

**THE FLYING DUTCHMAN**  
Music and Libretto by Richard Wagner

**Broadcast Date: August 7, 2023**

**SYNOPSIS**

**Act I**

*The Norwegian coast.*

Captain Daland's ship is sheltering in a cove during a storm. He watches as a ghostly ship appears in the harbor. The ship's captain is the Flying Dutchman, and he is cursed to live forever. Once every seven years he can leave his ship to go ashore, but he must find a woman who would be faithful to him unto death, or the curse will be unbroken.

Daland sees the Dutchman and follows him ashore. The stranger offers to pay for a night's lodging. Daland learns that the stranger's ship is full of riches. The stranger learns that Daland has a daughter. Daland agrees to bring the Dutchman home to woo his daughter, Senta.

The storm subsides.

**Act II**

*Captain Daland's home.*

Daland's daughter Senta seems obsessed with a portrait of the Dutchman. Her girlfriends tease her, but then she sings the ballad of the mysterious sea captain. Senta declares that hers will be the love that saves him by breaking the curse.

Erik, a hunter; arrives. Erik is Senta's suitor, and he asks her to plead his case with her father. But she seems more interested in the Dutchman's picture. Erik tells Senta about a dream in which he saw her father coming ashore with a ghostly stranger. Then he saw Senta embracing the stranger and sailing away with him. She declares that this is what she must do, and Erik leaves in despair.

Daland enters with the Dutchman. Though she doesn't yet realize who he is, she is transfixed by him. He asks Senta to accept him as her fiancé, and she vows to be faithful to him unto death. Daland is delighted.

### **Act III**

*The harbor.*

Daland's crew are celebrating their safe return. They call out to the ghost ship, inviting the crew to join their celebration. But there is no answer, and they begin to taunt the other crew.

Suddenly the ghost crew appears, as bluish flames run up their sails. Daland's sailors are terrified.

Erik reminds Senta that she had once encouraged his love for her. Now he is afraid she is possessed, and he pleads with her not to marry the ghostly captain. But the Dutchman has overheard them. Believing he is unloved, he bids Senta farewell, and returns to his ship.

Erik and others try to hold her back from following him.

The Dutchman's ship puts out to sea. Senta breaks away and rushes to the cliff's edge. Calling out that she knows who he is, and that she will be faithful unto death, she throws herself into the sea.

The ghost ship sinks, the sea rises... and the forms of Senta and the Dutchman float upward in the light.