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Auditions

Side A Vlad, Announcer, Policeman

ANNOUNCER. Train for Budapest on Track Four. Paris via Budapest on Track Four. (VLAD enters.)

VLAD. It's a special train. "Aristocrats and intellectuals" – everyone the Bolsheviks want to be rid of. (He sees someone.) I recognize that woman. She's the Countess Ipolitov. She's not just an aristocrat but an intellectual as well. She's dead on both counts.

ANNOUNCER. Paris via Budapest on Track Four. All aboard!

VLAD. We should go.

POLICEMAN. Papers. Papers.

VLAD. Good evening, gentlemen. Is there a problem?

POLICEMAN. We're looking for someone who is illegally leaving the country.

VLAD. Didn't have the right papers, eh?

POLICEMAN. She had the right papers; she had the wrong name. Countess Ipolitov.

Side B Dmitry, Mira

DMITRY. We need something of hers to show the old lady. (To MIRA, a marketeer.) How much is that music box?

MIRA. Ah, the music box! It's genuine Romanov. I could never part with it.

DMITRY. Two cans of beans, comrade?

MIRA. Done! (They shake on it. DMITRY takes the music box.)

DMITRY. Do you believe in fairy tales?

MIRA. Once upon a time I did.

DMITRY. I'm going to create a fairy tale the whole world will believe.

Side C Young Anastasia, Dowager

YOUNG ANASTASIA. Why must you go, Nana?

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. I've stayed too long here.

YOUNG ANASTASIA. Take me to Paris with you.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. Anastasia. Wherever I go, you'll always be with me. You're my favorite. Strong, not afraid of anything.

YOUNG ANASTASIA. Like you.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. Ssshh, our little secret. (She takes out a music box.) Our lullaby. When you play it, think of an old woman who loves you very, very much.

Side D Anya, Dowager

ANYA. I believe I am the youngest daughter of –

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. Spare me my family history! It's in every bookstore along the Seine.

ANYA. I didn't think you'd be so cruel.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. I'm old and impatient. Kindness has become a luxury.

ANYA. My Nana was the most loving woman imaginable. She smelled like oranges when she hugged me.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. It's a common enough scent.

ANYA. Not hers. It came from Sicily, made especially for her, in a box of polished olive wood.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. Who was my favorite lady-in-waiting?

ANYA. You didn't have one. You kept dismissing them.

Side E Lily, Leopold

LILY I'm sorry, Count Leopold.

COUNT LEOPOLD She can't always be resting. The Dowager Empress knows I have important papers for her to sign.

LILY Papers designating you the heir of the Romanov fortune. (She laughs.) She will never sign those.

COUNT LEOPOLD She is an old woman who has outlived her place in history. Anastasia is a pathetic figment of her imagination. Eventually I will be recognized as the sole beneficiary of the Tsar's estate, by international court of law!

LILY I'll tell her majesty you called. (She gestures for him to exit.)

Side F Anya, Dmitry

ANYA I need exit papers. And I was told you're the only person who can help me.

DMITRY Exit papers are expensive.

ANYA I saved a little money.

DMITRY The right papers cost a lot.

ANYA I'm a hard worker; you'll get your money.

DMITRY What do you do?

ANYA I'm a street sweeper.

DMITRY A street sweeper!

Callbacks

Side 1 Anya, Dmitry (Alexander Bridge)

DMITRY. My father used to bring me here. He put me on his shoulders so I could get a better view. (in a voice) "Bet you can see all the way to Finland from up there, Dima!"

ANYA Dima?

DMITRY That's what he called me. There isn't a day I don't miss him.

ANYA So neither of us has a family.

DMITRY You don't know that yet. The answer is in Paris. (They look at each other.) Now, tell me about the little dog.

ANYA His name was Toby.

DMITRY Go on.

ANYA I loved him so much.

DMITRY Don't stop.

ANYA I'm not as strong as you think I am.

DMITRY Close your eyes.

ANYA Why?

DMITRY Just do it. Put your hand out. (She does so and he grabs the music box from his bag. He puts it in her hand.) Open. You've worked hard. You've earned it.

ANYA What is it?

DMITRY A music box.

ANYA It's beautiful.

DMITRY It's broken. I can't even open it. (ANYA looks at the music box, and twists the bottom three times. It opens. Music starts to play. ANYA is mesmerized by it.) How did you do that? Anya?

Side 2 Vlad, Lily

VLAD I crossed a continent for this moment.

LILY Still up to your old tricks?

VLAD Admit you're happy to see me.

LILY I'm glad you're not dead, but that's as far as I'm prepared to go. (She makes a scene of walking away from him. "Seductively".) What are you doing in Paris?

VLAD (taking off his suit jacket) Didn't you get my letter?

LILY I did; and I promptly tore it up. (She sits on a bench stage right.)

VLAD (running after her) You've grown hard, my darling Lily.

LILY No harder than need be.

VLAD My precious Lily. LILY I'm not the woman you remember, Vlad.

VLAD No. You're even lovelier than I remember. (He takes her arm and kisses it after each word.) My hot-blooded. Sensual. Passionate-

LILY That was then. When the world was beautiful!

VLAD We'll make it beautiful again! In Paris! The city of lovers!

LILY If only we could.

VLAD Ever since that first day in court when I saw you, I knew I was beneath you.

LILY You're right, darling. You were.

Side 3 Lily, Leopold

LILY I'm sorry, Count Leopold.

COUNT LEOPOLD She can't always be resting. The Dowager Empress knows I have important papers for her to sign.

LILY Papers designating you the heir of the Romanov fortune. (She laughs.) She will never sign those.

COUNT LEOPOLD She is an old woman who has outlived her place in history. Anastasia is a pathetic figment of her imagination. Eventually I will be recognized as the sole beneficiary of the Tsar's estate, by international court of law!

LILY I'll tell her majesty you called. (She gestures for him to exit.)

COUNT LEOPOLD You will be at The Neva Club, this evening, Lily?

LILY Along with every other White Russian in Paris.

COUNT LEOPOLD I will want the first charleston.

LILY I've given up dancing for Lent.

COUNT LEOPOLD Lent just ended.

LILY Next Lent. I'm getting an early start.

Side 4 Anya, Dowager

ANYA. I believe I am the youngest daughter of –

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. Spare me my family history! It's in every bookstore along the Seine.

ANYA. I didn't think you'd be so cruel.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. I'm old and impatient. Kindness has become a luxury.

ANYA. My Nana was the most loving woman imaginable. She smelled like oranges when she hugged me.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. It's a common enough scent.

ANYA. Not hers. It came from Sicily, made especially for her, in a box of polished olive wood.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. Who was my favorite lady-in-waiting?

ANYA. You didn't have one. You kept dismissing them.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. It was a trick question. You're clever, I'll grant you that. I don't believe Anastasia exists.

ANYA. Then why did you come here?

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. Your young man told me you weren't part of his scheme.

ANYA. He's right, I wasn't.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. He believes you may very well be my granddaughter. He says you've come to believe it yourself.

ANYA. I believe it with all my heart, but I can't be her unless you recognize me.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. You can't be anyone unless you first recognize yourself.

ANYA. (Bowing her head.) I know. Do you remember the last time you saw Anastasia?

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. (Shaking her head no.) I didn't know it was the last time.

ANYA. You were leaving for Paris. You gave her a music box. I believe this was it. (She opens the music box.)

Side 5 Gleb, Anya

(GLEB stands, looking down at the city below. ANYA enters.)

GLEB. It's a remarkable city, our Leningrad. All those people down there, coming and going, creating a future for themselves. I stand at this window for hours admiring them. And wondering why a few bad apples are getting up to mischief instead. I can see all the way to the old Yusupov Palace. Funny business going on there. Counterrevolutionary behavior, some might say!

ANYA. Why was I brought here?

GLEB. I thought you could tell me, comrade. (Turns to her.) You, the frightened little street sweeper! I had almost stopped looking for you on the Nevsky Prospekt. Anya? Am I right?

ANYA. Yes.

GLEB. I am Deputy Commissioner Gleb Vaganov.

ANYA. What's the charge?

GLEB. There is no charge. Why should there be? You have a job, food on the table, your own place in the new order of things.

ANYA. I'm very thankful.

GLEB. Which is why I'm warning you to leave your world of make-believe before it's too late.

ANYA. I don't understand.

GLEB. If you really were who you're pretending to be, they would kill you without hesitation.

ANYA. Everyone imagines being someone else. It's an innocent enough fantasy.

GLEB. No, Anya, a dangerous one. The Romanovs are gone, every last one of them. My father was one of their guards. When he was told to fire, he obeyed orders. Could I have pulled the trigger if I'd been told?

ANYA. I don't want to hear this.

GLEB. (To ANYA.) As your new friend, be careful, Anya. As Deputy Commissioner Gleb Vaganov, be very careful. A revolution is a simple thing.

Side 6 Marfa, Vlad, Dmitry

(VLAD and DMITRY are auditioning MARFA to pretend to be Anastasia. DMITRY is running the audition, and his impatience and disappointment are palpable.)

MARFA. (Overacting like crazy!) It's me, Grandmama, your precious Anastasia. I've come all the way to Paris to tell you I'm alive. (breaking character.) I'm not an actress.

VLAD. (Deeply sarcastic.) No!

DMITRY. Thank you, Marfa –

MARFA. But –

VLAD. We'll let you know –

MARFA. What you're doing is against the law. (MARFA leaves.)

VLAD Well. You tried, my friend. Anastasias don't grow on trees.

DMITRY Yeah, I'm not giving up. I'll go to Siberia to find an Anastasia. (He reaches into his bag and pulls out the music box.)

VLAD Have you ever been to Siberia?

DMITRY I've never been anywhere but here.

VLAD Ah. The day I took up with you...

DMITRY It was me or a Bolshevik firing squad.

VLAD You saved my life.

DMITRY A rash act of kindness. Completely out of character! (DMITRY inspects the music box.)

VLAD Stop fiddling with that before you break it.

DMITRY I can't get it open!

VLAD It's a fake!

DMITRY Oh, what do you know?

VLAD No one spots a fake like Count Vladimir Popov. Biggest fake of them all.

Side 7 Young Anastasia, Dowager

YOUNG ANASTASIA. Why must you go, Nana?

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. I've stayed too long here.

YOUNG ANASTASIA. Take me to Paris with you.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. Anastasia. Wherever I go, you'll always be with me. You're my favorite. Strong, not afraid of anything.

YOUNG ANASTASIA. Like you.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. Sssh, our little secret. (She takes out a music box.) Our lullaby. When you play it, think of an old woman who loves you very, very much. (she sings)

FAR AWAY, LONG AGO, GLOWING DIM AS AN EMBER, THINGS MY HEART USED
TO KNOW, THINGS IT YEARNs TO REMEMBER...

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS & YOUNG ANASTASIA.

(singing together) AND A SONG SOMEONE SINGS ONCE UPON A DECEMBER.

(THE TSARINA ALEXANDRA FYODOROVNA enters.)

THE TSARINA. Have you said your prayers, my precious Anastasia?

YOUNG ANASTASIA. Yes, Mama.

THE TSARINA. What's this?

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. A music box. So the child will remember me. (There is no love lost between THE DOWAGER EMPRESS and THE TSARINA.)

THE TSARINA. It's the last ball of the season.

THE DOWAGER EMPRESS. We've been through this. (To YOUNG ANASTASIA.) Remember, Anastasia: Paris. (She exits.)

YOUNG ANASTASIA. Nana! Nana!

Side 8 Anya, Dmitry (first meeting)

ANYA (enters) I'm looking for someone called Dmitry.

DMITRY I'm Dmitry. What do you want?

ANYA I need exit papers. And I was told you're the only person who can help me.

DMITRY Exit papers are expensive.

ANYA I saved a little money.

DMITRY The right papers cost a lot.

ANYA I'm a hard worker; you'll get your money.

DMITRY What do you do?

ANYA I'm a street sweeper.

DMITRY A street sweeper!

ANYA In Odessa, I washed dishes. Before that, I worked in the hospital in Perm.

DMITRY They're a long way from here.

ANYA I know. I walked it.

DMITRY You walked here all the way from Perm?

ANYA I had no choice.

DMITRY Who are you running from?

ANYA I'm running to someone. I don't know who they are. But they're waiting for me in Paris.

DMITRY You don't need papers. There's a canal out there. Jump in and start swimming. You'll be in Paris before you know it!