

English Translation:

[The first three movements refer to the invasion of the Mongols (the Golden Horde—Tartars) as they swept in waves across Russia at around 1230AD.]

I. Chorus

From a tiny spring flowed a cold river; from this source a stone-walled Moscow grew. Princes came here for sport, to hunt boar in the dark forest, and to shoot swans in the quiet backwaters. Overhead, a black cloud spreads in the blue sky—unfortunately not a storm, but invading Tartars. The sun can't be seen for the smoke and the land groans. The people are killed or taken captive. The captives ask one another: "Where are you from?". They reply: "I'm from Kiev"; "I'm from Chernigov"; "I'm from Suzdal"; "I'm from Perislaw". O Lord, why have you become angry with Russia? Have you no mercy for her? Can she not be saved?. There is distress among the people, and the Princes are arguing. And all around us is impenetrable night.

II. Aria

The light that has begun to shine in the deep darkness is not a star, but a candle burning fiercely in the city of Moscow. St Peter lit the candle, together with the Moscow Prince. The Russian people begin to notice it from the distance, and they are encouraged as they look to the light. As they pray to God, the light seems ever brighter, lighting up all Russia. The Moscow Prince stirs; he is thinking; he is taking his time.

III. Chorus

The joyful long-awaited hour has come! Church bells sound and congregations sing. The whole land is joyful. Like muddy waters in the spring time the invading Golden Horde is now melting away—receding from Holy Russia. The black clouds part, and the sun emerges. The domes of the Kremlin become clearer and the golden onion domes of the churches reflect the gleams of light. And in the decorated interior of the palace bold knights have gathered and are feasting. Above them, the Moscow Prince is enthroned. The mighty nation has chased away the plundering Horde, and their taxpayers' edicts are crunched under foot—even the stable boys can sweep them away!