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SF PERUSALS

The Anastasia Trials in the Court of Women

An Interactive Comedy in Two Acts

Carolyn Gage

A Samuel French Acting Edition



SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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INTRODUCTION

Women's roles have undergone dramatic changes in the West since the 1950's, and with these changes have come changes in our expectations of ourselves and each other. What are the limits of "sisterhood" as women move away from our status as fellow victims, toward more personal economic independence and autonomy?

This was a question for me when I wrote *The Anastasia Trials in the Court of Women.* I wanted to explore the radical changes in the interpersonal ethics practiced by women at the turn of the new century, and I especially wanted to explore the issue of betrayal.

In this play, five women are put on trial for their failure to recognize Anastasia Romanov after she escaped the massacre at Ekaterinburg and surfaced in a public mental asylum in Germany four years later. The women included a nurse at the asylum, her former nanny, an indigent fellow inmate, a former member of the royal court, and an American millionairess who hosted the Grand Duchess in New York. All of these women recognized Anastasia initially and then, responding to her history of trauma, rejected her later.

All of the women had reasons for their betrayals. They were all threatened with very real losses: loss of a job, loss of a husband, even loss of a life. On the other hand, the woman they betrayed was a deeply disturbed survivor — incapable of advocating for herself, suicidal, and desperate for recognition. On still another hand, Anastasia's post-traumatic behaviors were hostile and antisocial to such a degree that she compromised every effort made on her behalf by her supporters.

The Anastasia Trials is a play written at a pivotal point in the history of women. It has one foot in the patriarchal world where women accept the necessity of betraying each other, and one foot in the brave new world of testing the limits of our empowerment by standing in solidarity with each other, and especially with the survivors. It also stands at the turning point after the Second Wave, where it has become apparent that the rhetoric of sisterhood is not enough to reconcile the divisions between women caused by class and

race. Were the utopian experiments of the radical feminists a failure because of that? Were all our achievements superficial? Where do we go from here?

The Anastasia Trials answers its own question in its challenge to traditional assumptions about a male-identified audience. The play is audience-interactive, but only with the women in the house. The men are not invited to vote on either the motions or the final verdict. The actors in the play continually address their arguments to "the women of the jury." In inviting the women of the audience to serve as judge and jury, *The Anastasia Trials* affirms a culture of, for, about, and serving the interests of women. It also acknowledges the presence of the audience, making explicit their contribution toward the creation of this culture and respecting their right to their own conclusions.

The radical format of *The Anastasia Trials* affirms a faith in the evolution of a women's culture that breaks down the hierarchical wall between the observer and the observed, the actor and the acted upon. It posits a culture where every woman's opinion carries weight, and where, even if perfect equality is an unrealizable goal, the progress toward it can be dynamic and self-interrogating.

This play is dedicated to Hyacinth Morgan,
a courageous survivor and a friend.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

BETTY: A butch stagehand, plays the Bailiff.

DIANE: The founder and director of the Emma Goldman Theater Brigade, plays the Prosecuting Attorney.

ATHENA: The daughter of a rich man, plays the Defense Attorney and also Annie Jennings, a wealthy socialite.

JENNY: An actor with stomach flu, plays Anastasia Romanov, and also the Prosecuting Attorney.

MELISSA: An actor bent on impressing the critics, plays Thea Malinowsky, a nurse from a public mental asylum.

MARIE: A grassroots, radical activist, plays Clara Peuthart, an alcoholic bag lady.

AMY: An actor with professional aspirations, plays Baroness Sophie Buxhoeveden, former lady-in-waiting to Anastasia's mother.

DONNA: An actor who resents Diane's authority, plays Shura Tegleva, Anastasia's former nursemaid.

LISA: The playwright, plays Baroness Zinaida Tolstoy, a former friend to Anastasia's mother and Anastasia.

SCENE

A stage set for a courtroom trial.

TIME

The present.

Each copy of the program for the play should contain a sheet of red paper and a sheet of green paper, along with a note that reads:

"The women in the audience are invited to serve as judge and jury in the Court of Women."

ACT I

(The stage is bare except for eight chairs and one stool. The stool, for the BAILIFF, is downstage right. The witness chair is center stage, with the two chairs for ANASTASIA and for her attorney to the right of it. To the left, are five chairs for the defendants and their attorney. [Although there are five defendants, there are only four chairs for them. This is intentional.]

Curtain up: MARIE enters and begins to run the lines spoken by the BAILIFF at the top of the show. MARIE is a longtime, grassroots political activist, a militant feminist, and all-around uplifter-of-the-masses. All of the actors are wearing black, in preparation for the evening's performance.)

MARIE. *(Speaking as if to an audience.)* Good evening. Welcome to the Court of Women. I'm the Bailiff, and this ... *(Indicating the stage.)* is our courtroom.

(Suddenly BETTY enters. She is a theater technician, otherwise known as a stagehand, who has been pressed into service as an actor. BETTY is a butch woman of the type rarely seen on the stage of a mainstream theater. She begins to follow MARIE, repeating her lines and imitating her gestures.)

BETTY. Good evening. Welcome to the Court of Women. I'm the Bailiff, and this is our courtroom....

MARIE. *(Glancing at BETTY.)* This chair is for the plaintiff, Anastasia, and this chair is for her attorney....

BETTY. This chair is for the plaintiff, Anastasia, and this chair is for her attorney....

MARIE. *(Clearing her throat.)* Over here are the chairs for the five defendants, and ....

BETTY. Over here are the chairs for the five defendants, and ....

MARIE. *(Very rapidly.)* And here is the chair for the defense attorney. Now, you'll notice there's no judge's bench or jury box—

BETTY. *(Matching her tempo.)* And here is the chair for the defense attorney. Now, you'll notice there's no judge's bench or jury box—

(MARIE sits, folds her arms, and stares at BETTY.)

MARIE. Are you through?

BETTY. Yes.

MARIE. *(Rising, she resumes her monologue.)* That is because this is the Women's Court, and in the Women's Court ....

BETTY. That is because this is the Women's Court, and in the Women's Court ....

MARIE. *(Turning.)* Betty, what are you doing?

BETTY. *(Also turning.)* Betty, what are you doing?

MARIE. Betty!

BETTY. Betty! Oh ... I was ... just imitating you.

MARIE. Why?

BETTY. That was the Bailiff's part, wasn't it?

MARIE. You mean you don't know?

BETTY. I can't remember anything!

MARIE. Well, maybe you won't get the Bailiff's part tonight.

BETTY. I don't want any of the parts!

MARIE. Betty, how can you say that?

BETTY. It's easy. I'm not an actor. I'm a stagehand.

MARIE. But you know in the Emma Goldman Theater Brigade we don't observe hierarchy.

BETTY. What does that have to do with making me act when I don't want to?

MARIE. This isn't about *making* you act, Betty. It's about equal opportunity. It's the only way we can break out of the class structure of traditional theater.

BETTY. Why can't I just run lights, if that's what I want to do?

MARIE. Because, Betty, when you say, "That's what I want to do," what you really mean is, "That's what I've been *conditioned* to want to do."

BETTY. But I hate being out here.

MARIE. Why?

BETTY. Because it's uncomfortable.

MARIE. Exactly! It's "uncomfortable." It's uncomfortable, because it's unfamiliar. And that is no accident. Think, Betty—Why is it that some women are less comfortable in the limelight? Because they don't conform to the patriarchal stereotypes about women! And why do you think some women are right at home in the spotlight? Because they grew up white and middle class, and their parents could afford to get their teeth straightened! Because they grew up believing they were naturally *entitled*! Don't you see, Betty, that what you feel comfortable with is not a choice at all, but a culturally conditioned response. It is the goal of the Emma Goldman Theater Brigade to break down the walls of these artificially imposed barriers between women and to liberate the spirit within all of us that transcends class and race and looks and age and physical ability.... The Emma Goldman Theater Brigade is smashing centuries of oppressive tradition in the theater—

BETTY. *(Cutting her off.)* But we're supposed to memorize all the parts in the whole play!

MARIE. *(Exasperated.)* Well, of course, Betty. That's because the only way to be sure the casting is fair, is to use a lottery system every night, and the only way to use a lottery system is for all the actors to know all the parts.

BETTY. But I can't remember any lines.

MARIE. You did beautifully last night at dress rehearsal.

BETTY. But last night I was Anastasia, and she hasn't got any lines!

MARIE. Well, maybe you'll get lucky and draw her again tonight.

BETTY. Look, I've been thinking about this thing. There's nine parts in the show, right? And so that's nine chances to one that I might draw any particular part, right? But, see, now that's changed, because last night I drew Anastasia, so now the odds of me drawing that same name two nights in a row are eighty-one to one, right? So, you see, I have a worse chance of getting her part tonight than you do, or anyone else, because no one else will be drawing it twice in a row, see? So, you see, I don't have an equal chance anymore. So I'm being discriminated against.

MARIE. No, you're not. Diane brings the hat out. She mixes up the names. We all draw one. The hat doesn't know you drew Anastasia last night. The slips of paper don't know you drew Anastasia last night. Perfect equality.

(DONNA enters. DONNA is one of those actors whose talent is eclipsed by her perpetual paranoia that someone else—in this case, the director of the company—is standing in her light.)

DONNA. "Perfect equality!" I bet Diane draws one of the attorneys' parts tonight.

MARIE. She has the same chance as the rest of us.

BETTY. *(Crossing to the upstage right chair.)* Except for me....

DONNA. *(To MARIE.)* Oh, come on. She probably takes out the slip she wants before she passes the hat.

MARIE. What makes you say that?

DONNA. She's a complete and total control freak. Can you really see her settling on opening night for the role of Anastasia? The great Diane Anthony, founder and director of the revolutionary

Theater Brigade? Can you really see her drawing a non-speaking role?

MARIE. The lottery was her idea!

DONNA. What better way to disguise the mechanics of her dictatorship than with a dramatic display of democracy. Brings tears to your eyes, doesn't it, the thought of her coming down among the ranks of the lowly actors to play Russian roulette with the casting?

MARIE. Diane did not found this theater to forward her career, believe me. If that was her aim, she'd be working in the mainstream instead of some small, political, women's theater.

DONNA. And that's why she just happens to be the head of the company.

MARIE. She just happens to be the head of the company, because she does ninety-nine percent of the work, or hadn't you noticed?

DONNA. I notice that every time someone else comes up with an idea, everyone has to ask Diane about it.

MARIE. Well, maybe because Diane is the only one in the company whose vision transcends personality.

DONNA. You just see. She's going to pull one of the attorney's roles tonight.

MARIE. Well, then why don't *you* pass the hat?

BETTY. *(Suddenly galvanized, she crosses to DONNA.)* Yes! *You* pass it! Here!—Here's five dollars. No, here's twenty. You take Anastasia's name out of the hat before we draw, and give it to me! *(Dropping to her knees.)* Please, please, please, please....

(MELISSA has entered during BETTY's speech. MELISSA is not the sharpest pencil in the box—probably one of the reasons she puts so much stock in the opinions of the critics.)

MELISSA. *(Eyeing the money suspiciously.)* What's going on? Betty, what are you doing?

BETTY. *(Busted.)* I was just ....

DONNA. She was getting into character.

MELISSA. Which one?

BETTY. Anastasia.

MELISSA. What makes you think you'll get Anastasia?

BETTY. *(Too quickly.)* Nothing. In fact, I probably won't.

MELISSA. What are you doing with this money?

BETTY. I ... uh ....

DONNA. She was trying to see how it would feel to be Anastasia and lose all her money. *(Taking the money.)* There! And you'll never get any of it back. How does that make you feel, Betty?

BETTY. Pretty pissed off.

DONNA. Good. *(To MELISSA.)* She's very serious about her acting.

MELISSA. Good thing, because I just checked the reservation list, and *both* critics are going to be here tonight.

BETTY. No!

DONNA. Really? They've never come to our shows before. I wonder what made them decide—

MELISSA. Well, all I know is their names are on the list, and I hope I get one of the good parts.

MARIE. They're all good.

MELISSA. Only some are more good than others.

(ATHENA enters. She is the daughter of a wealthy man, the epitome of entitlement. Her arrogance masks her abysmal ignorance about the world outside her ivory tower, and she's too smart not to be suspecting as much.)

ATHENA. Has anybody seen our celebrated playwright?

MELISSA. Athena, guess what? The critics are going to be here tonight ... both of them!

ATHENA. I know. I sent them the tickets.

MARIE. *(Rising to confront her nemesis.)* You what?

ATHENA. *(Relishing another opportunity to yank MARIE's chain.)* I sent them comp tickets and a brief, but flattering note.

BAILIFF. No!

MARIE. And who told you to do that?

ATHENA. No one. I thought it would be good publicity for us to get reviewed.

MARIE. Athena, I don't like that you did that without consulting the company.

MELISSA. Why? I'm glad they're coming.

MARIE. Because we don't care what the patriarchy thinks of our theater.

ATHENA. But we should make use of "the patriarchy" any time we can get it to serve our interests.

MARIE. No! Wrong! Don't you know that's been the excuse behind women's collaboration with men and our betrayal of each other for two thousand years? Don't you know that the idea of working within the system for change has been the biggest boondoggle in the history of women's oppression? That's exactly the kind of argument that has kept us from having our own theaters and taking our own culture seriously!

MELISSA. If it bothers you, don't read the reviews.

MARIE. That's not the point!

MELISSA. Well, what is?

MARIE. Inviting the male gaze!

ATHENA and MELISSA. *(Turning toward each other in mock terror.)* Ooo ... "the male gaze...!"

MARIE. *(Soldiering on.)* We have been so trained to see ourselves through their eyes—

ATHENA. *(Smiling.)* Speak for yourself.

MARIE. Have a good laugh, but the joke's on you. *(To MELISSA.)* You can spend your life hanging on the words of male critics ... *(To ATHENA.)* ... or going to law school to study how to be just like them, but when all is said and done, who's going to give you your identity?

MELISSA. *(To ATHENA.)* My god—that sounds just like a play I once did. Little political thing in one of those women's theater

companies. What was it called?

ATHENA. *The Anastasia Trials in the Court of Women*?

MELISSA. How did you know? Did you see it?

ATHENA. No, but I read the reviews.

MARIE. *(Crossing down left again.)* Oh, shut up.

(Just then DIANE and LISA enter. They are conferring over script changes. DIANE is the head of the company. She is passionate about her mission to produce feminist theater, and she naively and mistakenly assumes the other members of the company share her vision. Ignoring the petty jealousies and personal agendas that are tearing the company apart, she remains blissfully ignorant of the impending train wreck. LISA, the playwright, is like DIANE in that her commitment to feminism does not incorporate any practical engagement with actual women. She deeply resents the fact that her works of art are dependent on the caprices of these flawed creatures for their actualization.)

ATHENA. *(Turning.)* Ah, the playwright. Just who I wanted to see.

LISA. *(Looking up from her rewrites.)* What?

MELISSA. *(To DIANE.)* Diane, did you see the list of reservations?

DIANE. *(To MELISSA.)* No, why?

MELISSA. The critics are coming! Both of them!

DIANE. *(To MELISSA.)* That's nice. *(To the other actors.)* Look, is everyone here yet?

DONNA. *(To MARIE.)* You see?

MARIE. *(To DONNA.)* See what?

DONNA. How casual she was...."That's nice." Like she doesn't care.

MARIE. She doesn't.

DONNA. Oh, right.

ATHENA. *(To LISA.)* I wanted to talk to you about some changes

in the script.

BETTY. What? No! No changes!

LISA. *(Threatened by ATHENA's education and privilege.)* We open in a few minutes.

ATHENA. But these are important. The play isn't going to make sense—

DIANE. *(Calling out.)* Look! Is everyone here?

LISA. *(To ATHENA.)* It's too late.

ATHENA. *(To LISA.)* But if anyone in the audience knows anything about the law—

LISA. I'm not a lawyer— I'm a playwright.

ATHENA. But it's about a trial.

LISA. In the *Women's* Court—a whole different paradigm.

DIANE. *(To the company.)* Okay, listen! Who's *not* here?

JENNY. *(An offstage wail.)* Me! *(She enters. JENNY is a perpetual hypochondriac. This is her way of deflecting criticism, while garnering support for her fragile talent.)* I'm not here....

DONNA. *(Defender of the weak.)* What's the matter, hon?

JENNY. I'm sick. *(Expressions of sympathy: "Oh, that's too bad." "I'm sorry...," etc.)* I don't think I can go on. *(Sudden shift in climate: "Oh, sure you can." "You're not that sick." "You have to," etc.)* Diane, I can't...

DONNA. Why are you telling Diane? This is a collective.

JENNY. *(Staggering across the stage.)* I went to bed with this headache last night, and then in the middle of the night, I woke up and I started vomiting, and I've been vomiting all day. I had to pull over twice on the way to the theater. Only I haven't eaten all day, so it's not really solid. It's this kind of green, watery—

(JENNY lies down across the defendants' chairs.)

MELISSA. We can't cancel the show! The critics are going to be here!

MARIE. Screw the critics!

DONNA. I know! Why don't we let her play Annie Jennings tonight? Annie only comes on at the end of the second act. That way she could lie down, or vomit, or whatever, until the play's almost over. Shed just have to come on at the very end. And by then, she might be better.

MARIE. But what about the lottery?

DONNA. The whole point of the lottery was to empower the actors. I don't see how it's going to empower us to have an actor throw up in the middle of her lines.

BETTY. Yes! Yes! Exactly! Yes! *(To MARIE.)* Yes! Yes! You see?

LISA. *(Standing on the witness chair.)* Excuse me.... Excuse me....

DIANE. Hey, could we have some quiet, please? Our playwright has something to say!

LISA. I added a character last night—

(A riot ensues.)

DIANE. *(Yelling.)* Will you let her finish, please?

LISA. I added the character of Zinaida in the first act—

(More rioting.)

DIANE. *Please*!

LISA. I added the character of Zinaida in the first act, and so the actor playing Annie in the second act, will have to double as this new character Zinaida—

BETTY. The lines! The lines!

DIANE. Listen!

LISA. So, since nobody's had the chance to learn Zinaida's lines—

BETTY. How could we? We've never seen them!

LISA. I'm going to have to play the part—and the part of Annie

tonight. Which is why we can't give Annie's part to anyone.

MARIE. Wait a minute! Wait a minute! I don't like what I'm hearing. *(To DIANE.)* You mean after all those months of meetings to come up with a system of casting that's fair to everyone—we're just going to throw it out the window?

MELISSA. Oh, for Pete's sake! We're just going to let one woman play one role for one night, because of special circumstances.

BETTY. Special circumstances—yes! *(To MARIE.)* You see? Special circumstances!

MARIE. What special circumstances? Who is this Zinaida character? We've been doing fine without her. Why do we have to have her now?

MELISSA. Oh, who cares? It's ten minutes to curtain. Let's draw the parts so we can have a chance to look over our lines. They're going to review the performance tonight.

JENNY. *(Sitting up at the mention of getting reviewed.)* Ohhh ....

MARIE. I don't care if we hold up the curtain or if we have to send the audience home. I agreed to do this play with a lottery system, and here it is opening night—and what do we see? Good old boys, special privileges, and—as usual—the need to set aside our principles for the sake of some internally manufactured crisis.

JENNY. *(Indignant.)* Is she talking about my diarrhea?

ATHENA. *(To DIANE.)* I have a question.

DIANE. What?

ATHENA. *(Addressing DIANE.)* If the playwright is adding a character, is that character going to take the stand?

LISA. Yes.

ATHENA. *(To DIANE.)* Then won't the Bailiff and the attorneys need extra lines?

BETTY. No! No!

LISA. *(Holding up the rewrites.)* I've written those down, so the actors can just carry them on like they're legal papers, and then they can refer to them when it comes to that part of the script. It's very simple.

DONNA. There's nothing simple about this play. It's the most complicated show I've ever done.

BETTY. Me too!

MELISSA. *(To DIANE.)* Yeah, you know when you said we were doing a play about Anastasia, I was thinking it would be like that movie with Ingrid Bergman.

JENNY. *(Forgetting to be sick.)* I saw that! And Yul Brynner.

MELISSA. Only he was wearing a toupee.

JENNY. I think it was his real hair. He wasn't really bald.

LISA. That movie was a fairy tale! The story of the real Anastasia had nothing to do with romance. It was a story of oppression and betrayal.

MELISSA. What's wrong with romance? People like love stories.

LISA. Oh, sure—especially women. They're riding to work right now, as we speak, all over the world, clutching a regency novel in one hand and a subway strap in the other, on their way to some boring, demeaning job that only women can learn to tolerate, that barely pays them enough to cover rent and groceries—and of course, their weekly fix of cheap romance. Either that, or they're riding home to their emotionally-absent, parasitic, or tyrannical husbands and families. But none of this matters as long as Cecily Hargrave can manage to flash those defiant eyes at the arrogant Lord Beaverbrook as Count Twickendick hands her into his coach for the masquerade ball. Women love romance. Sure. That's why they betray women like Anastasia. Because they'll believe in romance even if it kills them.

MARIE. That's right! Going through life addicted to romance, women squander their capacity for radical action on the cheap baubles of patriarchy!

MELISSA. Well, excuse me for living! I'm going to get the hat.

ATHENA. *(To DIANE.)* I have something to say about this script. I'm in law school—

LISA. Where they teach you to write plays?

ATHENA. Diane?

DONNA. Stop talking to her! She's not our mother!

ATHENA. *(To DIANE.)* This play is full of legal mistakes—

LISA. Arrest me.

ATHENA. *(Still to DIANE.)* And I think this business of adding a witness that nobody's ever seen before—

LISA. *I'll* play her part. It won't be a problem.

MARIE. *(To DIANE.)* I agree with Athena. I feel the playwright has taken a lot of our power by changing—

LISA. *(Stung by MARIE's defection.)* I made it better! Do you hear? This is a better play! I'm sorry I couldn't call you all up last night and read it to you in the middle of the night, but my ideas don't even wait for my permission. You think I enjoyed typing all night?

MARIE. So, in other words, you're not accountable for your actions?

LISA. *(To DIANE, beginning to cry.)* It's impossible. I can't work like this.... I don't know what these people want. I give them my blood, my tears, my guts....

JENNY. *(Remembering that she's sick.)* Ohhh....

DIANE. All right.... Now, listen! This is an important play on an important subject. *(To LISA.)* It's a beautiful play. *(To the troops.)* Tonight is the world premiere. We've all worked very hard. We've all learned all the parts in the play, just so that we can be absolutely fair and equal with each other, and we're all working together for the same thing: the empowerment of women. And we have a playwright here who was up all night making sure that the play would be the very best that it could be, and we can respond to her integrity and her discipline by showing her our appreciation.

(DIANE applauds. BETTY starts to clap, but stops when she realizes that none of the other actors are applauding.)

MARIE. Sounds to me like the playwright has power over the actors.

DIANE. *(To MARIE.)* The *play*. The play has power over the

actors ... *(Appealing to the other actors.)* ... and the actors have power over the play. Please ... we have enough real enemies out there. We don't need to make enemies of each other.

MELISSA. *(Arriving with the hat, she hands it to DIANE.)* Let's go, let's go! We've got five minutes!

DONNA. *I'll* pass the hat. *(She snatches it out of DIANE's hands.)* You passed it last night. This is a collective.

JENNY. What about me?

LISA. *(To DIANE.)* If she doesn't go on, we won't be able to do the play.

DONNA. Give her Anastasia. If she throws up, it'll be in character.

BETTY. No! Not Anastasia. *(She nudges DONNA to remind her of their deal. DONNA stares back at her as if BETTY's crazy. Desperate, BETTY turns back to the others.)* Besides, anybody can vomit. You just stick your fingers down your throat.

(She starts to demonstrate.)

JENNY. *(Not to be upstaged.)* Oh, god ....

MARIE. *(Slapping BETTY's hand.)* Betty, stop that! Here, draw!

BETTY. First? I can't go first!

MELISSA. *(Suspicious.)* Why not?

BETTY. *(Thinking fast.)* Because ... I went first last night! *(To the company.)* This is a collective. I'll go last ....

(She nudges DONNA again, but DONNA continues to ignore her.)

DIANE. Wait! Let me take Annie's name out, since we already know who's going to play it.

DONNA. *I'll* take it out.

(She grabs the hat away from DIANE. Just then AMY enters. AMY is an actor who has what might be considered "sex appeal" in

mainstream theater, and she makes the most of it. To AMY, women's theater is like staying home with your girlfriend on prom night, and she can't wait to get out.)

AMY. So, what is this? The lottery without me? What's going on?

DIANE. I'm sorry. We thought everyone was here.

DONNA. *Diane* thought.

AMY. Oh, sure, I'm going to believe that. Just like I'm going to believe it's the luck of the draw that Anastasia is going to just happen to be the last name in the hat.

BETTY. *(Delighted.)* It is? *(Oops.)* I mean, if it was, it would be pure coincidence. Well ... eighty-one to one, actually ....

DONNA. *(Handing LISA the slip with "Annie Jennings" on it.)* Okay, here's yours.... Now, let's draw.

AMY. Wait a minute! Not so fast! I saw that! What's with giving the name to her? Aren't we supposed to draw?

DONNA. Show up on time and maybe you'd catch a clue.

AMY. Hey, fuck you. My bus was late. *(To LISA.)* Let me see.

(She grabs the slip of paper.)

DIANE. There were some changes to the script—

AMY. *(Ignoring DIANE, she reads.)* Oh—"Annie Jennings." Who wants her anyway? *(To LISA.)* You can have her every night. In fact, if I ever draw her, I'll give her to you.

MARIE. *(Disgusted.)* Look, I'm drawing from the hat! Anyone else want to know who they're playing tonight?

(The actors become quiet as the hat goes around. JENNY is the next to the last to draw. BETTY goes to take the hat from her, but she snatches it back and vomits into it.)

JENNY. Sorry.

BETTY. Now what am I going to do? I can't draw!

DIANE. *(Retrieving the hat.)* Okay, let's all say what we drew so we can figure out Betty's part by process of elimination.

ATHENA. *(Aside.)* So to speak.

JENNY. Defense attorney.

(She gags and exits up left.)

MELISSA. Hey! That's the biggest part in the show! She can't play that!

DONNA. We have to let her trade with someone!

MELISSA. I'll trade with her. *(Crossing down to DIANE.)* Diane, let me trade with her!

BETTY. *(To MELISSA.)* What did you get?

MELISSA. Nurse Thea.

DONNA. *(To MELISSA.)* You just want to trade, so you can show off for the critics.

BETTY. *(To AMY.)* Who did you draw?

AMY. Baroness Sophie Buxhoeveden.

MELISSA. Lucky!

AMY. I'm not complaining.

MELISSA. *(To DIANE.)* Look, I can play the defense attorney.

DONNA. And so can I! So can all of us!

MELISSA. *(To DONNA.)* What did you get?

DONNA. Shura.

MELISSA. That's a good part.

DONNA. Oh, yeah. About as good as Nurse Thea.

BETTY. *(To MARIE.)* What did you get?

MARIE. The bag lady, Clara Peuthert.

BETTY. *(To DIANE.)* What about you, Diane?

DIANE. Prosecuting attorney.

ATHENA. Congratulations!

DONNA. Best role in the show. *(To MARIE.)* What a coincidence.

DIANE. *(To DONNA.)* What are you saying?

MELISSA. *(To DONNA.) You* passed the hat.

DONNA. But it was on Diane's makeup table, wasn't it? She had plenty of time to palm it and then fake drawing one.

BETTY. *(To ATHENA.)* So, Athena, what did you get?

ATHENA. Anastasia.

BETTY. No! I'm ruined! I'm ruined!

DIANE. That means you must be the Bailiff.

BETTY. No, no! Not the Bailiff! The Bailiff has almost as many lines as the attorneys!

MELISSA. *(To BETTY with a certain malicious glee.)* That's right. And the Bailiff talks to the audience.

BETTY. No! No! What am I going to do?

MELISSA. Want to trade?

MARIE. No! No trades! Absolutely. We've already violated the system once. That's enough.

MELISSA. *(Checking her watch in the hopes of distracting MARIE.)* Hey, it's almost curtain!

LISA. Diane, here are the rewrites for the attorneys. Where's the defense attorney?

(DIANE takes a set of papers.)

ATHENA. She's in the bathroom. Here. I'll give them to her. *(She takes the rest of the rewrites.)* Let's go! Betty's got to open the show!

BETTY. No! No!

ATHENA. *(To BETTY.)* You'll do great.

(Handing BETTY a set of rewrites.)

DIANE. Come on! Five minutes to curtain!

(The actors exit, except for AMY and MELISSA. AMY grabs MELISSA as she is about to leave.)

AMY. Can I talk to you a second?

MELISSA. Me? *(AMY has never talked to her before.)* What do you want?

AMY. *(Putting her arm around MELISSA.)* I need to ask a favor.

MELISSA. *(Staring at AMY's hand on her shoulder.)* What is it?

AMY. *(Backing off.)* I need to leave after intermission, and I want you to tell the others I got sick.

MELISSA. You're leaving the theater?

(Just then ATHENA enters, carrying ANASTASIA's coat. She hides behind a curtain to overhear what's going on.)

AMY. Yeah. It's one of those things—I got this booking a couple of months ago—before I got in the play—and I forgot all about it. When I remembered, I tried to get out of it—

MELISSA. You're in another show?

AMY. It's a cabaret spot at the Eastland Hotel [or name of local upscale nightclub].

MELISSA. A nightclub act?

AMY. Yeah.

MELISSA. And you *forgot* you had the booking? *(AMY shrugs.)* You mean you're going to walk out on the play just because of some nightclub gig?

AMY. I have to. They're paying me...

MELISSA. *(This changes everything.)* They're paying you...?

AMY. *(Examining her nails.)* Three hundred bucks.

MELISSA. I can't believe it!

(MELISSA crosses to her new buddy, but AMY rises in alarm and crosses away from her.)

AMY. I don't care what you believe. You're lucky I showed up at all! I wasn't going to, but since some of the parts are only in the first act, I decided to come and see what I got. And Sophie is in the

first act....

MELISSA. But the critics are going to be here!

AMY. This is women's theater. They're not going to get it anyway. Look—do me this favor and tell them I'm sick, and I'll let you trade roles with me for the rest of the run.

MELISSA. But we can't.

AMY. Sure we can. Stand next to me when we draw, and if you like what I have, it's yours. *(She tries the arm-around-the-shoulder again.)* What do you say?

MELISSA. Okay.... *(Mission accomplished, AMY turns to go.)* But you're going to be here for the rest of the shows, aren't you?

AMY. *(Already gone.)* So far.

(MELISSA exits. JENNY wanders back on, and ATHENA emerges from her hiding place.)

JENNY. Where did everyone go?

ATHENA. They're changing. It's almost curtain.

JENNY. Oh, shit! I've got to put on all those lawyer clothes....

(She starts to exit, but ATHENA stops her.)

ATHENA. You don't have to be the attorney.

JENNY. *(Turning.)* I don't?

ATHENA. No. We decided you were too sick.

JENNY. But I thought everyone—

ATHENA. We decided it wasn't fair to make you carry such a big role when you were feeling so sick.

JENNY. *(A long pause as she notices the coat ATHENA is carrying.)* So who am I?

ATHENA. Anastasia.

JENNY. *(Nodding.)* Oh.

ATHENA. You won't have to say anything.

JENNY. *(A long pause.)* I know I'm too sick to do a good job as

the attorney, but there's a part of me that was excited about doing it anyway. I'll probably never draw it again. *(ATHENA doesn't say anything.)* Well—I guess it's better for me to be Anastasia ... better for the company.

ATHENA. I brought you your costume, so you can change in the wings and not have to put up with all the craziness in the dressing room.

JENNY. Thanks, Athena. That was really thoughtful.

ATHENA. No problem.

JENNY. Who's going to play the defense attorney?

ATHENA. I am.

JENNY. *(Another long pause.)* Well, you'll probably do a better job than I would.

ATHENA. Who knows? Have a good show.

(JENNY exits up left. ATHENA takes a proprietary look around the stage and exits up left also. Blackout. The lights come up on an empty stage. Whispers are heard off right: "Where's Betty?" Betty! "Betty!" etc. The lights go out again and come up again.)

BETTY. *(Offstage.)* No, oh, no, please, oh, please.... *(BETTY is pushed on stage from up right. She turns and exits immediately. BETTY wears a BAILIFF's shirt. She has a copy of the script stuffed in her back pocket.)* No! No!

(Offstage voices are heard: "Go on!" "Get out there!" etc. BETTY is pushed on stage again. This time she looks up at the audience and freezes, a deer trapped in headlights. Finally, someone offstage whispers the first line of the play, "Good evening." BETTY turns to stare into the wings at the speaker. The line is repeated. BETTY turns woodenly toward the audience.)

BETTY/BAILIFF. Good evening. *(Turning back toward the*

wings for her next line.) Welcome to the Court of Women. *(To her prompter in the wings.)* That's it. That's all I remember. *(To the audience.)* Look, I don't know any of my lines, and that's going to be a real problem for both of us. *(Something from the wings.)* What? Oh. Really? That's okay? *(To the audience.)* Okay. So I don't know my lines, but I have a general idea what they say, and so I'm just going to tell you what I do remember, and that's going to have to do for tonight. But if you take a rain check, the odds are eighty-one to one that someone else is going to be the Bailiff for the next show.... *(Noise from wings.)* What? Oh. *(To audience.)* I wasn't supposed to say that. So, okay. Let's see. I'm the Bailiff, and this is our courtroom. This is where Anastasia is going to sit, with her attorney ...here. She's the plaintiff. And then these chairs are all for the defendants. There's five of them, only one of them is going to be somebody else until the second act, which is probably going to be confusing, but you might as well get used to that, because it's a pretty confusing play. *(Noise from the wings.)* Hey, get off my ass! I'm doing fine. Everybody's a critic. *(To the audience.)* Where was I? The courtroom. Oh, yeah. And here's the witness chair.... And you'll notice there isn't any place for the judge to sit, which is on purpose, because there isn't any judge. The playwright told us that was because in the Court of Women every woman is the judge, but I got my own idea about it. *(Noise from the wings. BETTY turns upstage.)* What's wrong with that? Why is the playwright's opinion more valuable than mine? *(To the audience.)* See, from the actor's point of view, the role of a judge would be kind of a problem, because we're all rotating the parts every night, so if I drew the part of the judge, I would end up having to pass a judgment on the character I played the night before—see? And nobody wants to judge themselves, or the person they used to be, or might be in the future, because at the next lottery, I could always draw the person I condemned the night before. See? So, good riddance to the judge. Okay, but here's the catch, see—You can't have a trial without a verdict, right? What's the point? So, you're going to be the judge and the jury. Yeah, that's right. Dirty trick, isn't

it? We advertise a play, and then *you* pay *us* money, and then after you get here, we tell you you're the jury. Yeah, I'd be pissed, too. *(Noise from the wings.)* Audiences have rights, too, you know. *(To the audience.)* So, we've got to keep things moving. We're running a little late tonight. Even for a women's theater company. *(Protest from the wings.)* It was a joke! *(To the audience.)* So, like I was saying ... you're the jury. And that's no big deal, because all you have to do is have an opinion. Like you don't already, even though we haven't started yet. *(Noise from the wings.)* Can't I say anything? *(To the audience.)* How am I doing? Am I doing okay? Just clap, if I'm doing okay. Come on! *(Let's hope they clap.)* Thank you. See if anyone else gets a private ovation tonight. Okay, and one last thing I have to tell you. Since we haven't got a judge, you people are going to have to rule on the motions, which means that every time one of the lawyers pops up with "I object," you have to decide whether or not to sustain it or overrule it. And this is really easy, don't worry. You all have those red and green cards, like traffic lights, right? Okay. Well, I'll call for the motion, and then, if you want to stop what's going on, you hold up the red card, or if you think what's going on is just fine and should keep on going, you hold up the green card. See? Simple. Like traffic lights—stop and go, right? So, let's practice. *(Anticipating trouble from the wings.)* Hey, they've never done it before. *(To audience.)* So, one of the attorneys yells "Objection!" If you want to keep *going*, what do you do? *(They hold up the green cards.)* Great. Beautiful. And now the attorney yells "Objection," and you want to *stop* what's going on. What do you do? *(They hold up red cards.)* See? Easy. *(To the wings.)* No problem. *(To the audience.)* Oh—here comes Anastasia and her attorney, Diane. Guess you don't need me anymore.

(BETTY crosses to the stool and sits. She starts to study a script. JENNY enters from up left, and DIANE enters from up right. They meet in the center, and DIANE escorts JENNY to the downstage right chair. JENNY wears a long black coat, buttoned

up over her head. DIANE is dressed as the PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. She carries her rewrites and puts them under her chair. JENNY and DIANE sit. DONNA, MARIE, MELISSA, and AMY file in from up right and sit in the chairs for the defendants. MARIE wears a tattered shawl and carries several battered shopping bags. DONNA wears a woman's hat from the 1920's, AMY wears a fur stole and diamond jewelry, and MELISSA wears a nurse's cap. After they are seated, ATHENA, dressed as the DEFENSE ATTORNEY, enters from up left, carrying her rewrites. DIANE reacts violently to the sight of ATHENA.)

DIANE. Athena? What are you doing?

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. Defending my clients.

DIANE. But you're supposed to be Anastasia. Who's this? *(DIANE opens the coat to look at her client. To JENNY.)* You're supposed to be the defense attorney!

JENNY. But Athena told me you all decided—

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. *(Cutting JENNY off, she addresses DIANE.)* Do you need some time to consult with your client?

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. *(After a long look at ATHENA.)* No, I think I understand her case perfectly.

JENNY. You mean I wasn't supposed to trade?

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. Bailiff ... you have a line, I believe.

(She sits, putting her rewrites under her chair.)

BETTY/BAILIFF. *(Rising.)* Oh! *(She checks her script.)* All rise. *(The actors rise. If the audience has not risen, BETTY repeats the line: "I said, All rise.")* The Women's Court is now in session. You can sit down.

(Audience sits, and DIANE rises to address them.)

DIANA/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Good evening, women of the jury ... and sisters. Tonight you're going to hear a case about a woman who was denied her identity—denied it by women she loved, women she trusted, women she depended on. And you can see all too well the tragic consequences of these betrayals.... *(She indicates JENNY, who is under the coat.)* This woman you see now, cowering under her coat, has not been allowed to be who she is. This woman, members of the jury, this woman you see next to me, was once one of the most celebrated women in Europe, the Grand Duchess Anastasia Nicolaievna Romanov, daughter of the Tsar of Russia. But that life ended tragically for her on the night of July 16, 1918, when she was ripped from her bed, led with the other members of her family into a dark courtyard of their Siberian prison, and forced to witness the brutal massacre of her entire family. There, in that terrible courtyard, this girl—and girl she was, for she was only seventeen at the time — would have also been murdered, had it not been for the fact that she lost consciousness and the body of her sister Tatiana fell on top of her, shielding her from the worst of the bayonet lances that followed the shooting. Rescued by a soldier who had been ordered to bury the bodies, suffering a smashed jaw and bayonet wounds, she was smuggled out of Russia in a hay cart, delirious with fever, to spend two years in hiding before perilously making her way to Berlin, where she attempted to end her life by jumping into the Landwehr Canal on February 17, 1920. Refusing to give her name to the police who rescued her, she was considered insane and sent to a Dalldorf public mental asylum, where she spent another two years, suffering in silence. Finally, in 1922, she told her secret and her painful ordeal should have ended. This heroic martyr should have been restored to her title, she should have come into the legacy left for her as the only surviving member of the Russian imperial family. She should have been welcomed and honored by the relatives of her family and the entire community of Russian emigrants who had fled the Revolution. She should have been able to rest, to heal from her horrendous experiences. But this did not happen. She was denied, slandered,

rejected, ridiculed, libeled, cheated, and abandoned. This woman, that you see before you today, was denied her identity and her heritage by other women ... *(Turning toward the defendants.)* ... women who were motivated by greed, jealousy, and sadism ... *(Turning to JENNY.)* ... women who abused her *because* she was a survivor. *(Confronting the audience.)* And how many of you have known the special torment of being denied your identity by *other women*? Few of us have recourse to a public trial, but tonight, right here, this woman is going to have her day in court. This is a miracle, sisters, a miracle of justice in an unjust world. This woman is going to be given a hearing, sisters, a *fair* hearing, because you are going to give it to her. I ask you to hear this case as if you were standing in the shoes of my client, as if you yourself were this woman who has been so brutalized by her experiences, so tortured by her betrayers, that she is beyond the reach of traditional therapies. Without justice, sisters, there is no healing for this woman. And so I ask you to stand in her shoes to hear this case, because this woman you see next to me, cringing in terror, could have been—and might still be—any one of you!

(DIANE sits.)

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. *(Rising.)* Women of the jury.... You have just heard a very eloquent plea from my esteemed colleague—a plea to render justice to this unfortunate woman by turning in a verdict of "guilty" against these five women. I want to assure you that I want justice for this woman as much as my colleague does. She has certainly been the victim of a terrible fate, and her suffering is obvious to all of us. I am not here to argue that. And I want to see justice done today, but, women of the jury, a verdict of "guilty" will not bring that justice! It will not restore this woman's health. It will not give her back the lost years. It will not recover her lost inheritance. It will not do any of these things. But what it will do is turn five innocent women into scapegoats, convicted criminals. And it will do something else. If my clients are found guilty, there will be a

legal precedent set for thousands of lawsuits all over the world—lawsuits of women against women. It is my intention to prove that every woman is responsible for her own identity. It is my intention to demonstrate that this is not a perfect world, that women must compete to survive, that women are not above the laws of nature, and that our justice system exists to mediate the disputes caused by this imperfect world, *not* to impose a utopian social order—as my colleague seems to think! This mythology of sisterhood is tearing women apart. It is destroying our ability to act independently in our own best interests. It is keeping us locked in patterns of dependence and submission. Women of the jury, it is a grave mistake to believe that holding each other to some mythical standard of perfection is going to bring us any closer to justice. And if you attempt to impose this myth of sisterhood, you will end by creating a reign of terror.

(ATHENA sits. There is a long pause. DIANE turns to look at BETTY.)

BETTY/BAILIFF. *(Rising with a jolt.)* Oh! I call ... *(Checking her script.)* ... Thea Malinowsky to the stand. *(MELISSA rises and crosses to the witness chair and BETTY crosses to swear her in.)* State your name.

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Thea Malinowsky.

BETTY/BAILIFF. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. I do.

(BETTY returns to her stool and DIANE rises.)

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Thea, what do you do?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. I work as a nurse at the Dalldorf Mental Asylum.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Will you state your connection to the plaintiff?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Anastasia—I mean, the

Grand Duchess—

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. *(Pointedly.)* You may call her Anastasia. That's her name.

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Anastasia was a patient at Dalldorf when I started working there. I was a night nurse on her ward.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And so you knew who she was?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Well, no. I mean, I knew her as Fraulein Unbekannt. That's what we called her. Nobody knew who she really was.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. So you called her "Miss Unknown?"

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Yes.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. That doesn't seem very respectful or very therapeutic does it?

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. *(Rising.)* Objection.

BETTY/BAILIFF. *(Rising, to the audience.)* Okay, here we go....

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. I withdraw the question.

BETTY/BAILIFF. *(Returning to her stool.)* Off the hook this time.

(ATHENA sits.)

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. *(To MELISSA.)* Would you like to be called "Miss Unknown?"

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. She wouldn't tell us her name!

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Please just answer the question. Would you like to be called as "Miss Unknown?"

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. No.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And did you know of her history?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. All I knew was that she had

been there for about a year, and that they had brought her to Dalldorf, because she had jumped off a bridge in Berlin, but she wouldn't tell anyone who she was.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. But she did tell someone, didn't she? She told you, didn't she?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Yes.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And how did she do that?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. I was on night duty, and she came up to the desk to talk to me. She always did that with the night nurses. She never slept. She'd just come and talk all night. And this night, she had been sitting with me for about a half hour when she told me she wanted to show me something, and I asked her what it was, but she wouldn't say. I told her to bring it to me, but she wanted me to go with her to her room. And so I did, and she pulled a magazine out from under the mattress. It was a magazine she had gotten from the hospital library, and she showed it to me. She pointed to the picture on the cover and asked me if I didn't notice something special about it.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And can you tell us what it was a picture of?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. It was a photograph of the imperial family of Russia.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Tsar Nicholas and his wife and his children?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Yes.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And did you notice anything special about it?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Not at first. I didn't know what she wanted.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. But she told you to look closer, didn't she?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Yes.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And when you looked

closer, did you notice anything?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. I noticed that the Tsar's youngest daughter looked a little bit like Fraulein Unbe—like Anastasia.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And did you tell her this?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. No. I pretended I didn't see anything.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. You *pretended* you didn't see anything. And can you tell the jury why you did this?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. To test her.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. To test her? And why would you want to test her?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Well, it was a mental asylum.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And so you lie to the patients to test them?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. No ... I ....

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. You pretend you don't see things?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. You don't—

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. You make them believe they are crazy, because they're supposed to be crazy anyway?

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. *(Rising.)* Objection. Badgering the witness.

(BETTY rises, but DIANE starts to speak.)

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And so after this "test" of yours, what did the patient do?

(BETTY and ATHENA sit.)

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. She pointed to the girl in the photograph and asked me if I saw any resemblance between herself and the photo.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And did you "test" her again?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. I admitted there was a resemblance.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Ah. And what did she do then?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. She became very upset, and she said, "I am Her Imperial Highness the Grand Duchess Anastasia Nicolaievna."

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Now, Thea, this is very important. Did you believe her?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. I did at the time, but later—

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. But you did at the time. And of course, you immediately reported this to your supervisor.

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. *(Turning to her attorney for direction.)* No ....

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. No? You discover that the youngest daughter of the Tsar of Russia has escaped the massacre at Ekaterinburg—*(JENNY reacts to the name "Ekaterinburg" with a guttural, primal cry. DIANE has anticipated this and takes it in stride.)*...and has turned up in a mental asylum four years later in Berlin, and you don't tell your supervisor?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. No.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. This is incredible! A woman wrongfully diagnosed, wrongfully incarcerated, wrongfully separated from her family, wrongfully deprived of her inheritance—and you didn't report it to your supervisor?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. No, I did not.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Did you report it to anyone?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. I told my boyfriend.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Ah. Your *boyfriend.* And why did you tell him?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. I wanted his advice.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Of course. And what did he say?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. He laughed at me, and then he said, "What do you expect to hear at a mental asylum?"

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. And is that when you changed your mind about Fraulein Unbekannt's identity?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Yes.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. No further questions.

(She crosses to her chair and sits.)

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. *(Rising.)* Thea, was this your first job as a nurse?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Yes.

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. And this job was very important to you, wasn't it?

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. *(Rising.)* Objection. Irrelevant.

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. Nurse Malinowsky's motives in not reporting this episode to her supervisor are precisely what she is here being tried for. I intend to establish that Nurse Malinowsky felt her job would be in jeopardy, and that this was of great concern to her.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. Nurse Malinowsky's attachment to her job is irrelevant to the fact that she heard Anastasia say who she was, she believed her, and she deliberately withheld this information from those who were in a position to restore my client to her rightful identity.

BETTY/BAILIFF. *(Rising.)* Okay. Does she get to ask Thea why she needed the job? Green if she can ask her, red if she can't. *(She takes the vote and announces the result:)* Overruled [or Sustained; if Sustained, skip to *].

(BETTY and DIANE return to their seats.)

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. This job at Dalldorf was important to you, wasn't it?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. Yes.

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. Can you tell us why it was so important?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. I had just finished my nurses' training, and I had many debts to pay. I was also supporting my sister and her baby, because her husband had just left her.

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. And what would have happened to your sister if you had lost your job?

MELISSA/THEA MALINOWSKY. She would have had to give up the baby.

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. Thank you. And, * Nurse Malinowsky, is it your job as a nurse to diagnose the patients at Dalldorf Hospital?

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. *(Rising.)* Objection! Irrelevant and misleading! We are not talking about diagnosis. We are talking about identity.

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. I intend to prove that to the medical profession, the two are the same thing.

DIANE/PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. The medical profession is not on trial here. Thea Malinowsky, who knew who my client was and did nothing about it, is on trial.

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. *Nurse* Malinowsky is on trial, and I intend to prove that it was her understanding that to make the report was a violation of her job description.

BETTY/BAILIFF. *(Rising.)* Okay, can she ask Thea if nurses are supposed to diagnose? Green if she can, red if she can't. *(She takes the vote and announces the result:)* Overruled [or Sustained; if Sustained, skip to *].

(BETTY and DIANE return to their seats.)

ATHENA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. Is it the job of the nurses to

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