# Adagio and the Death of Love

*by Reid Conrad*

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## DEDICATION

*To Family*

## STORY OF THE PLAY

The Imarovas were once the royal family and held sway over the social and political arenas of the country. But a new regime gained power and the Imarova children became captives in their own home. They live under a repressive guard, yet each sibling remembers or knows a different kind of love: romantic love, paid love, love of a child and pet, and most of all, Anabella's childlike, colorful love of life itself. It is only their family wealth and figurehead status that keep them from joining the work colonies. Anabella's fourteenth birthday brings with it unexpected discovery and a big change for all of her family. The events of that day have repercussions that will be felt forever, as roles and allegiances shift to help ensure the continued survival of the Imarova family. But are the changes sincere, or are they compromises and sacrifices to make the future less bleak for all of them?

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(5-6 m, 4 w, extras.)*

**RELIGIOUS FIGURES**
**MILITIA**
**POLITICIANS**
**TYCOONS**
**FOUR PALLBEARERS**
**WOMAN**
**ANABELLA IMAROVA:** Innocent, celebrating her birthday.
**STEPHANE IMAROVA:** Her brother, studious and cynical.
**PETER IMAROVA:** Her eldest brother, hard-working and good-natured.
**TANYA IMAROVA:** The oldest sister, practical and apprehensive.
**SOLI IMAROVA:** Anabella's beautiful sister.
**MADAME BATHORY:** A cruel, bloodless woman.
**MR. AVARIT:** A rather drab, unremarkable little man.
**MR. LUXUR:** A commanding figure, intimidating.
**ASMODEUS LUXUR:** Appears unsure, hides his sickliness.
**KOMEN:** Luxur's servant. *(May be played by Avarit.)*

### Casting/Production Note

The procession at the beginning may be omitted, if your production has time constraints or a limited number of available actors, without altering the integrity of the performance.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

This play is rich in symbolism. The death of art and love is even more stark when compared to some of the character names. While Anabella means "easy to love," the names of Mrs. Crepuscular, Mr. Mammon, Mr. Bodkins, (the real.) Madame Bathory and Asmo(deus.) are much more sinister, representing legendary evils. The more you study the play, the more symbolism you will find.

## ACT I

*(MUSIC up – Albinoni's "Adagio in G minor." AT RISE: After the music has begun, intersecting processions of figures begin to walk in time across the stage with the music. The numbers gradually increase. While the clothing is not specific for any time period or identifiable group, the procession consists of MONKS and NUNS, MILITIA and warmongers, POLITICIANS and TYCOONS. Some walk with the beat, some double and triple time. Their lines are straight and unbroken. After the procession is underway, starting at up left and proceeding to center stage, a heavily draped bed is carried by FOUR PALLBEARERS. Gradually, the intersecting lines of characters decreases and is gone. On the bed lies a WOMAN. Five children, in descending age, PETER, TANYA, SOLI, STEPHANE and ANABELLA, follow in single file. When the bed is set down, the pallbearers step upstage and the children crowd around. The woman lifts a hand to each of their faces, then lays still. The children fall weeping on the motionless figure. The lights fade to black. The music slowly fades. After a moment, lights up at center stage. The pallbearers and the woman are gone. TANYA, SOLI and ANABELLA lie on bed with Anabella closest to audience. PETER is upstage lying on floor above bed and cannot be seen. STEPHANE sits profile, back against the foot of the bed, head bent over a book. As lights come up on bed Anabella rises and crosses down front to face the audience. She pantomimes the opening of a curtain. As the bed is the only set piece, all action is pantomimed.)*

**ANABELLA:** *(Brightly.)* It's a lovely day today. The sun is up. Hello, Mr. Sun. The sky is a deep cerulean blue with big lazy clouds floating across it all the way to the mountains. The lake is blue too. Why I could dip my cup into it and come away with a day's worth of cheer. Oh, look. A mother lark is feeding her little brown babies. They jostle so. Stop it, now, you bully, there's enough for all. Look, there's a doe, sleek and silent, and her wobbly, dappled fawn, come to drink at the side of the stream.

**STEPHANE:** *(Who has staggered up from the floor and comes to ANABELLA's side, parts the curtain next to her.)* The sky is grey. Everything's grey. Same as every other day. And there are no birds left anymore. Or deer. *(Lets the curtain drop and shuffles right where he pantomimes washing his face from a basin.)*

**ANABELLA:** *(In a sudden rage.)* Oh, Stephane, now you've ruined it! You just had to go and –

**TANYA:** *(Rolling over quickly to face ANABELLA.)* Will you two stop it! Just one morning I'd like to wake up feeling refreshed –

**ANABELLA:** *(To STEPHANE.)* You've ruined my day! I hope you're happy, making me miserable!

**TANYA:** *(Sitting up.)* Peter, will you deal with this child?

**STEPHANE:** I haven't ruined anything. You've ruined it. You woke up.

**TANYA:** Peter!

**PETER:** *(Jumping up from behind bed.)* Up, up. *(Looks around for something near him, then at TANYA.)* I'm up!

**TANYA:** They're at it again. I'm not going to stand for it.

**STEPHANE:** *(Returning to his book.)* As if you had a choice.

**TANYA:** You see! Insolence. Aggravating insolence. Will you deal with this, please!

**PETER:** Dealing, dealing. *(Walks around to foot of bed. HE looks down at STEPHANE.)* Stephane. Do you think for one morning you could leave your sister be?

**STEPHANE:** She … irks me.

**PETER:** Yes, but *(Squatting in front of STEPHANE.)* don't let it get to you. You can't let the little things get to you, not if you want to get ahead. *(Taps the books.)* Not with technical quaternarians coming up.

**STEPHANE:** Her incessant blabber fuddles my mind.

**PETER:** Learn to block it out. It's the only way you will make it here. Understood? *(Waits for a reply.)* Understood?

**STEPHANE:** Understood.

**PETER:** Good then. *(Rises.)* And you… *(Crosses to left of ANABELLA who is sitting on floor below window with her back to STEPHANE.)* … why are you pouting over here in the corner?

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