeping, brokenhearted,

She lives again as if we'd never parted! (Onegin appears at the door. He stands there for a while looking passionately at the weeping Tatiana. Then hurries to her and falls kneeling at her

side. She looks at him without anger,

and then motions him to rise.) Onegin, stop please! Please get up! Let us at last discuss it frankly... Onegin, can you still recall The place, the garden, and that

hour supreme, When with a few cruel words You shattered my poor dream?

ONEGIN

Have pity! Mercy, I implore you! Look at my sorrow and my repentance!

TATIANA

(wiping away her tears and motioning him not to interrupt her)

Onegin, I was then so humble. I was so trusting and so blind . . . And, in my innocence, I loved you! But in your heart what did I find? Your looks were stern, your words were frozen . . .

I know, you could not well have chosen A girl from our provincial set! But Heaven! How can I forget Words that politely praised my beauty, Warned and admonished me! And yet, you were so right! Yes, in that dreadful hour I feel you did your duty! You were quite noble and quite frank! Our world, so innocent, so pleasant

Was far from your accustomed groove, And you ignored me then... But at present You seem to haunt my every move! I wonder why you now must woo me? Why you so brazenly pursue me? Pretend to love but me alone? It's true, my husband is well known... A soldier, battlescarred and wounded! And so at court we have a place! And for that reason my disgrace Would be so scandalous and open. 'Twould prove once more your doubtful fame

As a seducer without shame!

ONEGIN (passionately)

No, Tatiana! No! No! It cannot be that in my pleading You could suspect such low conceit! I swear to you, my heart is bleeding To sink and worship at your feet! Could you but fathom how I languish, How much my life depends on you! Look down, have pity on my anguish! You must believe my love is true! I yearn to hold you and to cherish . . . To give my life and not complain . . . To love you ... Yes, to die, to perish... To prove my suffering and pain!

TATIANA

I'm weeping . . .

ONEGIN

Bless you! Your forgiveness Means more than every earthly treasure!

TATIANA AND ONEGIN

Oh! Happiness was in your power... So near us! So near us!

TATIANA

But the past is gone beyond recall! My path is chosen! For I am married! And you must...yes I insist... You now must leave me!

ONEGIN

To leave you? How can I leave you! No, Just to see you all the while, To spy your beauty from a distance, To watch over you, to see you smile, To feel the bliss of your existence! With loving glances to behold How sweet, how noble your perfection, To tell you of my passion times untold, To die and languish . . . that is rapture...

That is my desire, the goal I crave to capture!

TATIANA

Onegin, in your heart there is some pride, There is some self-respect!

ONEGIN

No, I shall never part from you!

TATIANA

Onegin! Please, I beg you... I implore you, let me leave you!

ONEGIN

Oh, mercy!

TATIANA

Why should I lie? And why deceive you?
Ah, I love you still!
(Overcome with emotion, Tatiana lets Onegin embrace her.)

ONEGIN

What words are these?
No, no, my ears did not deceive me!
Oh, rapture, happiness! You are once
more the old Tatiana!

TATIANA

(freeing herself)

No! What is gone will not return!
The die is cast! My path is chosen!
And to my husband I'll be true!
I am forever lost to you! (sits down overcome with emotion)

ONEGIN

(kneeling before her passionately)
Don't bid me go! You know I love you,
And you love me by law divine!

Look at the stars so high above you, Heaven proclaims it, you are mine! All of your life has been a token, A promise you would be my own! These words, our destiny has spoken: "Forever I am yours alone!" / Your marriage vows can never

bind you!

Away you go! And leave behind you
This hateful house, this wretched lie!
Forever free, both you and I!

TATIANA

Onegin! My last word was spoken! Yes, to my husband I'll be true! I gave my word, it shan't be broken! I am forever lost to you!

ONEGIN

No! Your marriage ties can never bind you!
We shall depart and leave forever...
I and you!

TATIANA (aside)

Be cool my heart, be steady... Don't let his passion sway my mind! Unto his sinful words be blind! Let wisdom, let honor, and duty Find me ever ready!

ONEGIN

You shall forget this wretched lie... Forever free just you and I!

TATIANA

I now must leave! Good bye forever! (leaves)

ONEGIN

Disgrace, despair! Oh what a wretched fate!

(He rushes off.)

END OF OPERA.