

CHARACTERS

KATARINA	female; awaiting execution in a Death Row cell for the killing of her father and others at her mother's funeral
FATHER TREYOR	male; priest who was accidently killed at Katarina's mother's funeral
WARDEN	male or female
PRIEST	male; non-speaking
GUARD	male or female; non-speaking (optional)

SETTING

A Death Row cell.

TIME

Anytime.

Lights up on KATARINA sitting on a small cot in a prison cell. The only light is from above, casting a tight area of light around the cot and leaving the rest of the stage in darkness. FATHER TREYOR walks into the light and stops. TREYOR remains silent until KATARINA realizes she is not alone. KATARINA talks without looking at TREYOR.

KATARINA

Thank you for coming, Father.

TREYOR

Of course, Katarina.

KATARINA

You probably have at least six other places you'd rather be. Other things you'd rather be doing.

TREYOR

You need me here. I will always be here for you, Katarina.

KATARINA

(laughs lightly) You are the only one who calls me Katarina.

TREYOR

It's your name, isn't it?

KATARINA

Yeah, but no one calls me that. I've always been Kat...Katie...Rina. I always kinda liked Rina. It sounds like one of those old fashioned movie stars. *(sighs, pause)* I would love to be one of those old fashioned movie stars—glamorous no matter what.... Glamorous to the end.

TREYOR

Why would you want to be someone different, Katarina?

KATARINA looks at TREYOR for the first time.

KATARINA

Kind of a silly question, isn't it, Father?

TREYOR

I don't think so.

KATARINA

Oh, come on. How is that not a ridiculous question? *(gets off cot)* Look at me. Look at you. Hell, look at the rest of the world! Sorry, Father.

TREYOR

You're an individual. Unique. You shouldn't compare yourself to anyone else. You are Katarina, like it or not.

KATARINA

Not. Do you know why—do you know why my mother named me Katarina?

TREYOR

No. She never told me.

KATARINA

She named me Katarina because my father beat her down so much, so many times that the only escape she had were bad paperback romance novels that she could buy at garage sales for five cents a piece. She used to save back a nickel or a dime every time my father would decide that maybe she did actually need some money to buy groceries or toilet paper or something else boring, but necessary. She'd keep a whole fifty cents for herself when he sent her out for bourbon and cigarettes. She should have kept a lot more. She could have kept a lot more. She'd come home and he would demand the change from whatever he had given her, but I never saw him count any of it. He'd just snatch it from her hand, nearly crushing it most of the time, and shove the money into his front pocket. There was always a bulge there from the wad of cash. He was too drunk for it to be anything else. *(pause)* I don't want to talk about him anymore.

TREYOR

But why Katarina?

KATARINA moves back to the cot and sits, ignoring his question.

TREYOR

From the books? *(with slight force)* Tell me more about your mother's books.

KATARINA

She read every one of those books she managed to buy. She was in love with romance. I think she wanted to be like those women—strong, sexy, free. But she wasn't, she couldn't be...so she named me after one of them—Katarina Von Ravanstahl. So, not so unique. Named after a character from a five cent romance novel.

TREYOR watches KATARINA as she pushes a fingernail into the cot.

TREYOR

Katarina, how are you doing?

KATARINA

I'm all right. It's not really what I expected.