

NICOLE SCIMECA AND MARY BETH PEIL, *ANASTASIA*, Hartford Stage

Synopsis

SAINT PETERSBURG, 1907

When the Dowager Empress **Maria Fyodorovna Romanov** gives her beloved granddaughter **Anastasia** a music box, she has no idea it is the last time she will see her. As the musical **ANASTASIA** begins, Russia is on the verge of revolution. Time jumps from 1907 to 1927, and **Anastasia**'s family, the imperial **Romanovs**, fall victim to the tide of history. When the **Dowager Empress** receives the news that they have been put to death, she believes she has lost her entire family.

SAINT PETERSBURG, 1927

Russia is now firmly under the Bolshevik Communists' rule, but the winters are still cold, the people are still hungry, and rumors have begun to surface that one **Romanov** daughter might have survived. **Dmitry** and **Vlad**, two opportunistic Russian con artists, attempt to find an impressionable girl to pass off as **Anastasia** to the **Dowager Empress**, who is offering a reward for her granddaughter's safe return to Paris. Their patience is rewarded when they find **Anya**, a young woman suffering from amnesia, who has spent the past years traveling across Russia, from Perm to Odessa and finally to Saint Petersburg. **Dmitry** and **Vlad** begin to "teach" her what she needs to know. Striking similarities between **Anya** and **Anastasia** begin to surface. However, **Anya**'s activities have caught the notice of a rising Communist official, **Gleb**, whose father was involved in the murders of the **Romanov** family. **Gleb** wonders to himself if he could have pulled the trigger, but tells **Anya**—in no uncertain terms—that if she continues to pose as **Anastasia**, she will end up like the **Romanovs**. **Anya**, **Vlad**, and **Dmitry** escape Russia and **Gleb**'s reaches just in time, traveling through Poland, Germany, and more on the way to Paris.

PARIS, 1927

Once in the city of lights, **Vlad** attempts to reconnect with **Lily**, the **Dowager Empress**' lady-in-waiting and his lost love, to arrange a meeting between the **Dowager** and **Anya**. **Anya**, meanwhile, is haunted by a nightmare of the **Romanov** family and continues to wonder if she could possibly be **Anastasia**. **Dmitry** comforts her, telling her a story of when he saw **Anastasia** as a young boy and fell instantly in love. The story triggers something in **Anya**, and she remembers seeing **Dmitry** that day, proving that she is **Anastasia**. But when she finally meets the **Dowager Empress** at the Paris Opera, the **Dowager** is determined not to recognize her as her granddaughter. When **Anya** shows her the music box, however, there can be no denying their connection.

As **Vlad** and **Lily** prepare the press to be introduced to **Anastasia**, the **Dowager Empress** readies **Anya** for the life she will lead—one in which she will lose **Dmitry**, who is not a proper match for a royal princess. **Anya** intends to choose a life with **Dmitry** and leave, but she is stopped by **Gleb**, who has tracked her all the way from Russia to finish the job his father started. Haunted by memories of the **Romanov** family, however, he cannot pull the trigger. **Anya** disappears with **Dmitry**, and the **Dowager** announces to the press that the memory of **Anastasia** will live on only as a legend.