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# REQUIEM

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# CHARACTERS

## **LEADS:**

ALEXANDRA FEODOROVNA: Tsarina of all Russia

NICHOLAS II of ROMANOV: Tsar of all Russia

PIOTR ERMAKOV: Bolshevik, murderer of the imperial family, narrator

RASPUTIN: Wizard, heals Alexei, a manifestation of death

## **ENSEMBLE ROLES:**

VICTORIA of HANOVER: Opposes Nicholas (Russia)

ALEXANDER and MARIA of ROMANOV: Oppose Alexandra

ALEXEI of ROMANOV

WILHELM II: German Emperor

WEDDING GUESTS

COFFEE PATRONS

3 ASSASSINS

NEWSPAPER CHILD

4 DAUGHTERS

SERVANTS

2 CHILDREN

# ACT I

## SCENE 1: YEKATERINBURG, THIS MINUTE

Preset *Romanov family* as saints in stained glass windows.

Doors open to the audience.

*(The voices of two children can be heard behind the door.)*

**CHILD A:** Petya! Come on, why so slow?

**CHILD B:** Wait for me!

*(CHILD A opens the door and enters, CHILD B follows, both holding flashlights)*

**CHILD A:** God be blessed... The church does look beautiful at night...

**CHILD B:** Andrusha, we shouldn't be here...

**CHILD A:** Aw, is someone scared?

*(CHILD A physically scares CHILD B)*

**CHILD B:** There's nobody...

**CHILD A:** Of course there's nobody, it's exactly 12 midnight! *(ERMAKOV enters, walks slowly towards CHILD B)* Even the guards are dozing off!

*(The light of CHILD B disappears, CHILD A reveals the imperial family with his flashlight, and takes a piece of jewellery.)*

**CHILD A:** My God, look at this! Petya, what do you think? Petya? Piotr?

**ERMAKOV:** Piotr is here.

*(CHILD A turns around, and the flashlight reveals ERMAKOV.)*

**CHILD A:** Who are you!?

**ERMAKOV:** Piotr. Piotr Ermakov. Who are you, and why is a lad like you out here all by yourself?

**CHILD A:** I'm sorry-

**ERMAKOV:** Go home! Skedaddle!

*(CHILD A sprints to the exit. Just as he is about to reach it, the door shuts close on him, and lights start to flash. CHILD A tries, and fails, to pry the door open. After realising his failure, he leans against the wall. Lights darken again. ERMAKOV walks towards CHILD A)*

**ERMAKOV:** Wanting to bring away some memories, isn't it?

*(ERMAKOV takes the jewellery back, and shows the jewellery around)*

**ERMAKOV:** Damn good brooch. Brings back memories.

**CHILD A:** Was it yours?

**ERMAKOV:** Mine? Oh, oh no. *(Place the brooch back)* It lived far more than my life ever worthed. These are memories which I can never put down. But since you wanted it so badly, *(to the audience)* what do you say? We put up a show! Let's teach him a lesson, shall we?

*(Lights flash, clock ticks again, while also accelerating. Clock sfx starts ticking.)*

**ERMAKOV:** Time passes, son! To hell and back have I not seen it all! And now you will too. My final testimony! The life of... the final tsars...

*(Lights fade. The ROMANOVs exit.)*

## SCENE 2: BALLROOM

**ERMAKOV:** Where to start... *(announces)* Saint Petersburg, 1884. The wedding between Elisabeth and Sergei, where our story begins.

*(BROOCH SEQUENCE: Wedding bells ring. SERVANTS and ENSEMBLE enter for their moment. As the sequence progresses, ERMAKOV and CHILD A crouch together in front of the audience and watch the proceedings. SERVANTS take high tables off. This is the ENSEMBLES + CHILD A cue to exit to the aisles to watch the BALLET SEQUENCE.)*

*(BALLET SEQUENCE)*

*As applause dies down ERMAKOV moves to the centre and speaks:*

**ERMAKOV:** Who is Elisabeth? A German princess, granddaughter of Victoria. And Sergei is a prince from Russia. Weird match, I know, but it's not like the Crown Prince Nicholas is marrying a *German*. *(Chuckles, turns to WEDDING GUESTS and begins to walk away)* Oh! Where'd that nasty kid go? Wait here!

*(ERMAKOV*

*MORE WEDDING GUESTS enter the ballroom to come back on for the TABLEAU MOMENT.)*

**ANNOUNCER:** Make way! The Newly-weds are here to have their first dance!

ENSEMBLE BREAK FROM TABLEAU AND MOVE COUNTER CLOCKWISE TO THE THREE EXIT - NOT WHERE ROYALS ARE ENTERING FROM. THEY ALL FACE CENTRE. As the ENSEMBLE move to their positions, SERGEI and ELISABETH enter and start dancing centrestage in half light.

*MARY, ALEXANDER, NICHOLAS enter. They stand at the edge of their entrance in light.*

**MARY:** Doesn't Sergei look so happy, Alexander?

**ALEXANDER:** Yes, Mary.

**MARY:** Nicky, don't you think it's time for you to start thinking about marriage too?

*(Nicholas acts timid. VICTORIA AND ALIX enter.)*

**ALEXANDER:** Hah! Look at how embarrassed you became! Relax, we have a lot of time.

*(WEDDING GUESTS chatter begins. Some people approach MARY and ALEXANDER, and they go away leaving NICHOLAS alone and wandering. He begins to make conversation with other guests, clearly uncomfortable and awkward.)*

*VICTORIA, ALIX, SERVANT enter*

**VICTORIA:** Hmpf. This ball seems nice. Shame I have no plans to stay here. Alix? Alix!

**ALIX:** Yes, Grandmama Victoria.

**VICTORIA:** There you are. *(turns to servant)* Keep an eye on Alix, thank you. God knows why Elisabeth wants to stay here, I sure don't. Alright, you two have fun!

**ALIX:** Grandmama?

**VICTORIA:** Yes, darling?

**ALIX:** When will I have such a grand wedding?

**VICTORIA:** Oh, dear, I wouldn't say... Well. I'm certain your wedding will be much greater. But that is still far in the future. Darling, why don't you go have fun and give your grandmother a rest?

*(VICTORIA exits)*

**Wedding Guest 1:** *(exclaiming in a posh, aristocratic tone)* Let us raise our glasses in a toast to the newly weds. May their union be filled with an abundance of love and prosperity. To the bride and groom!

*(WEDDING GUESTS raise their glasses in the air, ad-libbing in agreement. Chatter resumes, filling the ballroom with a vibrant ambience.)*

*(NICHOLAS enters stage right, his manner calm and timid as he shyly greets the wedding guests.)*

**SERVANT:** Ah! Alix! Where have you gone? You were just here a moment ago!

*(ALIX's SERVANT exits)*

**ALIX:** *(flustered)* Excuse me...pardon me! *(runs directly into NICHOLAS, which causes her to drop her fan)*

**NICHOLAS:** *(surprised, reaching down to pick the fan up)* Oh!

*(ALIX and NICHOLAS both bend down to retrieve the fallen fan. Their hands briefly meet as they both reach out to grab it. )*

**ALIX:** I'm sorry! I didn't see you there. *(quickly stands up, smoothing her own dress and fixing her hair)*

**NICHOLAS:** *(taken back by Alix's shyness for a split second, then smiles)* No, no, no worries. Here you are. Are you alright? *(hands her the fan)*

**ALIX:** *(takes the fan)* Yes... I was looking for my sister, but there's just so many guests here! They've been swarming around her, and —

**NICHOLAS:** Oh, yes, a lot of guests. It is quite overwhelming, isn't it? A lot more crowded than I expected...

**ALIX:** *(blushes)* Well... I should be going, I don't wish to hold you up.

*(ALIX turns to leave, but NICHOLAS gently reaches out and takes her hand)*

**NICHOLAS:** Wait. Don't you want to take a break from all this noise?

**ALIX:** *(shy, but intrigued)* That's very kind of you. Is there...

**NICHOLAS:** There is a balcony just a few floors above, with a good view of the garden. Nobody goes there, there won't be anyone to bother us. *(offers his arm)* Shall we?

*(ALIX hesitantly takes NICHOLAS' arm. NICHOLAS leads ALIX out onto a secluded balcony overlooking the palace gardens, hushing her to be sneaky.)*

*(crickets, nighttime garden noises)*

**NICHOLAS:** *(whispering)* This way, quickly!

**ALIX:** *(Looking at the palace gardens in awe)* What a lovely spot... It's so peaceful, away from all the commotion.

**NICHOLAS:** *(gazing at her intently and nods in agreement)* Indeed...

**ALIX:** *(blushing deeply)* You're too kind. *(turns to look at him)* Please, call me Alix.

**NICHOLAS:** Alix. It's a beautiful name.

= 'A NEW LIGHT' =

**SERVANT:** *(offstage calling out)* Nicholas! Your parents are looking for you!

**NICHOLAS:** *(yelling in the SERVANT's direction)* Yes, I'll be there! *(moves, then stops, and looks at ALIX)* Take this! *(takes a brooch from his pocket, and places it onto her hand tenderly)* A token to remember me by.

**ALIX:** *(gazing at the brooch, then back up at him)* Nicky, I –

**NICHOLAS:** *(taking her hand)* I have to go now, but I will see you again. *(lifts her hand to his lips)* Until then, Alix.

*(NICHOLAS reluctantly lets go of her hand and hurries back inside the ballroom, leaving ALIX alone on the balcony. She holds the brooch up against her chest and smiles warmly as she gazes out at the palace gardens. [ALLEANA, ZOE, SHERYL, LIV] moves platform to centre stage.)*

*Lights fade*





## SCENE 3: RUSSIA - GERMANY

*(ERMAKOV enters, and stands on the platform in centrestage, holding a diary, and multiple letters)*  
*(Spotlight on ERMAKOV, while the imperial couple stands on two opposing aisles.)*

**ERMAKOV:** Nicholas kept a diary since he was twelve. *(Holds up the diary and speaks to the audience)* Does anyone here have one? [Ad-lib] Unlike his letters, which were filled with emotions, the diary was just a tool for him to record daily events: “I got up at 10:30...” “We watched an Opera...” Boring! That evening, however, the young Nicholas scribbled a bit in his diary...

*(NICHOLAS rushes in, while a very tilted light originating from centre stage points at him)*  
**NICHOLAS:** “We loved each other!”

**ERMAKOV:** ...He sure did see something in her, and perhaps she did as well. *(A similar tilted light points at ALIX as she slowly moves forward)* But they were still hundreds of kilometres apart. Nicholas is still in St Petersburg, and our dear Alix back in Hesse.

*(Music plays, lights spontaneously flash on the ground for a while. ALIX and NICHOLAS stop moving.)*

**ERMAKOV:**

Yeah, I see some questioning faces, there's no story without a conflict! So what's the conflict? Any guesses? Yeah, yeah, well that's right, practically all of Europe was more or less wary of Germany *(points to Stage Left and a map of Germany lights up)* back then. Not just that, y'see, Russia *(Points to Stage Right and a map of Russia lights up)* was Eastern Orthodox *(points at the map of Russia and a Russian Orthodox Cross lights up next to it)*, which relies heavily on tradition, while Germany *(starts pointing towards the map of Germany)*, is a Lutheran *(a Latin Cross appears)* country. Alix was quite the staunch one too. Most importantly the Lutherans rejected many of the traditions of the old churches *(Crimson lights pop up on Germany's side)*. And to be a Russian Tsarina you have to be Orthodox *(Crimson lights pop up on Russia's side)*. There you go, that's your conflict. *(Lights disappear)* Moving on...

Nicky and Alix didn't see each other for another 5 years, and that's when Alix visited Russia again. A few days of skating and balls later, when it comes time to say farewells, he put another entry into the diary: “Was in a sad mood!” *(Chuckles)* And that's when they started writing letters to each other...

*(NICHOLAS and ALIX begin walking towards each other at an increasing rate, until they meet in the middle, where ERMAKOV spreads his arms out and they stop. ERMAKOV throws some letters to the two of them. As ERMAKOV leaves, he tosses NICHOLAS' diary back to him. Parents of both parties enter. ALEXANDER visibly sickly, with a cane. Seeing their parents, NICHOLAS and ALIX run back to them and spotlights go on on them.)*

**VICTORIA:** Alix!

**ALEXANDER & MARY:** Nicky!

**VICTORIA:** Writing letters again?

**MARY:** How many times do we have to remind you?

**VICTORIA &:** We do not deal with the Russians!

**ALEXANDER:** We do not deal with Germans!

**VICTORIA:** Why don't you check out Prince Eddy! He will be the King of England one day.

**ALIX:** *(Sighs)* If you force me to, I won't resist. But I know for a fact that we would not be happy with each other.

**MARY:** What about Princess Helene? The French are some great people.

**NICHOLAS:** *(Dismissive)* I already have my mind set on one path, and it seems that my mother wants me to take another.

**VICTORIA:** I'll arrange a meeting with Prince Maximilian of Baden! Anything! Anything is better than to send you off so far away!

**ALIX:** Maximilian? I hardly know him, there exists no love between the two of us, and now it's clear to me, you just want to keep Nicky away!

**ALEXANDER:** Alright, Princess Margaret of Prussia. If you like the Germans so much. The sister of the Kaiser! Does that not satisfy you?

**NICHOLAS:** *(Angrily)* I would rather become a monk than marry her!

*(Silence in the room)*

**ALEXANDER:** I have time, Nicholas! *(Collapses)*

*(Everyone gasps audibly, a servant enters to take ALEXANDER away, while another gives a letter to Ermakov, who goes near MARY and reads it with her)*

**ERMAKOV:** What? *(pauses, aside)* The Tsar is sick *(pauses, aside)* His kidneys are in a mess, time's almost up. *(pauses, aside)* And in his message to Nicholas... *(long pause, MARY does some reactions)* He allowed him to propose!

*(Princess ELISABETH comes in to comfort VICTORIA, MARY fakes a congratulations, while the rest of the cast cheers)*

*ERMAKOV holds NICHOLAS' hands and childishly walks over to the side of Germany)*

**ERMAKOV:** *(While walking)* So he took an opportunity on a trip to Coburg, at another royal wedding, and immediately proposed to Alix. Of course, she replied with... "NO!"?

**ALIX:** No! Forgive me, no matter how strong our love is, I can't abandon my church.

**NICHOLAS:** Alix, please! The church is just a formality to go through, think about what we promised to each other!

**ALIX:** I will never-

*(VICTORIA interrupts her, quite reluctantly)*

**VICTORIA:** It is merely a formality. Love is a beautiful thing, my child, and this will be the first of many sacrifices that you will make. Trust me, it will all be worth it.

*(WILHELM II enters, with a signature pickle hat and moustache, and a disabled left arm)*

**WILHELM:** *(gestures to ALIX)* Let me handle it.

*(WILHELM and ALIX enters behind windows, where we can only see their shadows)*

*(WILHELM returns after a while, and also joins the waiting. ALIX is left behind the window, sobs for a while, then composes herself)*

**VICTORIA:** So?

**WILHELM:** Give her a moment.

*(Ad lib chatting + waiting, at some point ERMAKOV can talk to the audience, put some stuff around the room for the audience to see too [historical files]. ERMAKOV then goes to chat to WILHELM)*

*(QUIET CONVERSATION BETWEEN ERMAKOV AND WILHELM)*

**ERMAKOV:** Hey, hey! What did you say to her?

**WILHELM:** Huh?

**ERMAKOV:** You know, how do you plan to get her to change her mind?

**WILHELM:** Oh! It's simple, I just *(unintelligible)*

**ERMAKOV:** *(Back to normal)* Ah! The Kaiser of Germany had...-

*(ALIX bursts into the room)*

**ALIX:** YES! Yes, I will. Yes! *(Embraces a surprised NICHOLAS)*

*(ERMAKOV lets out a pleasant sigh. Then organises the people for the next scene. The rest of the family lets out a soft sigh and seem relieved, though there is a sense of unease. ALIX and NICHOLAS run off like teenagers. The rest also leaves, while [insert names here] moves set on stage for the next scene)*



## SCENE 4: CORONATION

*(God Save the Tsar plays)*

**RANDOM PERSON YELLING:** THE TSAR IS DEAD!

**ANOTHER RANDOM PERSON YELLING:** LONG LIVE THE TSAR!

*(ERMAKOV enters)*

**ERMAKOV:** Dormition Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin, 14, or 26th, of May, 1896. Almost two years after the death of Alexander, Nicholas will now be proclaimed as the new Tsar of all Russia. Alix, meanwhile, took on the name Alexandra, as is Russian tradition, and became the new Tsarina.

*(ERMAKOV begins to walk away as people discuss)*

**PERSON A:** So? What do you think of Nicholas?

**PERSON B:** He seems promising.

**PERSON C:** One could critique his choice of partner.

**PERSON B:** How so?

**PERSON D:** Her eyes lack the warmth fitting of a Tsarina.

**PERSON E:** She must think she's better than the rest of us!

**PERSON C:** She only speaks English and German!

**PERSON B:** Well...

**PERSON A:** Have you heard her French?

*(Very posh laughing)*

**PERSON D:** And Russian?

**PERSON E:** I've heard, she never bothered to learn it before coming here!

*(Even posher laughing, now with worry. Another PERSON comes in and whispers to PERSON A)*

**PERSON A:** Oh! Make way guys, His and Her Imperial Majesty are coming through!

*(Everyone makes way for ALIX, NICHOLAS, and MARIA. They walk and sit on three thrones. People sing for a while, some cheering, then lights off)*

## SCENE 5: COFFEEHOUSE

*(ERMAKOV stands in the centre.)*

**ERMAKOV:** The court up there in Saint Petersburg seems to be settled. Well, it seems to be. Chatters can still be heard all around the coffeehouses, right here in the centre of the city.

*(ENSEMBLE takes chairs and tables on stage, and sits down, doing their own action. Either drinking something or reading something or writing something or chatting. ERMAKOV begins to serve drinks to the audience)*

=COFFEEHOUSE INSTRUMENTAL=

**PROFESSOR:**

Have you heard the news?

**JOURNALIST:**

What news, where? Who?

**BOHEMIAN:**

There's nothing, to me, that's new.

**ARTIST:**

The world is cruel, that bit is true.

**POET:**

... So? What is this little secret?

**PROFESSOR:**

Well I've heard... that the Tsarina...

**JOURNALIST:**

Perfect for an article.

**ARTIST:**

How decadent!

**BOHEMIAN:**

What does she have to do with us?

**POET:**

Nothing more than just a waste of tax!

**PROFESSOR:**

She had just given birth!

**JOURNALIST:**

Afternoon's headline!

**ARTIST:**

Say, a new imperial portrait?

**BOHEMIAN:**

The imperial world lives on...

**POET:**

And more glorious than ever!

**PROFESSOR:**

Welcome Princess Olga!

*(Rest of the crew sighs, sit back down. ERMAKOV turns a clock, and serves more drinks)*

**JOURNALIST:**

New insider notices!

**ARTIST:**

What are the imperials up to this time?

**BOHEMIAN:**

Surely nothing like the rest of us here.

**POET:**

They only show what they want you to see!

**PROFESSOR:**

Dear gentlemen, please, let the Mister talk!

**JOURNALIST:**

There are some winds that say the Tsarina...

**ARTIST:**

No prettier than my paintings

**BOHEMIAN:**

She's busy as always.

**POET:**

Who knows what Nicholas was thinking?

**PROFESSOR:**

The Tsar has his reasons.

**JOURNALIST:**

Had an affair!

**ARTIST:**

How come?

**BOHEMIAN:**

Even the Tsarina fell!

**POET:**

When will humanity repent?

**PROFESSOR:**

Rumours! All rumours!

**JOURNALIST:**

Do you really believe she had a miscarriage? Wake up!

*(Everyone sit back down, Ermakov turns the clock)*

**ARTIST:**

A new commission brings with it a new story.

**BOHEMIAN:**

Which is?

**POET:**

An artist should be proud of his art.

**PROFESSOR:**

I have a sense of where this is going.

**JOURNALIST:**

Ohh, secrets aren't for hiding!

**ARTIST:**

There's something about the Tsarina...

**BOHEMIAN:**

There's always something about her.

**POET:**

She has too many problems!

**PROFESSOR:**

She certainly has the attention of the press.

**JOURNALIST:**

That's because of the people's interest in her!



**ARTIST:**

A new child...

**BOHEMIAN:**

Good for Nicky!

**POET:**

Great for their reputation.

**PROFESSOR:**

That will please the people.

**JOURNALIST:**

They are not easy to please.

**ARTIST:**

Here's princess Tatiana.

*(Everyone sighs, then ERMAKOV turns the clock even more)*

**BOHEMIAN:**

*(Whistles/hums)*

**POET:**

What is it?

**BOHEMIAN:**

Huh?

**POET:**

You don't whistle/hum unless something happens.

**PROFESSOR:**

Bravo, acute observation.

**JOURNALIST:**

I could use a detective like that.

**ARTIST:**

Either go play some actual songs, or say it out loud!

**BOHEMIAN:**

Fine. I saw the Tsarina a few days back.

**POET:**

What would bring her out?

**PROFESSOR:**

We could never understand them.

**JOURNALIST:**

As if they seek to understand us!

**ARTIST:**

Can it be?

**BOHEMIAN:**

Yes, there was a child by her side.

**POET:**

Oh! Third time's the charm!

**PROFESSOR:**

You wish...

**JOURNALIST:**

Come on, the people demand an answer!

**ARTIST:**

And I could use some inspiration.

**BOHEMIAN:**

And the name, I heard, is Maria.

*(People sigh, ERMAKOV turns clock once more)*

**POET:**

How many times would Nicholas have to try?

**BOHEMIAN:**

The Tsarina is weak; that's why!

**PROFESSOR:**

I knew that the Germans are good for nothing!

**JOURNALIST:**

The people are giving up their hope!

**ARTIST:**

That is nothing unreasonable!

**BOHEMIAN:**

The Tsars got busy again?

**POET:**

Well, I do know something.

**PROFESSOR:**

Don't leave us hanging like that.

**JOURNALIST:**

I demand to know more!

**ARTIST:**

Whatever it is, life cannot get worse.

**BOHEMIAN:**

Just wait and see.

**POET:**

The Tsarina begot another child.

**PROFESSOR:**

God bless!

**JOURNALIST:**

That is not the whole story!

**ARTIST:**

The Imperial family is ugly enough.

**BOHEMIAN:**

You would never have guessed...

**POET:**

And her name is Anastasia! Unbelievable.

*(Lights dim. ERMAKOV turns the clock even more. Visible 'time change' with lights. PAPER CHILD enters.)*

**PAPER BOY:**

Exclusive! The heir of Russia is born! A son! A son!

*(Focus on BOHEMIAN, who snatches the paper from PAPER BOY.)*

**BOHEMIAN:**

But that's not all to it.

*(POET snatches the paper)*

**POET:**

The son is sick!

*(PROFESSOR snatches the paper)*

**PROFESSOR:**

Nothing the Tsars can do...

*(JOURNALIST just slightly glances at the paper)*

**JOURNALIST:**

Doctors across Russia are perplexed by his condition!

**PAPER BOY:** *(Snatching paper back from PROFESSOR)*

There is one who is said to help.

**ARTIST:**

A plebian with a gift.

**BOHEMIAN:**

A mysterious man.

**PROFESSOR:**

With eyes that... pierce the soul.

*(RASPUTIN ENTRANCE MUSIC MOTIF sfx plays)*

*(RASPUTIN enters)*

**BOHEMIAN:**

Gentlemen... Grigori Rasputin!

==RASPUTIN ENTRANCE SONG==

**BOHEMIAN:**

Quite over the top.

**POET:**

Don't lie to yourself! You loved it.

**RASPUTIN:** *(interrupting, grabbing the paper from PAPER BOY )*

The boy... He needs my help.

**BOHEMIAN:**

Tsesarevich Alexei. The pride of Russia!

**ARTIST:**

Take a look at this portrait. Captivating, eh?

**RASPUTIN:** *(Dreamily/ as if experiencing a vision)*

Alexei...He is the one from my visions. His sickness runs deep in his veins.

**BOHEMIAN:** Good. Do what you do. The Tsarina will cave in no time. Oh... Such a beautiful child, and God cursed him with this ailment. *(Falsetto)* The wounds won't heal on their own, my dear, let Father Rasputin take control! Go on then. *(Normal)* Russia will not be the same.

*==Music/ SFX that breaks tension, announces arrival of new character (Nick) onstage==*

**VOICE:** Shh! The Tsars!

**VOICE:** What are they doing here?

**BOHEMIAN:** Your majesty.

**RASPUTIN:** Your majesty.

**NICHOLAS:** He... is the Father?

**BOHEMIAN:** A skeptic?

**ARTIST:** Have belief, your majesty.

**RASPUTIN:** Bring me the child, and he shall be cured.

*(NICHOLAS hesitates, ALIX seems possessed, and passes ALEXEI to RASPUTIN. RASPUTIN examines the bleeding wound, spits on it, then the wound magically heals. Creepy sound and light designs. The TSARS exclaim.)*

**RASPUTIN:** Did the doctor give him any medicine?

**ALIX:** Yes... day after day, it is endless.

**RASPUTIN:** Stop all of them. It is not God's will for the Tsesarevich to be under such influence.

**ALIX:** But Nicholas invited all of them, just to cure him...

**RASPUTIN:** Well, do you believe in the judgement of a mortal, or the command of the Father?

**ALIX:** Yes... I will command them to leave, immediately.

**RASPUTIN:** Good. Your child will recover. As long as I am here, Russia will endure.

*(Voices come from the darkness)*

**ASSASSIN A:** He certainly has Alexandra's attention.

**ASSASSIN B:** And Nicholas's. And that of all Saint Petersburg.

**ASSASSIN A:** He shouldn't get ahead of himself.

**ASSASSIN B:** Someone will take him down eventually.

**ASSASSIN C:** But the child... not even the doctors can deny its miracle!

**ASSASSIN B:** No doubt. But all he is doing is damaging the Tsars' reputation further. Think of all his scandalous affairs! It's like cutting a cancerous leg to ensure Russia's survival.

**ASSASSIN C:** What if... the cancer already spread to the head?

**ASSASSIN A:** The Russian people demand his head. We only deliver the will of the people.

*(LIGHTS OFF, END SCENE)*

# ACT II

## SCENE 1: WINTER PALACE

*(The 4 daughters are playing together, in a dark room. Alexei is playing with train models)*

**ERMAKOV:** And with that, we have returned to the Winter Palace...

*(ERMAKOV exits and OLGA enters. The SISTERS stop chatting when they notice OLGA. ALEXEI is playing with his toy train.)*

**TATIANA:** *(nudges one of her sisters)* So...how did the walk in the gardens go?

**MARIA & ANASTASIA:** Ooooooh, tell us now!

**OLGA:** *(shyly)* He's quite a gentleman. I wouldn't mind going on more walks with him in the future. He even complimented my hair and kissed my hand! *(starts playing with her hair)*

*(SISTERS giggle.)*

**MARIA:** You've only known him for four hours, and you're already in love? *(scoffs)* Come on, Olga, there are plenty of fish in the sea.

**ANASTASIA:** *(grinning)* Exactly! You can't just settle after one charming encounter with him.

**TATIANA:** I bet Mama and Papa have a whole list of suitors lined up for you, lovebird!

**MARIA:** Seriously, do you believe in love at first sight?

**OLGA:** Okay, okay, he might not be "the one". But Mama and Papa had their own love at first sight, and they met when they were around my age!

**ANASTASIA:** At what cost, though? You know their marriage wasn't exactly a fairytale.

**MARIA:** *(Angrily)* Who said so?

**TATIANA:** You've heard how people talk about her.

**MARIA:** How?

**TATIANA:** Well... They say that she is foreign, and-

**ANASTASIA:** I've seen Mama draw pictures of all our courtiers before! They were super embarrassed when they saw it...

**OLGA:** Enough.

**ANASTASIA:** And, I have been following some servants around, they were talking about Mama too!

**OLGA:** Nastya!

**ANASTASIA:** There were people who said that Mama gave the country away to Rasputin! Can you imagine? He's just here to help Alyosha feel better!

**OLGA:** Anastasia!

*(Awkward silence)*

**OLGA:** *(clears throat)* Alright, enough about boys and romance. How's Alyosha doing? Did Grigory come visit whilst I was away?

**ANASTASIA:** *(turns to look at ALEXEI)* He's been playing with that train for almost an hour now.

*(ANASTASIA playfully snatches Alexei's train)*

**ALEXEI:** Hey! Give it back!

*(He lunges for it, loses his balance and falls. The sisters panic as he begins to sob in pain.)*

**OLGA:** Anastasia!

**TATIANA:** Alyosha!

**OLGA, TATIANA, MARIA & ANASTASIA :** *(shouting in unison)* Mama! Papa!

*(RASPUTIN enter the playroom)*

**RASPUTIN:** Alyosha, hurt again? Be not afraid.

*(RASPUTIN magically heals ALEXEI)*

**RASPUTIN:** Girls, what did your mother and I say about how to treat your brother? We cannot afford to hurt the future Tsar, can we?

*(RASPUTIN just looks at the daughters)*

**RASPUTIN:** Of course.

*(RASPUTIN walks away from the siblings and sits on a rocking chair, tending to young ALEXEI, surrounded by the 4 DAUGHTERS)*



*(ALIX enters. She panics and rushes to Alexei.)*

**RASPUTIN:** G'day, your majesty.

**ALIX:** What are you doing here!? What happened!?

**RASPUTIN:** As you can see, your majesty, spending some time with your beautiful children.

**ALIX:** Oh! How lovely of you... They must like you a lot... no?

*(The room stays quiet, everyone continues to play)*

**ALIX:** Oh. I guess that is a yes...

*(OLGA whispers something into RASPUTIN's ears)*

**RASPUTIN:** Of course.

*(OLGA leaves)*

**ALIX:** What was it?

**RASPUTIN:** Nothing special. No need to worry.

*(NICHOLAS enters, angrily)*

**NICHOLAS:** Grigory! Who gave you permission to enter!

**RASPUTIN:** Who else? The daughters' nurse.

**NICHOLAS:** She told me a lot about your behaviour—

**RASPUTIN:** *(interrupts)* Yes, that annoying nurse, she dare try to stop me from coming here.

**NICHOLAS:** What excuses shall you make this time?

**RASPUTIN:** I treat your children as my own, your majesty. Why can't I visit them?

**NICHOLAS:** Don't try to fool me, you—

**RASPUTIN:** Your imperial majesty, I have done nothing wrong. It is my duty, after all, to take care—

**NICHOLAS:** Enough! Holy man, you've been through a lot of pilgrimages, no? Well go on another one to Jerusalem at once! Instil some more of that holiness into your mind again.

**RASPUTIN:** Your majesty—

**NICHOLAS:** Go!

*(RASPUTIN stands up slowly and exits. ALIX stays silent and holds a crying Alexei, while Rasputin leaves the room.)*

**ALIX:** *(Jokingly)* So, are you just going to stand there?

**NICHOLAS:** No, I still have some paperwork to catch up on.

**ALIX:** *(sighs)* Come on, the day is already over. Spend some time with your children.

**NICHOLAS:** My people need me, I have a country to run. Goodnight, love.

**ALIX:** Goodnight.

*(NICHOLAS leaves)*

**ALIX:**

*(ALIX leaves with ALEXEI, lights off)*

## SCENE 2: RUSSIA - GERMANY

*(Lights on. WILHELM is present at Centre, whereas NICHOLAS is present at Stage Right. They are both accompanied by a servant.)*

**WILHELM & NICHOLAS:** Is he mad? Did he think I would back down? Demanding me to demobilise while he is preparing for a full-blown war! I say, [Moscow/Berlin] will be conquered in just 6 months!

**WILHELM:** Deliver this declaration of war to Saint Petersburg! This is his last chance to reconsider.

**SERVANT:** Your Imperial Majesty, a notice from the German Emperor.

*(NICHOLAS [holding a smoking pipe if possible] takes the notice and reads it. Then he folds it and reads the telegraph.)*

**NICHOLAS:** *(going from mumbling to clear)* I must ask most earnestly that you, without delay, order your troops under no circumstances to commit the slightest violation of our frontiers. Signed, Willy...  
*(Silent)*

*(ALIX can be seen slowly entering through the corner)*

**ALIX:** Nicky...does that mean...

*(NICHOLAS does not respond. He stares at the telegraph in shock.)*

**ALIX:** So it is war, isn't it?

**NICHOLAS:** I must go...for the sake of Russia.

*(ALIX is taken back by his response. Short silence)*

==REPRISE OF 'A NEW LIGHT'==

**SERVANT:** *(interrupts from offstage)* Forgive me, your Majesty, but there is urgent news.

**NICHOLAS:** *(to SERVANT)* Come in. What is it?

*(SERVANT enters. ALIX hesitantly lets go of NICHOLAS' hands.)*

**SERVANT:** A letter has arrived from Rasputin. *(hands a letter to NICHOLAS)*

**NICHOLAS:** *(unfolds letter impatiently and reads from it)* 'Dear friend, I will say again a menacing cloud is over Russia, lots of sorrow and grief. It is dark and there is no lightning to be seen. I know they keep wanting war from you evidently not knowing that this is destruction. Grigori.'

**ALIX:** *(pleading)* Even Grigory agrees that war will destroy this place. Please, listen to his advice...listen to me for once.

*(NICHOLAS stares at the letter; his hands trembling in anger. He suddenly rips and crumples the letter into his fist.)*

**NICHOLAS:** *(composes himself)* Alix, I know what's best for my country and my people.

*(NICHOLAS exits, leaving ALIX visibly distressed. Blackout. A darker version of God Saves the Tsar plays.)*

*(Spotlight on ERMAKOV)*

**ERMAKOV:** His decision set in motion a chain of events that would shake the very foundations of the Romanov dynasty. The war has begun! Which one? The Great one! How could anyone see it coming? Definitely not with the volatile situation in the Balkans.

**ALIX:** My dear, it will soon be twenty years since I have arrived here.

*(NICHOLAS stays silent)*

**ALIX:** Twenty years since you have ascended to the throne, twenty years since I have converted to Orthodoxy.

**NICHOLAS:** Alix! Please. I'm only going to the front as it is my duty. It is my duty to protect my countrymen, those whom I love the most.

**ALIX:** Then am I not your wife? Someone close to you? Someone who you love and loves you regardless of whatever that happens?

**NICHOLAS:** I only want to secure support from the people! They never loved you, it's harsh but it is true. I'm doing this to save both the faces of you and me and the royal family!

**ALIX:** So what... you are leaving me here?

**NICHOLAS:** We await the general's return. We attack at dawn.

*(NICHOLAS leaves)*

**ALIX:** This miserable war... does Wilhelm not realise it will not do anyone any good? *(sob)* The children went to sleep at 11 tonight. And I am left here waiting for you. May God help you, and me. So that you no longer appear in my thoughts and dreams, but to be here, physically. We await your return home, safely.

*(Lights go off at ALIX, then on for ERMAKOV)*

**ERMAKOV:** The war is going badly. Russia had some early advances... but now Poland is completely lost. Any more attacks will only kill more men. The war economy simply cannot be

sustained. And the people are only getting more and more radicalised. While back home... Back home, someone is pulling the strings.

*(Lights go on for ALIX & RASPUTIN)*

**RASPUTIN:** How is Nicky doing?

**ALIX:** Still at the front...

**RASPUTIN:** God forever be with him. *(To the sky)* Russia's future depends on us. Nicky. You go secure her borders. I will make sure she is healthy inside.

*(Lights flash, then go off, except for that of ERMAKOV. ALIX and NICHOLAS sneak off or hide somewhere)*

**ERMAKOV:** But his hunger for power didn't go unnoticed.

*(Spotlight on the balcony, ERMAKOV sneaks off, a board is put above the table, with a crucifix on it.)*

**ASSASSIN A:** The Tsar is at the front.

**ASSASSIN C:** And the Tsarina is resting.

**ASSASSIN A:** Tsesarevich Alexei is only a child.

**ASSASSIN C:** With a chronic illness. It is not hard to lure Rasputin out.

**ASSASSIN A:** A monk lured in by promises of pleasure... and to think that he led our nation.

*(ASSASSIN B enters)*

**ASSASSIN B:** Gentlemen, the poison is ready.

*(Spotlight on ERMAKOV goes off, then dim, flashing house lights go on with raining sounds RASPUTIN and ASSASSIN A & C arrive at opposing sides of the table)*

**ASSASSIN A:** The wine is ready, and the pastries... just baked.

*(RASPUTIN acknowledges it, then rapidly devours the food, leaving a lot of crumbs, while staring straight into ASSASSIN A & C's eyes. They look fearful.)*

**RASPUTIN:** The wine is good. Pour me the other one.

**ASSASSIN A:** The Madeira? Yes, here it...

**RASPUTIN:** In the same glass.

**ASSASSIN A:** Mixing two types of wine? You can't do...

**RASPUTIN:** No, no, I insist.

*(ASSASSIN A fills the glass. RASPUTIN slowly sips the glass. Then, walks a few steps away and points at his throat.)*

**ASSASSIN A:** Yes?

**RASPUTIN:** Why, nothing, just a tickling in my throat. The Madeira is good. Pour me some more.

*(RASPUTIN sits back down. ASSASSIN A takes another glass, laces it with cyanide, then pours the wine and gives it to RASPUTIN. RASPUTIN takes it and begins to drink while walking as normal. ASSASSIN A also pours a glass and drinks it himself. Silence ensues. Ominous noises play, lights flash, with changing colours, Rasputin changes his stance, and everything starts shaking. Some stuff breaks.)*

**RASPUTIN:** Now, see, you're wasting your time. You can't do anything to me!

*(ASSASSIN A shivers and the room returns to normal, with RASPUTIN still enjoying the wine. Some noise comes from the balcony)*

**RASPUTIN:** What is that?

**ASSASSIN A:** Just my friends. I will be back.

*(ASSASSIN A walks back onto the balcony. Spotlight on balcony.)*

**ASSASSIN C:** Is it done?

**ASSASSIN A:** No... It is not possible. He drank two glasses of poison, ate several cakes, and nothing! Nothing has happened! The only thing that the poison had done was to make him tipsy!

**ASSASSIN B:** Well then, let's leave it for today, and maybe we will figure out another...

**ASSASSIN C:** Never! Rasputin must not leave here alive!

**ASSASSIN B:** But how?

**ASSASSIN C:** Well, if the poison doesn't work, then either we go down together, or I'll do it alone. Dispatching him with my pistol or bashing his brains out.

**ASSASSIN A:** Come what may, do you mind if I shot him?

**ASSASSIN C:** By all means! It is not a matter of who kills him, but whether or not he is killed!

*(ASSASSIN A grabs a pistol and then walks back. RASPUTIN is in a worse state, breathing heavily and being dizzy. The room is silent for a while.)*

**ASSASSIN A:** Are you feeling ill?

**RASPUTIN:** Yes... Another little glass will do me good.

*(ASSASSIN A pours another glass of wine for RASPUTIN. RASPUTIN gulps it down, then stands up.)*

**RASPUTIN:** Say, why don't we go out for a walk...

**ASSASSIN A:** Now? No. It is too late.

*(ASSASSIN A fixes his gaze on a piece of candle)*

**RASPUTIN:** What are you staring at that candle for?

**ASSASSIN A:** I like it. It's so beautiful.

*(RASPUTIN walks a few steps towards the crucifix, leaving ASSASSIN A out of his sight. ASSASSIN becomes anxious, takes aim for a while, then finally aims at RASPUTIN's head and shoots. As the shot fires, house lights go out, and a thud can be heard. RASPUTIN lets out a final cry. RASPUTIN and the ASSASSINS leave the scene. Onstage a Coffin is present, as is the Imperial family.)*

**TATIANA:** I'm glad he is dead. *(Leaves)*

**ALIX:** Do you know who did this?

**NICHOLAS:** Yes.

**ALIX:** They will be punished.

**NICHOLAS:** Of course.

**ALIX:** Now there's no one by my side anymore.

**NICHOLAS:** I...

**ALIX:** I know. The front.

**NICHOLAS:** Russia shall endure, like how she endured the many storms before.

*(Spotlight goes up to see a grieving ALIX, then goes off. Lights off)*





## SCENE 3: YEKATERINBURG, 1918

*(phone rings onstage. YUROVSKY enters, answers it.)*

**YUROVSKY:** Yes? Yes, Yekaterinburg is still the same. Yes, the Tsars too. Ever since the October Revolution we've kept them here for... for the safety of the people. Yes. 1917... that was almost a year ago, no? I would've gone mad if you locked me up for that long! Yeah... *(serious)* Yes. Tonight? No... no... we're ready whenever. It's up to you. Certain? Yes. *(Hangs up)* Ermakov!?

**ERMAKOV:** Yes, sir...

**YUROVSKY:** Have you been drinking all day long?

**ERMAKOV:** Oh come on, it's nothing!

**YUROVSKY:** It's nothing unless your drunkenness ruins the night! Tell me, can I trust you with this pistol?

**ERMAKOV:** Me? Yes... yes...

*(YUROVSKY hands pistol to ERMAKOV)*

**ERMAKOV:** Gah!

**YUROVSKY:** The burial site's ready?

**ERMAKOV:** Ready... yes...

**YUROVSKY:** Then go! And don't let me catch you like this again!

*(YUROVSKY and ERMAKOV exits) ALIX, NICHOLAS, ALEXEI, MARIA enter. They put all their belongings into their suitcases.)*

**MARIA:** *(In sleeping gown)* Papa, it's 11 at night, why must we wake up?

**NICHOLAS:** I'm sure it's nothing. The guards have a message for us, we'll just have to go out and see.

**ALIX:** I hope so.

**NICHOLAS:** *(turns to Maria)* Maria, where are the rest of the girls? Could you ask them to hurry up? And change into something more presentable, please.

**MARIA:** Yes, papa. *(Exits)*

**ALEXEI:** Papa, where are we going?

**NICHOLAS:** *(forcing a smile)* Nowhere. Not today. We are safe here, and if we were to go anywhere, it would be to England, where Uncle George is waiting for us.

*(NICHOLAS finds some old books, and begins to flip through them. DAUGHTERS enter.)*

**ALEXEI:** What's the matter with Papa? Why is he upset?

**OLGA:** *(whispering, fixing ALEXEI's suit)* I don't know, Alyosha. Don't worry about it.

**ANASTASIA:** *(whispering to the sisters)* Something's wrong... I've never seen Papa so stressed before.

**TATIANA:** *(whispering)* Do you think we'll really be safe wherever we're going?

**MARIA:** *(shrugs and sighs)* I hope so. I just wish we could go back to the palace...

**OLGA:** Poor Alyosha, he shouldn't have to experience this.

**TATIANA:** What if we never return home?

**MARIA:** I guess we're just stuck here forever...

**ANASTASIA:** *(Chuckles)* You think so?

**OLGA:** Masha's just joking! They couldn't keep us here forever if they wanted to.

**TATIANA:** Yes! I say, one of these days, let's just run off into the woods!

*(Sisters starts chuckling)*

**ANASTASIA:** And what? Leave papa and mama and Alyosha here?

**TATIANA:** Oh, Nastya, we won't leave without them.

**MARIA:** When are we leaving this place?

**OLGA:** Why? Are you that excited?

**MARIA:** No... I just want to get back to bed... why do we have to be up anyway?

*(Sisters chuckle again)*

**OLGA:** Okay, I will check in on mama and papa, they seem busy though...

*(ALIX notices NICHOLAS and approaches him. OLGA begins to move, but then stops and goes back with the sisters.)*

**ALIX:** Nicky, what weighs so heavily on your mind? *(gently brings down his hands from his face)*

**NICHOLAS:** *(sighs)* Alix, I don't...I don't know how to face what lies ahead. I have failed my countrymen, and the last thing I want is to fail you as well...

*(NICHOLAS paces back and forth anxiously.)*

==REPRISE OF 'A NEW LIGHT'==

*(GUARD enters, interrupting the family. They break from their embrace.)*

**GUARD:** Follow us.

*(GUARD escorts the family and their servants.)*

## SCENE 4: Epilogue: YEKATERINBURG, 1 HOUR PASSED

*(House lights off. 1 flashlight appears. Heavy breathing. The imperial family begin their movement sequence.)*

**ERMAKOV:** So... you've seen it all...

**CHILD A:** No... What happened next?

**ERMAKOV:** Well, people come and people go. Sometimes when people are not liked... they go a bit faster... heh...

**CHILD A:** What?

**ERMAKOV:** Quite the pretty brooch. Shame it is all gone... and only a few icons left to remember their faces... and diaries to remember their words.

*(Some muffled voices of the MEN from the background are heard)*

**VOICE A:** Where is the noise coming from?

**VOICE B:** Whoever he is, let's ensure he's safe first.

**ERMAKOV:** They loved each other until the end... nothing could break them apart...

**VOICE A:** Over there!

**ERMAKOV:** And at the end...

**VOICE B:** No, wrong way.

**ERMAKOV:** They rose high up above...

**VOICE A:** Check the basement!

**ERMAKOV:** Together.

**VOICE B:** It has to be one of the rooms here!

**ERMAKOV:** To think that they were in front of me, and now... It all started from a rally, then a truck, then a pistol, then a rifle, and then... poof

**VOICE A:** There they are!

**ERMAKOV:** All gone... in the blink of an eye...

*(ERMAKOV disappears and the family returns back into their 'stained glass' positions. Lights Two men enter)*

**MAN A:** Andrei, is that you?

**MAN B:** Where is the man you were talking about?

**CHILD A:** He's there! Right...

*(MAN A opens house lights)*

**MAN A:** Where?

**CHILD A:** There! Look!

**MAN B:** Oh, not again...

**CHILD A:** He was right there fiddling with a brooch!

**MAN B:** Come on, Andrei, we've had this conversation a million times now!

**CHILD A:** No! It was real just now! The room changed... there was a ball, then a wedding, then...

**MAN A:** *(gestures to MAN B)* Bring the kid away...

**CHILD A:** But..But the Tsar and the Tsarina –

*(The MEN chuckle)*

**MAN B:** Hah! Alright, enough of that, let's bring you back home. Your old man ain't gonna forgive you again. Breaking into the church for the sixth time... unthinkable!

*(The MEN drag ANDREI away as ANDREI stares at the stained glass of the imperial family)*

*(Curtain call)*

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## New ideas:

- ☐ Winter palace lines for siblings
- ☐ Yekaterinburg, more lines for siblings

Rewrite Ballroom scene to expose what Nicholas's parents are like. Use interactions with other main characters to create this relationship, (as characters enter the space they are greeted in certain ways) and also use a short interaction with a maid to indicate the care/ attention the queen and king have for the people of their country.

### 1. Audition rundown

Clock ticking as 'ermakov addresses audience' motif  
How big is our audience? Can we get cloaks for all audience members

Theme is muddled

- Rasputin scene
- Nationalism???

Merge Rasputin scene with last scene of Act 1

rewrite final scene Act 2 to end in the same room as yekaterinberg present day

where are we using the song kalinka: mark this in scripy, translate it to English

are we using the walkways or not because they could also be benches (let the audience sit)

shorten russia Germany act 2 scene.

how on earth are we going to have Rasputin heal alixei onstage??

are we allowed to have guns or gun imagery

Russia Germany s1 has lots of jumping around idk

more of the kiddos

do we want to have the royal family appear during the coffeehouse scene they could all appear on the balcony or smmth

**\*send mae the folk music stuff and take opinion**