

## ANASTASIA

### CHARACTERS

- ANASTASIA:** Youngest daughter of Tsar Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra of Russia. Thought to have escaped execution in July, 1918. Appeared in America in mid 1920's. Approximately 24 years old.
- MAURICE REMY:** A French film producer who pretends to be supportive of Anastasia but is really after the alleged fortune of Russian Tsar Nicholas II. Slick, but boorish.
- DOWAGER EMPRESS MARIE:**  
  
Grandmother of Anastasia, mother of Empress Alexandra (Anastasia's mother). At first refused to believe her family was executed. Then convinced that none survived. Reluctantly receives Anastasia and finally welcomes her.
- PROFESSOR PHILLIP GUILLARD:**  
  
Professor of Russian history at "the University" in New York. Has a fascination with the story of Anastasia. Is hired by Mssr. Remy to do research and to coach Anastasia in Russian history. His manner is very refined.
- SHURA BOTKIN:** Daughter of Dr. Botkin, Tsar Nicholas II's personal physician. Had met Anastasia as a child. Sent by Dowager Empress Marie to identify. Returns with a positive response. Acts as intermediary between Anastasia and her grandmother. Mssr. Remy attempts to charm her in order to get close to the Empress.
- ANNIE JENNINGS:** New York Socialite. Works with NYC orphanage. Appears in coffeehouse scene with orphans for production number. (TEACHER) Appears with class ONLY.
- ORPHANS:** Ages 5-7. Production number at coffee house.

GRAND DUCHESS OLGA:

In flashback party scene, Anastasia's oldest sister. Cameo appearance with party guests. Has a few lines. (TEACHER) Appears with class ONLY.

RUSSIAN PARTY GUESTS:

Ages 8-11. Need young Anastasia. And young Shura. No lines. Production number/party game. Singing and dancing.

TAYLOR FRIEDMAN: "Legal Grounds" manager. May have a few lines. Coordinates activity and business of non-verbal Patrons and Wait Staff of coffee house. (TEACHER) Appears with class ONLY.

COFFEE HOUSE PATRONS & WAIT STAFF:

Ages 12-16. Coffee House is stationary set. Patrons can be beatniks, poets, students, street people, reporters, etc. Focus on characterizations. A few lines to audition. All will interface throughout entire play. Will be present for Orphan scene as audience.

SET DESIGN:

Greenwich Village coffee house, "Legal Grounds". Meeting place for academia and intellectuals. Can be elaborate because it is stationary. Must have an anteroom for smaller scenes. Also need an area for Empress' sitting room.

COSTUMES:

Period is mid 1920's.

SETTING :

New York City, 1925.

STORYLINE:

New York is fashionable and frantic. There is talk of war. The city reflects unrest and instability. It is right before the stock market crash of 1929 and the panic begins to fester. Businessmen make deals in dark corners. Fanatics predict the end of the world. Academia flourishes. The very rich cling to their veneer. The very poor see the difference only in the increase of activity. Coffeehouses become the place to deal, to discuss and gather information. The most popular coffeehouse for such gatherings is “Legal Grounds”, located directly across from University housing, in Greenwich Village.

A young girl who calls herself Anna frequents the coffeehouse. She is dressed poorly and seems unsure of herself. She is a student at the University. She is sought after by Maurice Remy who wants to exploit her as the long lost Grand Duchess Anastasia, daughter of Tsar Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra Feodorovna of Russia. He creates a master plan, which is thwarted by the appearance of Shura Botkin, the daughter of Dr. Eugene Botkin, personal physician of the Tsar and his family who was murdered with the royal family in 1918. Shura runs into Anna in the coffeehouse by accident and overhears conversations between Mssr. Remy and Professor Guillard about their plans. She approaches the Empress about her chance meeting with Anna and thinks she recognizes her as Anastasia. The Empress refuses to believe Shura. Professor Guillard arranges a “chance” meeting between he and Anna. He offers to help her with her studies. Through their meetings, he falls in love with her and begins to see the possibility of her being the real Anastasia. Shura persuades him to help her convince the Empress to see her. Mssr. Remy threatens Guillard with his professorship if he interferes. Professor Guillard hesitates for fear Anna will be authentic and he will lose her forever. He does intervene, however, and is successful. Anna meets with her Grandmother and is reunited. The Empress offers to reintroduce her to society and restore her rightful heritage. Anna confesses her love for Professor Guillard and struggles with the idea of giving up her relationship. On the eve of her introduction, she suddenly decides to run away with the professor and leaves Mssr. Remy to face reporters and the world with no Anastasia.

NOTE FROM PLAYWRIGHT

Storytelling of this kind sometimes begs for fiction. I highly recommend “The Romanovs”, an historical account of this story by Robert K. Massie. This play is dedicated to the Tsar Nicholas and his family who suffered injustice and hardship because of political egotism and national fear.

ANASTASIA

BY

KITTY BELETIC

Based on the books “The Last Tsar” and “The Romanovs”  
and the creative license given authors in the name of entertainment.

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SHOEBOX THEATRE  
2015 Old Orchard Drive  
Dallas, TX 75208  
469-865-3753

ACT I

SCENE I

SETTING: “Legal Grounds”, a coffeehouse in NYC.

AT RISE: In blackout, opening production number begins. Special lights highlight a series of conversations.

SONG – MY NAME IS ANASTASIA/COMPANY with SOLOS

(In blackout – 8 cts – voice over)

ANASTASIA

MY NAME IS ANASTASIA

COMPANY

(Spoken – as if repeating a rumor)

Anastasia! Anastasia!

(Lights up downstage rt. REPORTER is interviewing STUDENT about “Anastasia rumor”.)

REPORTER

I’m doing a story for the Times. What do you know about this “Anastasia” sighting?

STUDENT

Who?

REPORTER

Anastasia. You know, the Grand Duchess of Russia who supposedly died with her family 7 years back. She’s been reported seen in the city.

STUDENT

Oh yeah. I've heard about that. Some people say she's been seen in the Village.

REPORTER

Really? Where?

STUDENT

At a coffeehouse called "Legal Grounds".

REPORTER

Thanks!

(Blackout)

ANASTASIA (V/O)

MY NAME IS ANASTASIA

COMPANY

(Spoken)

Anastasia! Anastasia!

(Lights up down stage left on MSSR. REMY & PHILLIP  
GUILLARD)

REMY

I got your name from the dean of the history department.

GUILLARD

How can I help you?

REMY

I need someone to help me with my film project. I'll compensate you for your time, of course.

GUILLARD

(Obviously pleased)

Sounds interesting, Mssr. Remy.

REMY

Tomorrow? 7:00, at the coffeehouse?

GUILLARD

Tomorrow. . .

REMY

You will have no regrets, Monsieur!

(Blackout – 8 ct key change)

ANASTASIA (V/O)

MY NAME IS . . .

(Lights up on section of “Legal Grounds”)

TAYLOR FRIEDMAN

Anastasia? Sure I’ve heard of her. Personally, I think the whole thing is a communistic plot. Publicity stunt to take the heat off the problems the Russian government’s having.

REPORTER

But there have been sightings. Right here in your coffeehouse.

TAYLOR FRIEDMAN

(Laughs)

Sure there have. Why, just the other day someone told me they saw Teddy Roosevelt.

REPORTER

But there have been so many reports. How do you explain that?

TAYLOR FRIEDMAN

Too much caffeine.

(Blackout – key change)

(Lights up on coffeehouse. Business in all corners. REMY is talking with students, waiters taking orders, GUILLARD is reading the paper, a street person wanders in and pilfers food from people's plates. Newspapers exchanged as all are abuzz with the "Anastasia" sighting)

COMPANY

WHO'S THE GIRL CALLED ANASTASIA?  
DID SHE SOMEHOW SURVIVE?  
COULD IT BE THAT PRINCESS ANASTASIA IS ALIVE?

WHO'S THE GIRL CALLED ANASTASIA?  
WHEREVER CAN SHE BE?  
WHO HAS SEEN HER? IS IT YOU?  
OR YOU? OR YOU? NOT ME!

REMY

ANASTASIA ANASTASIA  
I WILL BRING YOU FAME  
ANASTASIA ANASTASIA  
SUCH A LOVELY NAME

COMPANY

WHO'S THE GIRL CALLED ANASTASIA?  
DID SHE SOMEHOW SURVIVE?  
COULD IT BE THAT PRINCESS ANASTASIA IS ALIVE?

GUILLARD

(Reading about Anastasia in newspaper)

ANASTASIA. SURELY WE WOULD  
KNOW IF YOU WERE HERE  
SUCH A GIRL AS ANASTASIA  
COULDN'T DISAPPEAR

COMPANY

ANASTASIA ANASTASIA  
DID SHE SOMEHOW SURVIVE?  
COULD IT BE THAT PRINCESS ANASTASIA IS ALIVE?  
(spoken) Anastasia!

(Enter ANASTASIA. SHE is confused and unsure as SHE  
enters coffeehouse. Bumps into TAYLOR FRIEDMAN)

ANASTASIA & TAYLOR

Sorry.

REMY & GUILLARD

Anastasia

COMPANY

WHO AND WHAT AND HOW  
AND WHERE CAN ANASTASIA BE?

(Freeze. Presumptuous applause. Business begins with  
music cue. As music fades WAITPERSON approaches  
ANASTASIA who is sitting at table downstage. SHE seems  
timid and a bit sad)

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1-6-37

ACT I

SCENE VI

SETTING: “Legal Grounds”

AT RISE: The coffeehouse is decorated for a party. It is “Christmas in July” sponsored by the Ladies Aide. All sorts of people are there to Celebrate including ANASTASIA, GUILLARD & REMY. ANNIE JENNINGS & ORPHANS are on the stage. TAYLOR FRIEDMAN introduces them.

TAYLOR FRIEDMAN

Hey, hey, hey! Everybody look up here. Come on! Okay. Are ya having fun?

ALL

Yeah!

TAYLOR FRIEDMAN

Is it cold enough for you?

ALL

No! (PLANNED ad libs)

TAYLOR FRIEDMAN

Well, we got a lot more surprises comin. In fact, there’s one comin up right now. Ladies and gents, Miss Annie Jennings!

(Applause as ANNIE steps up to introduce the ORPHANS)

1-6-38

ANNIE JENNINGS

(Recognizes someone SHE knows)

Hello. Hello. Oh! Hello there!

(Clears her throat. Sings to the tune of “Winter Wonderland”)

Oh the weather outside is frightful and the heat is here in spite of  
All the love we find in our hearts. Let it grow! Let it grow! Let it grow!

(Applause and laughter)

I had a little moment on the way over. Thought it would be fun to share. I am here with a very special group of people. They have rehearsed very long and hard to entertain you today, so let’s give them a special hand. Ladies and gentlemen, the boys and girls of The Hampton Orphanage!

SONG – I’M YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY/ORPHANS

I’M YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY WITH A MILLION DOLLAR SMILE  
GOT A DOLLAR IN MY POCKET THAT I’LL TRADE YOU FOR AWHILE  
IF YOU WANNA CATCH A RAINBOW HITCH YOUR WAGON TO A STAR  
LET YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY DRIVE YOUR CAR

I’M YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY WITH A MILLION DOLLAR GRIN  
GOT A DOLLAR IN MY POCKET SAYS YOU’LL TAKE ME FOR A SPIN  
IF YOU WANNA CATCH A RAINBOW HITCH YOUR WAGON TO A STAR  
LET YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY DRIVE YOUR CAR

LET YOUR BABY HONK THE HORN  
LET YOUR BABY TURN THE WHEEL  
NOW WE’RE STOPPING AT THE MILLION DOLLAR DINER FOR A MEAL  
LET YOUR BABY PUSH THE PEDAL TO THE METAL WE WILL GO  
LET YOUR BABY DRIVE YOU STRAIGHT TO MEXICO!

I’M YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY WITH A MILLION DOLLAR SMILE  
GOT A DOLLAR IN MY POCKET THAT I’LL TRADE YOU FOR AWHILE  
IF YOU WANNA CATCH A RAIANBOW HITCH YOUR WAGON TO A STAR  
LET YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY DRIVE YOUR CAR

(DANCE – 32 CTS – HONKING AND BEEPING NOISES)

1-6-39

SONG/ORPHANS (Continued)

LET YOUR BABY HONK THE HORN  
LET YOUR BABY TURN THE WHEEL  
NOW WE'RE STOPPING AT THE MILLION DOLLAR DINER FOR A MEAL  
LET YOUR BABY PUSH THE PEDAL TO THE METAL WE WILL GO  
LET YOUR BABY DRIVE YOU STRAIGHT TO MEXICO!

I'M YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY WITH A MILLION DOLLAR SMILE  
GOT A DOLLAR IN MY POCKET THAT I'LL TRADE YOU FOR AWHILE  
IF YOU WANNA CATCH A RAINBOW HITCH YOUR WAGON TO A STAR  
LET YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY DRIVE YOUR CAR  
LET YOUR MILLION DOLLAR BABY DRIVE YOUR CAR!

(Bows by ORPHANS & ANNIE JENNINGS who lead  
ORPHANS offstage over exit music)

TAYLOR FRIEDMAN

(Over exit music)

Thank you. Thank you, Miss Jennings. Ad libs blah blah blah again next year.  
And now we'll move on to . . .