

Dark eyes

Otshi tshornýe, otshi strastnýe,
otshi zhgutshiye i prekrasnýe –
 kak lublyu ya vas, kak bayus ya vas!
 Znat', uvidel vas ya v nyedobrý tshas.

Okh, nyedarom vy glubiný tyemney!
 Vizhu traur v vas po dushe maye,
 vizhu plamya v vas ya pabyednoye:
 Sozhenu na nyom sertse byednoye.

No nye grusten ya, nye petshalen ya,
 uteshitelna mnye sud'ba maya:
 Fsyo shto lutshevo v zhizni bog dal nam
 v zhertvu otdal ya ognevym glazam!

Dark eyes, passionate eyes,
 burning and so beautiful eyes –
 how I am in love with you, how I am afraid of you!
 Since I saw you I have had no good time.

Oh, your deep darkness is not for nothing!
 I see the grief about my soul in you,
 I see the invincible flames in you
 which burn my poor heart.

But I am not sad, and not depressed,
 my fate seems comforting to me:
 All the good things God gave us in our lifetime
 I have sacrificed for these ardent eyes.

Words: K. P. Grebenko

Music: Russian Gipsy tune, about 1800

Pronunciation:

a as in "bar", *e* as in "bed", *i* as in "bid", *o* as in "bore", *u* as in "blue"

y = as in "yellow" / *y* = dull *i*, as in "bill"

s = always voiceless, as in "son" / *z* = voiced, as in "zone"

sh = voiceless, as in "mesh" / *zh* = voiced, like the *s* in "measure"

kh = mostly rough, like the *ch* in Scotch "loch", but smooth when "e" or "i" follows

a, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, *y* = the underlined vowel signifies the stressed syllable of a word.

Transcription and analogous translation: Kai Kracht

Comment:

This melody is easy to understand because it is so simple: The plain theme at the beginning - consisting of only five tones - is repeated again and again through the whole verse, but each time in a new variation, each time with more temperament, and the inversion of this theme at the end can hardly catch up the unleashed verve – you'll want to hear this tune again and again.

The words of a total and frank devotion to love match the music very well: You can give yourself up to this melody completely.

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