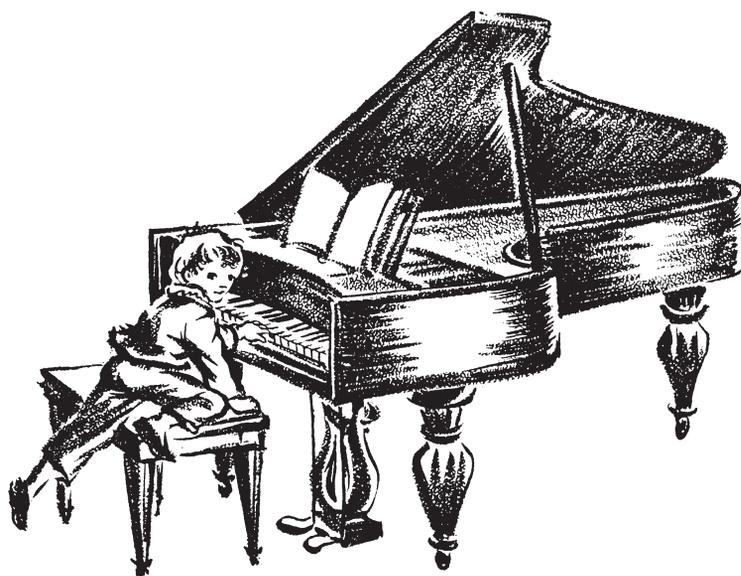


The Story of  
*Peter Tchaikovsky*

By  
*Opal Wheeler*



Illustrated by Christine Price

 **Zeezok**<sup>TM</sup>  
PUBLISHING

# *The Story of Peter Tchaikovsky*

Written by Opal Wheeler

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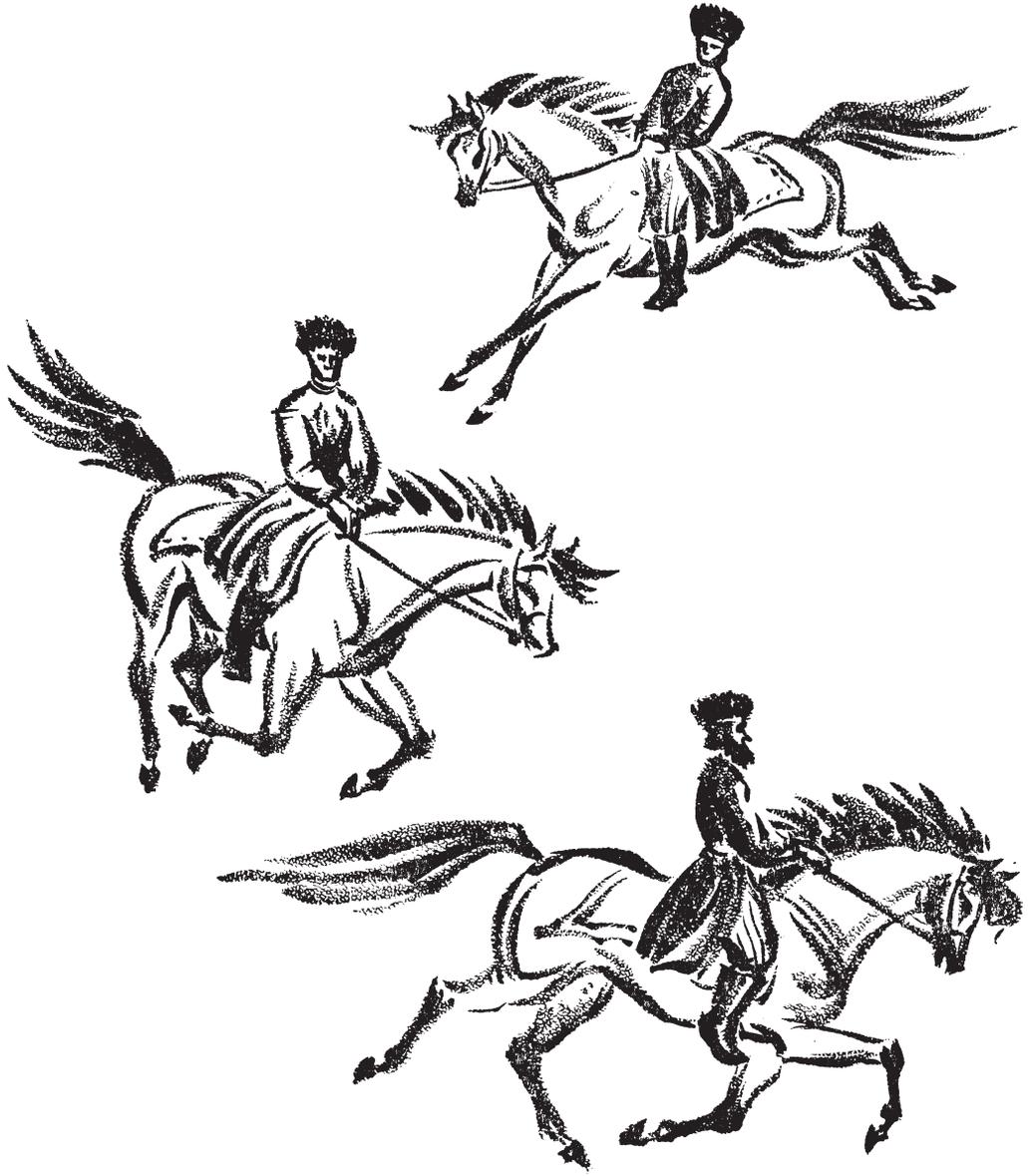
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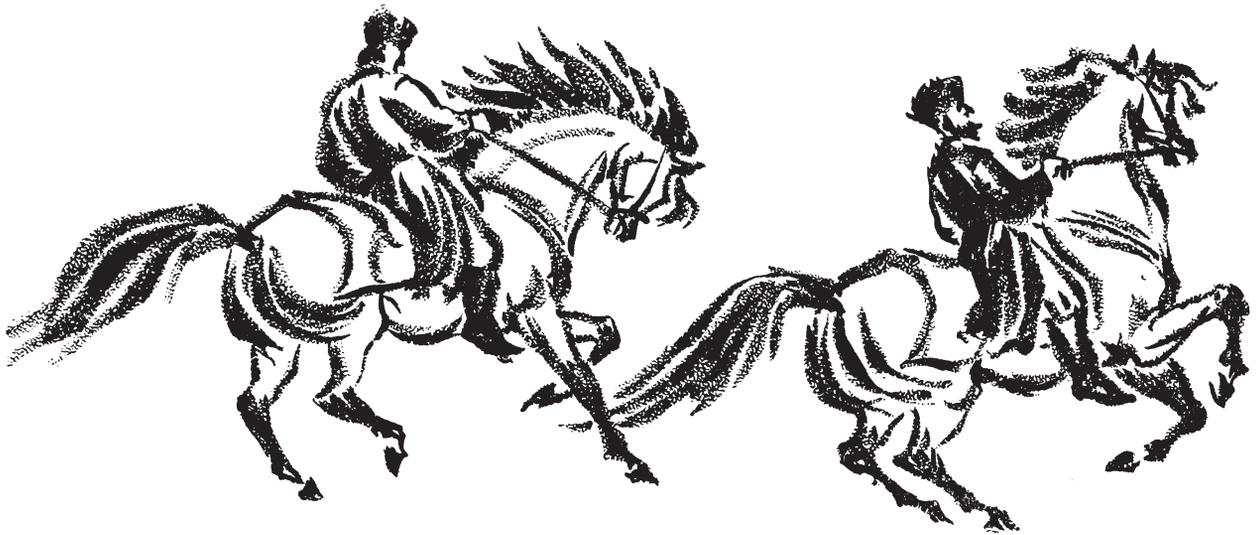


## CHAPTER ONE

“On Stardust! On Comet! On!”

The Cossack guardsmen, one hundred strong, urged their fiery steeds into the icy courtyard of their master, Ilya Tchaikovsky.

Strange to be called so early in the morning, with the May sun blinking sleepy red eyes at the bleak countryside. Raw and cold it was in the little mining town of Votkinsk, on the edge of Asia. Snow crystals glistened on rough cobbles and white drifts covered the land as far as the eye could see.

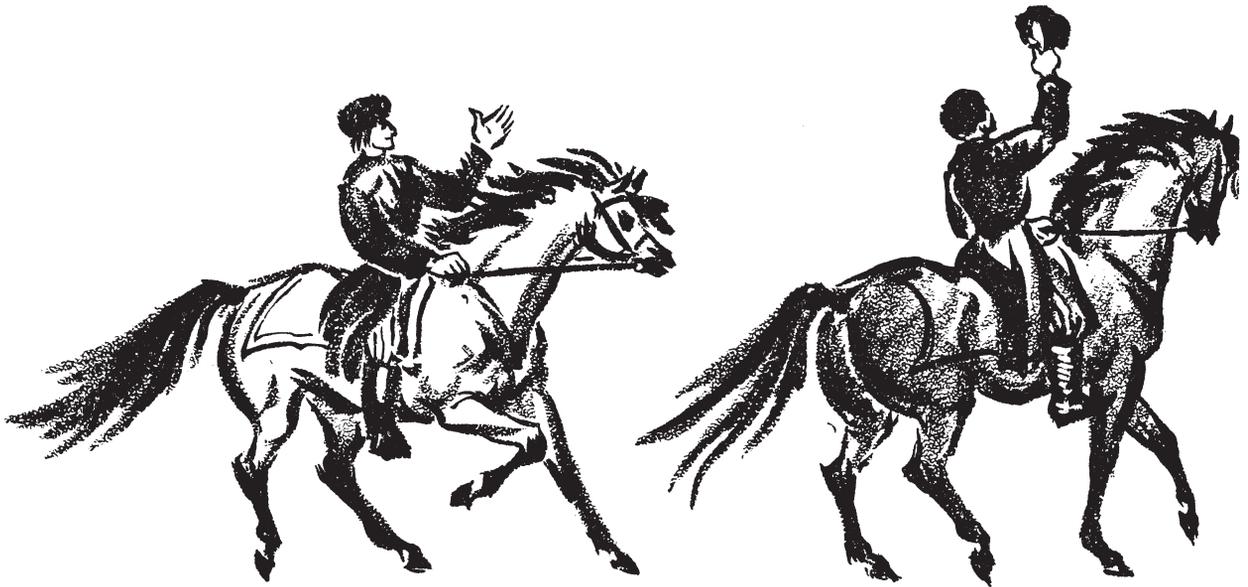


The horses pawed the ground and whinnied impatiently.

“Steady, boy!” The head rider pulled hard on the reins of his restless black stallion. “The master comes soon.”

Hardly were the words spoken than the door of the great house swung open. The men wheeled to attention as mine-inspector Tchaikovsky looked swiftly over the fur-hatted group. A warm smile lighted his handsome face.

“My good men,” said he, briskly, “You will rejoice with me to hear the news that I bring you. God has blessed us with a fair little son. We have already named him Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky.”

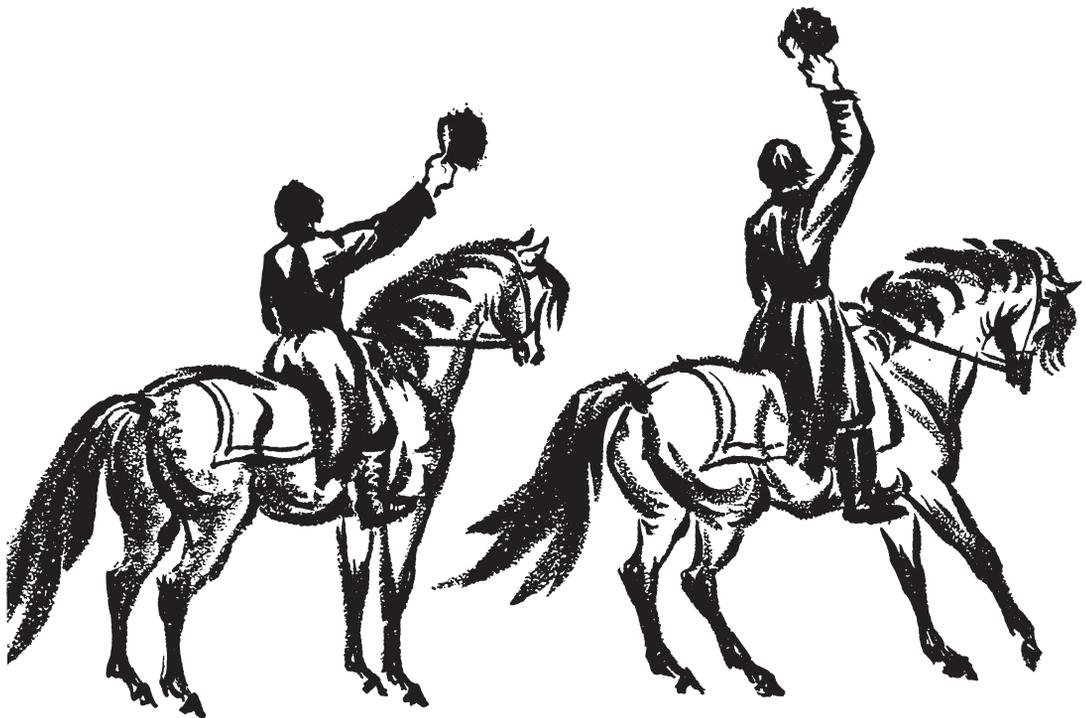


With a ringing shout, the men threw their caps high in the air.

“Peter Ilyich!” Their calls echoed in the frosty morning.  
“Long life to Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky!”

Around the courtyard they galloped at full speed, hoofs striking sparks on rough cobbles. At the deafening din, the household of servants ran to the windows to watch the gay parade.

Ilya Tchaikovsky laughed merrily and joined his two-year-old Nicholas indoors, whose short nose was pressed hard against the pane, eyes round at the spectacle outside.



“A fine salute to your new little brother, yes?” Father Tchaikovsky patted the small head and swung off for another look at the tiny newcomer.

No baby could have been born into a more loving household. Beautiful mother Tchaikovsky shook her head in dismay as aunts, uncles, cousins, and an army of servants hovered over him, obeying his every wish through the long bright months.

“Careful!” she cautioned. “We must not spoil this lovely child.”

But it was difficult not to spoil elfin, blue-eyed Peter, who loved horses more than anything else in his small world. As soon as he could walk about on his short legs, straight to the courtyard he took himself.

“Midnight, come!” he called at the top of his voice to his father’s favorite mount.

Ilya Tchaikovsky was amused at the small boy, looking so stern as he gave his command. But more surprised he was to see the great black animal moving slowly to the tiny hand for the big lump of sugar.

Each day, after seeing that all went well at the mines, Ilya hurried back home to find fair-haired Peter waiting patiently on the top step.