

SADKO

Rimsky Korsakov

Sadko, a poor but spirited minstrel, wagers his head against the wealth of the Novgorod merchants that he will catch golden fish in the neighboring Lake Ilmen. Aided by the Sea-King's daughter he wins, and embarks upon a voyage on one of the fleet of ships that have become his. Overtaken by storm, it is decided by the ship's company that one of their number must be offered as a sacrifice to the Sea-King. Lots are drawn, with the result that Sadko finds himself on a plank in mid-ocean.

Entering the Sea-King's domain, he plays upon his gusli with such goodwill that the monarch and his court are soon engaged in a frenzied dance. A fierce gale ensues. St. Nicholas, intervening on behalf of seafarers above, dashes the gusli to the ground, orders Sadko home, and transforms the Sea-King's daughter, who has offered herself to the already married minstrel, into the river Volkhov, on which Novgorod now stands.