



Anastasia at Your Service

Lois Lowry , Diane deGroat (Illustrator)

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A long, boring summer--that's what Anastasia has to look forward to when her best friend goes off to camp. She's thrilled when old Mrs. Bellingham answers her ad for a job as a Lady's Companion. Anastasia is sure her troubles are over--she'll be busy and earn money!

But she doesn't expect to have to polish silver and serve at Mrs. Bellingham's granddaughter's birthday party as a maid! As if that isn't bad enough, she accidentally drops a piece of silverware down the garbage disposal and must use her earnings to pay for it! Is the summer destined to be a disaster?

Anastasia at Your Service Details

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From Reader Review Anastasia at Your Service for online ebook

Julie Decker says

Anastasia is a precocious and quirky twelve-year-old, and this summer, she's lonely and bored. To make some money and avoid keeling over from lack of entertainment, she decides to fulfill one of her fantasies and offer her companionship to an old woman who needs a helper. But her visions of serving tea and becoming a trusted assistant are dashed when the person who actually hires her just turns her into kitchen help, and what's worse is that the woman's granddaughter is her own age and she's stuck in this embarrassing maid role having to serve at her parties. Anastasia finds unlikely allies and explores her priorities when she sees the differences between her own family relationships and those of her new friend, and once the summer is over, she'll find she's learned a great deal that she never expected.

I always loved the Anastasia books as a child, mostly because Anastasia reminded me of me (a bookish and somewhat solitary child with an active imagination), so I wanted to read some of the ones I'd never read when I was younger. The "hijinks ensue" factor in these books is usually a little unbelievable, but not ridiculous, and though everyone's a little too witty in their conversations, it's still entertaining and executed in a non-obnoxious way. Anastasia's misconceptions and executions of silly plans are always a lot of fun.

Katie Fitzgerald says

This review also appears on my blog, [Read-at-Home Mom](#).

Anastasia has settled into suburban life, but she really wishes she had a job. Specifically, she wants to work as a Lady's Companion to a rich old lady, a position she imagines would be quite glamorous and suited to her abilities. When she puts out an ad, Anastasia is in fact hired by a rich grandmother, but it turns out that Mrs. Bellingham just wants her to work as a maid. Worse, Mrs. Bellingham has a granddaughter, Daphne, who is Anastasia's age, and she just happens to be a witness to one of Anastasia's most embarrassing moments of all time! This is not the fabulous summer Anastasia imagined, but her trials and tribulations make for hilarious tween reading material all the same.

It is so puzzling to me that the Anastasia series didn't really catch on with me as a kid. I can remember looking at them many times in the library and bookstores, but I never really got hooked. Now, though, I look forward to reading each volume, because of the quirky protagonist, clever dialogue, and warm family environment. Kids will recognize bits of themselves in Anastasia - her imagination, her stubborn streak, her anger at being treated unfairly, and her humiliation when she makes wacky plans that don't come off quite as she imagined. Readers will feel sympathy for her, too, when a family emergency erases her worries about how she looks to her employer and instead focuses her energy on the well-being of her baby brother.

Readers who like *Harriet the Spy* and *From The Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* will also be likely fans of this book, because of its vintage style, intelligent writing, and memorable characters.

Dana says

My daughter was a tad young for this. Vocabulary was fine, only had to explain a couple words, but on the content side there was plenty that could have waited a couple of years. I should have read a review before diving in. Not a big deal, turned it into a teachable moment, just for parents of 12 & under, be aware of mentions of drunks and drug dealers, references to low-income people as 'the great unwashed', the protagonist 'borrowing' a bra from her mother and stuffing it, a quick explanation that a book about screws is not about sex, and a character with a black bedroom who hates her family. There is humor, especially in the very beginning, and the end. I couldn't read the thing with the bockle without bursting into laughter. Good for middle school, especially if you want to prompt discussions about income inequality, family, brothers and sisters, sibling love, grief, jobs, money, having a job as a teen, surviving mortifying moments.

Mugizi Rwebangira says

This is one of THE VERY FIRST "real" novels that I actually remember reading! (probably when I was 7-8 years old)

I was the kind of kid who read a lot, mostly "children's books", picture books, stuff like "The Hardy Boys", "Nancy Drew" and so on, but I recall this book being a bit different.

First of all the fact that I actually still remember the story means it made an impression on me that the other stuff didn't.

Second, there is a serious message here. About the class system and money and not judging people by their socioeconomic condition.

Quick summary: Anastasia Krupnik is the 12-year-old daughter of a college professor father and artist mom. She is bored and broke one summer so she gets a job with this rich lady in town who lives in a huge mansion on the "good" side of town. She expects the job will be classy, like a lady-in-waiting or something, but actually she is to be a MAID! Even worse, she accidentally destroys a fancy piece of silverware so she can't quit the job, she has to pay it off. And even worse than that, she has to be maid at a fancy party that the old lady is throwing for her granddaughter, who is the same age as Anastasia. How humiliating!

Of course, from my current perspective several decades later, it's a bit predictable how the plot the unfolds. And that IMPORTANT LESSONS ARE LEARNED BY ALL (tm).

But at the time, I enjoyed the heck out of it.

It would be so interesting if I could actually recall all those books I read when I was first learning to read and sort of trace how they influenced or reflected my "literary" thinking!

Swankivy says

Ah, the old Anastasia books. I missed some of them when I was reading these Lois Lowry favorites as a kid, so I wanted to go back and read them. This was a cute one from when Anastasia was twelve. It's mostly about how she expected to get hired as an old woman's companion and get paid tons of money just to keep her company, but getting disappointed when she's hired for babysitting wages and put to work in the kitchen.

I like her funny little fantasies, and how she makes so many of her problems worse with her weird schemes (trying to dress like she's middle-aged so a child her own age won't realize she's a peer comes to mind). I always love her relationship with Sam, and that her brother's precocity is commented upon by people outside the family so you don't just sit there thinking "wow, this is an awfully verbally advanced two-year-old." There were a couple nice little lessons about charity and those less fortunate in the book, but I was kind of put off by the way Anastasia thinks about fat people in an unflattering way a couple times.

Endah says

Aku suka banget serial Anastasia Krupnik ini. Gaya bertutur Lois Lowry serta tema cerita yang realis benar-benar sesuai dengan selera bacaanku. Ya, ini memang buku cerita remaja, tetapi kurasa ini sebuah buku yang keren yang akan membuatku ketagihan membacanya. Buktinya aku terus mengikutinya sampai judul ketiga terjemahan Indonesianya. Seluruhnya, serial ini terdiri dari 9 judul. Aku sih berharap betul semua judul tersebut diterbitkan di sini.

Keluarga Krupnik, menurutku, adalah model keluarga modern kelas menengah ideal. Pasangan suami istri Krupnik yang bekerja, beranak dua, tanpa pembantu, dan tinggal di daerah pinggiran kota adalah gambaran sebuah keluarga muda masa kini di daerah perkotaan.

Namun, bukan itu banget yang membuatku “mengidolakan” keluarga asyik ini. Terutama sekali adalah pada cara mereka berinteraksi setiap harinya dengan memakai prinsip kesetaraan. Hubungan ayah, ibu, dan anak adalah sebuah hubungan yang setara. Mereka saling menghormati dan menghargai. Semua bebas bicara dan semua mendengar dan didengar.

Nyonya Krupnik lebih banyak bekerja di rumah sebagai pelukis dan sesekali menerima order membuat ilustrasi buku; sedangkan Pak Krupnik adalah seorang penyair terkenal yang juga pengajar sastra di Universitas Harvard. Mereka orang tua yang sangat menoderat. Cara keduanya mendidik anak-anak mereka benar-benar keren. Mereka membebaskan Anastasia (13 tahun) dan adiknya, Sam (2,5 tahun) menjadi diri mereka sendiri. Anak-anak tersebut tumbuh sehat dan bahagia dalam naungan sebuah keluarga yang penuh cinta dan saling menghormati.

Pak dan Bu Krupnik senantiasa memberi dukungan untuk semua hal-hal positif yang ingin dilakukan oleh anak-anak mereka. Seperti kali ini, mereka mengizinkan Anastasia bekerja paruh waktu sebagai pendamping wanita tua demi mendapatkan uang jajan lebih di hari liburnya walaupun ternyata Anastasia hanya dijadikan sebagai seorang pelayan.

Anastasia marah betul pada Ny. Bellingham. Wanita kaya raya yang tinggal tak jauh dari rumah keluarga Krupnik itu telah mempekerjakan Anastasia bukan sebagai pendamping tetapi sebagai pelayan. Anastasia malu sekali. Namun, dengan bijaksana ayah ibunya memberi dukungan menghadapi situasi tidak enak itu. Mereka membesarkan hati anak gadis itu dengan menceritakan kisah “memalukan” yang pernah mereka alami sehingga Anastasia tidak lagi merasa malu. Di dunia setiap orang pernah mengalami hal paling memalukan dalam hidup mereka.

Nyonya Bellingham memiliki seorang cucu perempuan yang sebaya dengan Anastasia dan akan masuk ke kelas tujuh di sekolah yang sama dengan Anastasia. Daphne nama anak perempuan cucu Ny. Bellingham itu. Ny. Bellingham sangat menyayangi cucunya itu. Ia ingin menyelenggarakan pesta ulang tahun Daphne yang ketiga belas. Dan Anastasia dibutuhkan untuk melayani tamu-tamu di pesta tersebut.

Tadinya Anastasia jengkel membayangkan harus melayani seorang anak yang akan menjadi teman sekelasnya. Akan tetapi kiranya Daphne seorang remaja yang menyenangkan untuk dijadikan teman. Alih-alih malu, mereka kemudian malah bersekongkol menggagalkan pesta amal yang akan diadakan Ny. Bellingham seminggu setelah ulang tahun Daphne. Dua remaja putri yang kesal dan sakit hati pada seorang nyonya tua lalu menyusun rencana iseng untuk mengacaukan pesta. Daphne kecewa pada neneknya karena diberi hadiah ulang tahun sebuah boneka. Hanya bayi yang bermain boneka, katanya dengan sewot. Dan Anastasia juga masih belum hilang kesalnya karena dipekerjakan sebagai pelayan.

Tema cerita yang dipilih Lois Lowry adalah kisah yang bisa kita temui sehari-hari: remaja puber yang sibuk dengan penampilan mereka, pertemanan, hubungan tetangga, orang tua yang menjengkelkan....Semua itu hal biasa yang kita lihat dan alami setiap hari. Lois Lowry mengolah bahan-bahan yang tampak remeh itu dengan keahlian seorang penulis sehingga menjelma cerita memikat penuh makna tanpa terkesan menggurui. Aku benar-benar menyukainya. Serial Anastasia ini bukan hanya menghibur tetapi juga sarat pesan moral tentang hubungan antarmanusia, khususnya antara orang tua dan anak-anak mereka.

Humor-humornya segar dan cerdas, mengingatkan aku pada serial tivi Amerika yang populer di tahun 80-an, Growing Pains atau yang sejenisnya. Eh, Anastasia Krupnik ini juga sudah dibuat filmnya di tahun 1999 dengan sutradara Meryl Friedman. Ada gak ya dvd (bajakan)-nya?

Liz says

Anastasia has some spunk! This story has her getting a job, her dream versus her reality. Category: juvie realistic fiction.

This series is a delightful change from my usual dystopian/teen dysfunctional angst books that I have been reading. There are some good lessons thrown throughout the series. For this book, I especially liked how Anastasia dealt with first impressions, misconceptions, and taking responsibility.

Matti Karjalainen says

Lois Lowryn "Anastasia palveluksessanne" (Otava, 1989) on humoristis-realistisen tyttökirjasarjan kolmas osa. Anastasia toteaa olevansa köyhä, ja päättää sen vuoksi hankkia itselleen työpaikan seuraneitinä. Ikävä kyllä duuni ei ole ihan sitä mitä hän on toivonut.

Kuten sarjan aikaisemmissakin osissa, pidin tässäkin kovasti Krupnikin boheemin perheen arjen ja keskinäisen sanailun kuvaamisesta.

Isä mietti hetken. "Niin, minä kuuntelen ja tarkkailen ihmisiä. Sitten kirjoitan muistiin mitä olen nähnyt ja ohimennen kuullut. Jonkin ajan kuluttua käytän niitä asioita runoissani [...]

Lue vähäsen, hän pyysi.

Isä laski haarukan pöydälle ja selaili pienen muistikirjansa sivuja. "No", hän sanoi. "Tällaista kirjoitin tänä aamuna. Sam on aivan kuin äitinsä nukkuessaan."

Anastasian äiti hymyili. Sam hymyili.

"Kumpikin nukkuu suu auki ja takapuoli pystyssä. (s. 11-12)

Loppupuolelle on mahdutettu myös pieni opetus suvaitsevaisuuden merkityksestä ja siitä, etteivät asiat ole aina niin mustavalkoisia kuin ne alussa näyttäisivät olevan.

Lowry viljelee viittauksia elokuvien, kirjallisuuden ja musiikin maailmaan. Billie Holiday ja Federico Fellini mainitaan ohimennen. Epäilen kyllä, ettei kohderyhmä tule enää ymmärtäneeksi mitä hauskaa on siinä, että sairaalasta päässyt pikkuveli muistuttaa Kojakia.

Suomenkielinen laitos on paikoitellen hieman kömpelö, sillä jostakin syystä kääntäjä on päättänyt lokalisoida dollarit markoiksi, ja lisäksi puhutaan sulavasti Kapteeni Mainiosta (Captain Marvel) ja Hämähäkinverkko-romaanista (Lotta ystäväni).

Sri says

**** spoiler alert ****

Anastasia kembali bersikap lebay karena hidupnya terasa membosankan dan mengenaskan. Bosan karena sobatnya pergi. Mengenaskan karena kemiskinan (uang saku minim, ayah ibunya sedang bangkrut karena kepindahan mereka). Setelah dibuatkan daftar oleh ayahnya mengenai hal itu, akhirnya ayahnya memutuskan solusi dari masalah itu adalah: bekerja.

Anastasia lalu mencari pekerjaan sebagai companion bagi ibu-ibu tua yang kaya raya. Bahagia akhirnya menemukan seorang client yang sesuai kriterianya, ternyata di sana Anastasia dijadikan pembantu wkwkwk. Yang lebih parah Anastasia harus menjadi pelayan untuk pesta ultah cucu si nyonya kaya. Cucunya ini nanti bakal jadi teman sekelas Anastasia pada waktu sekolah sudah dimulai nanti. Untunglah ternyata cucu nyonya itu anaknya asyik-asyik aja dan malah jadi teman baru Anastasia.

Sam jatuh dari jendela T_T. Sam mengalami depressed skull fracture tapi syukurlah bisa sembuh dengan cepat. Di Rumah Sakit Sam mendapatkan seorang imaginary friend, paling tidak begitulah asumsi semua orang. Nyatanya teman baru Sam bukanlah hasil imajinasi. Teman barunya adalah.... arch enemy kakaknya sendiri. Siapa lagi kalau bukan nyonya kaya :D.

(Kindle#2Book5)

Heather says

I definitely owned this book as a kid, and was pleased to remember some parts of it as I read—including the really excellent/hilarious opening scene, in which Anastasia is so bored she’s lying on the floor acting out all the deathbed scenes she can think of (Beth from *Little Women*, Juliet from *Romeo and Juliet*, Charlotte from *Charlotte’s Web*, Cleopatra), and in which Anastasia’s mom teaches her what a groan sounds like (Anastasia thinks it just consists of saying “groan”). But there were other things I didn’t remember at all, and I definitely did not remember how *stressful* this book is (which is something that, as an adult, makes me like it a bit less than I liked the first two books in this series).

So, right: it’s summer vacation, and Anastasia’s broke (because her allowance is two dollars a week) and bored (because her family recently moved, and the only kid her age she knows in her new town is off at

basketball camp). Her dad suggests that a summer job will solve both problems, so she writes up a flyer advertising her services as a lady's companion and posts it around town. A woman named Mrs. Bellingham responds to the ad and hires her, but then, on her first day, Anastasia finds herself in the kitchen with the housekeeper and two cooks, polishing silver: she's doing the tasks of a maid. And two things make the whole situation worse: first, she accidentally drops a silver spoon down the garbage disposal, and is told she'll have to pay for it out of her wages—so she can't just quit until she's paid it off. And then she learns that the following day, she's expected to serve appetizers and drinks at a birthday luncheon Mrs. Bellingham is throwing for her thirteen-year-old granddaughter, Daphne—who's going to be in Anastasia's class at school.

Which leads to the first stressful thing: Anastasia decides she's going to disguise herself as a middle-aged lady, so maybe when school starts Daphne won't recognize her. Clearly this is not the strongest plan, and a comedy of errors ensues at the party. But luckily, Daphne turns out to be nice, so Anastasia gains a friend. Which leads to the next stressful thing: Daphne's upset at her grandmother for having given her a doll for her birthday, and Anastasia's upset that she has to work as a maid rather than as a companion, so they decide to try to humiliate Mrs. Bellingham at the big charity party she's throwing the following week. Again, not the best plan. There's more stress, too, involving an accident that befalls Anastasia's little brother. And oh, Anastasia gets in trouble with her parents because she says something really offensive about the town's low-income housing development—never mind that she was only imitating Daphne imitating Mrs. Bellingham, not actually saying the offensive thing herself. Everything turns out fine, ultimately, and the stressful things resolve themselves in sometimes-hilarious ways, but I don't really like reading about plans that are clearly doomed to go awry. Still, I liked this book, particularly the very beginning and the very end.

Jenne says

I forgot how funny this was!

Rahmadiyahanti says

Libur sekolah yang masih panjang. Uang saku yang pas-pasan (bahkan kurang). Bosan melanda. Apa yang harus Anastasia lakukan? Gadis unik dan cerdas anak Pak Krupnik ini punya ide menarik untuk menambah uang sakunya: menjadi pendamping. Pendamping? Iya, maunya sih Anastasia menjadi pendamping wanita kaya berusia lanjut. Di mana tugasnya hanya membacakan buku, menyediakan teh, menemani berjalan....

Saat seorang wanita tua kaya raya bernama Ferris Bellingham merespon iklan yang Anastasia sebar, ia berharap impiannya menjadi gadis pendamping menjadi kenyataan. Tapi, siapa mengira Anastasia harus mengenakan celemek dan membersihkan "jutaan" sendok dan garpu. Tak hanya itu, ia juga membuat sebuah sendok seharga 35 dolar rusak tak berbentuk. Dengan honor 2 ½ dolar per-jam, bukannya mendapat uang, Anastasia malah punya utang pada nyonya kaya itu. Ia juga harus menjadi pelayan pada perayaan ulang tahun cucu sang nyonya. OMG! Bagaimana kalau gadis seusia Anastasia itu akan menjadi temannya di kelas tujuh nanti?

Anastasia pun menyamar menjadi wanita dewasa agar Daphne tidak mengenalinya. Siapa sangka, Daphne Bellingham, cucu sang nyonya tahu samaran Anastasia. Anak pendeta yang rebel ini malah sangat sebal

dengan neneknya. Ia pun merencanakan sebuah aksi untuk sang nenek dan minta Anastasia membantunya. Aksi yang akan dilakukan pada pesta amal yang diselenggarakan sang nenek. Tapi, dari sang ayah, Anastasia disadarkan bahwa pesta itu bukan sekadar pesta. Apa yang harus ia lakukan?

Buku ketiga serial Anastasia Krupnik ini tetap bikin saya segar membacanya. Meski nggak selucu buku kedua, tapi seri ketiga lebih banyak menyodorkan persoalan sosial. Meski kisahnya untuk anak-anak pra remaja, buku ini tetap asyik dinikmati oleh orang dewasa. Bahkan ada unsur pengasuhan anak, seperti misalnya saat Anastasia curhat pada ortunya dan ia meminta ayah dan ibunya tak menertawakannya. Sang ibu berkata, "Sejak dulu kami tak pernah menertawakanmu." Ada kalanya orangtua tertawa saat anak mengungkapkan keinginan atau pendapatnya, padahal itu dapat membuat anak tak percaya diri.

Keluarga dan hubungan yang demokratis (yang sering saya temui dalam keluarga-keluarga di barat—dari film seeh) juga dapat menjadi masukan buat orangtua. Ketika Anastasia mengungkapkan keinginan untuk mencari pekerjaan misalnya, ayah dan ibunya mengajak ia membahas bersama pekerjaan yang diinginkan dan cocok, hingga membuat resume. Saya perhatikan dari seri pertama hingga ketiga ini, Lois Lowry sang pengarang, selalu menyisipkan definisi istilah-istilah untuk diketahui anak-anak/remaja (biasanya terjadi dialog antara Anastasia dengan ayah atau ibunya). Contohnya istilah resume itu.

Alexis says

I loved this book when I was a kid, and I just finished reading my childhood copy. It was written in 1982, and still holds up well. The writing is excellent and the story is about seeing people as who they are, without having prejudices about them. It's really quite a funny story, and I was able to pick out a lot of cultural references as an adult, that I wouldn't have picked out when I was a child.

I'm also just glad to finish a book. I'm been feeling unwell for a while, and the fact that I didn't finish a book for a while is one of my tells. :)

Yolanda Chapa says

This is was a charming story.

"Anastasia at your service" is about a young girl who is so bored that she announces herself on the paper to be a "companion", as other young girls in old movies. It had common teen problems (not the typically commercial ones, where you want to be attractive to a guy or be popular), light humor and easy reading. Oh!, and her family is just great! Her genius two year old brother, their loving and funny parents... I would like to have dinner with them some day.

Emily says

I honestly love all of the Anastasia books. They are funny, and relatable, and real and great.
