LILLI PALMER

IN

"Is Anna Anderson Anastasia?"

(This is NOT a film of the Play)

WITH

IVAN DESNY

Directed by
FALK HARNACK

Music by
Herbert Trantow

Directors of Photography
George Mohr, Felix Lehmann

CERT A

Length 8142 ft
Reg. No. F 22201

GERMAN DIALOGUE
ENGLISH SUBTITLES

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SYNOPSIS

For 36 years a woman has been posing a riddle to the world. She claims she is Anastasia Romanoff, the youngest daughter of the Czar Nicolas of Russia, and that she was the only one to survive the murder of the Czar’s family on the night of 16th-17th June, 1918.

This film is based on the files accumulated during the investigation of her case. It is not based on the play by Marcelle Mauretette.

In 1920 an unknown girl is pulled out of the Landwehr canal in Berlin. No one knows who she is and she answers no questions. The doctors are faced with an enigma. The unknown girl is sent to a mental home, Dalldorf, near Berlin. After a time she admits to being Anastasia Romanoff when she is recognised from a newspaper illustration.

The Russian emigres want to recognise Anastasia. They need the millions of gold roubles which the Czar had deposited in the Bank of England for his children. But Anastasia is not recognised by her aunts, the Grand Princesses Olga and Xenia; by her grandmother (Mother of the Czar) who is living in Copenhagen; or by the Crown Princess Cecilie and the Princess Irene of Prussia. In their eyes, apart from the millions of the Romanoff’s, it is the dynastic succession which is at stake. Under no circumstances do they want a weak, ill woman at the head of the House of Romanoff. So Anastasia becomes the puppet of international intrigue.

The Duke of Leuchtenberg gives her refuge in his castle in Bavaria, Seon, and it is here she meets again her childhood friend, Gleb Botkin. He, like her cousin Princess Katharina, is living in New York. She accepts Katharina’s invitation to go to America, and it is there, with the help of Gleb Botkin, that she succeeds in blocking the Romanoff fortune and preventing the payment, due on July 17th, 1928, to those members of the family entitled to inherit the sum. Her relations offer her money to live a peaceful and independent life, but only on condition that she renounces her claim to recognition. Anastasia refuses and after breaking with Gleb Botkin, whose sincerity she is beginning to doubt, she leaves Katharina’s house.

Mrs. Stevens, an American millionnaire, takes Anastasia in. She founds a company in order to obtain Anastasia’s roubles for herself with the aid of her dollars. Anastasia does not agree to the tricks of this woman and calls her a swindler. In revenge, Mrs. Stevens has Anastasia certified insane and sent back to Germany.

On examination, the doctors at the Ilen Mental Home near Hanover, discharge her—she is free to go where she wants. But where should she go? She lives for days, like an animal, in the woods until she is found.

The Prince of Sachsen-Altenburg offers her accommodation, and she lives with him until 1945. With the last of his money he buys her a shack in the Black Forest. Crown Princess Cecilie, a woman who has learnt about life, and who now has only human and no dynastic interests, visits Anastasia in 1953 and officially recognises her as Grand Princess Anastasia of Russia. But: Anastasia has found peace, and it is no longer important that she should claim her royal name.