

WOLF HALL

BY HILARY MANTEL

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE

BY MIKE POULTON



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

WOLF HALL
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Wolf Hall
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Notes on Characters
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SPECIAL NOTE ON TEXT

Some cuts and changes to this text may have been incorporated for the 2015 Broadway production. The version of the text published in this Acting Edition must be used for all stock and amateur performances licensed by Dramatists Play Service.

For Otto and Mandy Warhol

WOLF HALL was first produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, on December 11, 2013. It was directed by Jeremy Herrin; the set and costume design was by Christopher Oram; the lighting design was by Paule Constable; the music was by Stephen Warbeck; the music director was Rob Millett; the sound design was by Nick Powell; the fight director was Bret Yount; and the production manager was Patrick Molony. The cast was as follows:

THOMAS CROMWELL Ben Miles
GREGORY CROMWELL Daniel Fraser
RAFE SADLER Joshua Silver
CHRISTOPHE/FRANCIS WESTON Pierro Niél Mee
KING HENRY VIII Nathaniel Parker
KATHERINE OF ARAGON/JANE BOLEYN Lucy Briers
JANE SEYMOUR/PRINCESS MARY/
LADY WORCESTER Leah Brotherhead
ANNE BOLEYN Lydia Leonard
HARRY PERCY/WILLIAM BRERETON Nicholas Shaw
THOMAS WYATT/HEADSMAN Jay Taylor
CARDINAL WOLSEY/SIR JOHN SEYMOUR/
SIR WILLIAM KINGSTON/
ARCHBISHOP WARHAM Paul Jesson
MARK SMEATON Joey Batey
STEPHEN GARDINER/
EUSTACHE CHAPUYS Matthew Pidgeon
THOMAS CRANMER/THOMAS BOLEYN/
FRENCH AMBASSADOR Giles Taylor
THOMAS MORE/HENRY NORRIS John Ramm
GEORGE BOLEYN/EDWARD SEYMOUR Oscar Pearce
DUKE OF NORFOLK Nicholas Day
DUKE OF SUFFOLK Nicholas Boulton
LADY-IN-WAITING/MAID/
MARJORIE SEYMOUR Madeleine Hyland
MARY BOLEYN/ELIZABETH CROMWELL/
MARY SHELTON Olivia Darnley
BARGE-MASTER/WOLSEY'S SERVANT Benedict Hastings
ENSEMBLE Mathew Foster
ENSEMBLE Robert MacPherson
All other parts were played by members of the company.

The production transferred to the Aldwych Theatre, London, on May 1, 2014, presented by Matthew Byam Shaw, Nia Janis, and Nick Salmon for Playful Productions and the Royal Shakespeare Company, Bartner/Tulchin Productions, and Georgia Gatti for Playful Productions, and transferred to Broadway's Winter Garden Theatre in March 2015 as WOLF HALL, Parts 1 and 2.

WOLF HALL was originally commissioned by Playful Productions.

CHARACTERS

THOMAS CROMWELL

ELIZABETH (LIZ) CROMWELL, his wife

GREGORY CROMWELL, their son

RAFE SADLER, a young gentleman, Cromwell's ward and secretary,
later one of the King's gentlemen

CHRISTOPHE, a French boy and thief, Cromwell's manservant

KING HENRY VIII, King of England

KATHERINE OF ARAGON, Queen of England

PRINCESS MARY, their daughter

ANNE BOLEYN, lady-in-waiting to Queen Katherine,
later Queen of England

HENRY (HARRY) PERCY, a young lord, later Earl of
Northumberland

THOMAS WYATT, a young poet, friend to King Henry

CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP THOMAS WOLSEY, Lord Chancellor

MARK SMEATON, Cardinal Wolsey's lutenist

WILLIAM WARHAM, Archbishop of Canterbury

STEPHEN GARDINER, later Bishop of Winchester

EUSTACHE CHAPUYS, Imperial Ambassador

THOMAS CRANMER, Anne Boleyn's chaplain,
later Archbishop of Canterbury

THOMAS MORE, later Lord Chancellor

SIR THOMAS BOLEYN, later Earl of Wiltshire

GEORGE BOLEYN, later Lord Rochford, brother of Anne and Mary

MARY BOLEYN, King Henry's mistress, Anne Boleyn's sister

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK, Thomas Howard

THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK, Charles Brandon, the King's friend
and brother-in-law

SIR HENRY NORRIS, the King's Groom of the Stool

SIR WILLIAM BRERETON, gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber

FRANCIS WESTON, one of the King's gentlemen

JANE SEYMOUR, lady-in-waiting to Anne Boleyn

SIR JOHN SEYMOUR, father of Jane Seymour

EDWARD SEYMOUR, brother of Jane Seymour

MARJORIE SEYMOUR

JANE BOLEYN, later Lady Rochford wife to George

MARY SHELTON, lady-in-waiting to Anne Boleyn

ELIZABETH, LADY WORCESTER, lady-in-waiting to Anne Boleyn

SIR WILLIAM KINGSTON, Constable of the Tower

THE EXECUTIONER OF CALAIS

and SERVANTS, MONKS, DANCERS, LORDS, LADIES,
BISHOPS, GUARDS, etc.

WOLF HALL

ACT ONE

Scene 1

Fanfares. A military dance for young men led by King Henry VIII, watched by Katherine of Aragon and Princess Mary (age twelve), who absent-mindedly says her rosary. Men joined by ladies. Music softens. King Henry dances with Mary Boleyn. Katherine displeased. All eyes on Anne Boleyn (yellow dress), who dances with Thomas Wyatt. Then she rejects him and dances with Harry Percy — very lovingly — which makes Wyatt angry. Wyatt leaves. Thomas Wolsey enters with his train, followed by Stephen Gardiner, upstaging King Henry in every way possible. Thunder and lightning. King Henry and Katherine go off with Princess Mary. Harry Percy and Anne Boleyn exit together. It rains. Night falls. Scene becomes Wolsey's office.

Thomas Cromwell hurrying, wet, in riding gear. Stephen scowls as he leaves.

STEPHEN. Cromwell. Late.

THOMAS. Yes — isn't it?

STEPHEN. No — I mean ... *(Exasperated, he gives up and goes. Thomas goes into Wolsey's splendid golden room. Big fire. Shadows. Mark Smeaton plays the lute. Wolsey sits with his back to us.)*

WOLSEY. Where were you when I needed you, Thomas?

THOMAS. In Yorkshire, Your Grace.

WOLSEY. Yorkshire?

THOMAS. Turbulent monks. You sent me there.

WOLSEY. You'll be hungry then. Fetch him something to eat. Cherries — he likes cherries.

SERVANT. There are no cherries, Your Grace.

WOLSEY. What? Why not?

SERVANT. It's April, Your Grace.

WOLSEY. Nonsense! It can't *still* be April! Why am I so ill-served? Sorry, Tom — no cherries. Well, bring him something — I don't know — a lettuce? Is there a lettuce? If you don't give this one his feed he'll tear the place down. (*Servants appear to make Thomas comfortable — take his wet coat, build up the fire, bring wine and food — giving the lie to Wolsey's joke about being ill-served.*) What else would you like?

THOMAS. I'd like the sun to come out.

WOLSEY. You ask a great deal. It's almost midnight.

THOMAS. Dawn would do.

WOLSEY. We shall try the power of prayer. (*Wolsey looks at the servants — the signal to withdraw. Mark stays.*) The King called me this morning — early. (*Yawns.*) Exceptionally early.

THOMAS. What did he want?

WOLSEY. A son.

THOMAS. He's got one — young Richmond. And they say Mary Boleyn's boy is his.

WOLSEY. Might be. It squalls, and it's ginger. Look, forget Mary Boleyn — he needs a son born in wedlock. An heir to sit on his throne when he's gone.

THOMAS. His daughter won't do?

WOLSEY. What — Mary? A girl ruling England? Don't be absurd! Now, you have a son — Gregory's a fine boy — I, God forgive me, have a boy of my own — every lord, every landed gentleman, every lackey can get boys ... Only the King can't seem to manage it. Whose fault is that?

THOMAS. God's.

WOLSEY. Nearer the King than God?

THOMAS. Queen Katherine?

WOLSEY. Nearer?

THOMAS. Yourself, Your Grace?

WOLSEY. Myself, My Grace. If the King lies awake at night asking himself why his children die, the fault must be mine. Enough now, Mark. (*Exit Mark.*) Henry believes God won't give him sons because he and Katherine were never truly married.

THOMAS. He's just noticed? After eighteen years?

WOLSEY. He's reading his Bible. And though the Pope declared their marriage lawful — gave a dispensation — swept aside all impediment — in the Book of Leviticus the King has found the verse which forbids marriage with a brother's wife. Katherine was his brother's widow.

THOMAS. Then show him the contradictory verse. Deuteronomy says marrying your brother's widow is compulsory.

WOLSEY. The King doesn't like Deuteronomy. He prefers Leviticus. He says, "If this is God's Word, plainly written, no Pope has power to set it aside."

THOMAS. Well, he's right there, isn't he?

WOLSEY. Is he?

THOMAS. You tell me — you're the Cardinal.

WOLSEY. I am a divided man: the Pope's voice in England — but first the King's loyal servant. Still ... If we go to work in the usual way — offer Pope Clement a — a —

THOMAS. A bribe?

WOLSEY. God forgive you, Tom! A loan.

THOMAS. He may grant the King an annulment.

WOLSEY. There are precedents. Gold finds its way into the Vatican and the King gets a new wife. One who can breed.

THOMAS. What does Queen Katherine get?

WOLSEY. Jesu! She doesn't even suspect. It will be me who has to tell her. The King won't deliver bad news — he delegates it.

THOMAS. You'll have to pick the right moment.

WOLSEY. There is no right moment. She'll say, "I am the daughter of two reigning monarchs and they send a butcher's boy to tip me off my throne!"

THOMAS. Then she'll threaten you with her nephew — the Emperor —

WOLSEY. But Charles won't go to war over his old aunt? Surely not!

THOMAS. He doesn't need to go to war. He can blockade us — starve us out — cut off our trade. When winter comes he can hold back the grain ships — and we'll be at his mercy. If I were you —

WOLSEY. Cardinal Cromwell — in charge! What a world that would be!

THOMAS. If I were you, I'd deal with the King's case here in London. You have the Pope's authority — get him his divorce before Europe wakes up to what's happening.

WOLSEY. When Europe wakes up it may break this country apart.

THOMAS. Then tell that to the King. He listens to you. He always has.

WOLSEY. He's listening to his conscience now. Which is an active one — a tender one.

THOMAS. Then ... (*Taking this in.*) He's sincere in this matter?

WOLSEY. The King always believes what he says — at the time he's saying it. You know, Katherine and Arthur, they were children when they were married. Fifteen. Katherine always swore they lay beside each other chaste. Like brother and sister saying their prayers. She swears Arthur never touched her. Henry believed she came to him a virgin.

THOMAS. Couldn't he tell?

WOLSEY. He was a boy — seventeen! He was in love with her — how could he tell? Could you tell — the first time you ... I know I couldn't! Anyway it suited him to believe her.

THOMAS. And now it doesn't.

WOLSEY. Still ... if I do part him from Katherine, I could marry him smartly to a French princess.

THOMAS. You'd have to. We'd need the French as allies.

WOLSEY. Never a good position to be in!

THOMAS. If you *do* separate them, where will Katherine go?

WOLSEY. She's very pious. Convents can be comfortable.

THOMAS. What if she won't budge?

WOLSEY. (*Yawns.*) Go home now, Tom. (*Calling to servants.*) Send Rafe Sadler in here! Your ward's been waiting for hours. Ah, Rafe — (*Enter Rafe Sadler.*)

RAFE. Your Grace. I wish you'd talk to God about the weather. It's been raining for three years.

WOLSEY. I'll see what I can do. Take this man home to his family. (*Starts to usher them out.*)

RAFE. We've missed him, sir. How was Yorkshire?

WOLSEY. Yes — how was Yorkshire? Did we get the money?

THOMAS. Your project's disliked there.

WOLSEY. I have the Pope's authority for it.

THOMAS. The Pope's no help when it comes to converting monks into cash.

WOLSEY. Thirty ill-run, over-wealthy monasteries must — and *shall* — amalgamate with larger well-run ones — like it or not. They are ill-run, aren't they?

THOMAS. Yes — treasure flows in at the front door, whores sneak out at the back —

WOLSEY. What became of poverty, chastity, and obedience? Thomas, I *need* those funds — for my Oxford college and the school at Ipswich — my monument — my legacy when I'm gone.

RAFE. Ipswich, Your Grace?

WOLSEY. The town of my birth. Inglorious in every other respect. Go home now.

THOMAS. The laws relating to land —

WOLSEY. The law is an instrument for saying “no.” I want to hear you say “yes.” Find a way.

THOMAS. The Yorkshire gentry threatened to kill me.

WOLSEY. You don't look particularly killed. I may have to go to Yorkshire myself. I've often wondered what it's like. What do they eat up there?

THOMAS. Londoners, when they have a chance.

WOLSEY. ... but do they have any lemons.

RAFE. But surely ... Your Grace is Archbishop of York? Were you never enthroned?

WOLSEY. When have I ever had time for my own spiritual affairs? Home! Come early tomorrow.

THOMAS. (*Struck by a thought.*) You say the King is reading the Scriptures? Is he reading them in English?

WOLSEY. That ... is forbidden.

THOMAS. Not to the King.

WOLSEY. Careful, Tom. Walls have ears. God bless you both. (*They kneel, kiss Wolsey's ring, and leave. Wolsey is robed, goes into his chapel, and prays hard. A downpour. Thomas and Rafe are escorted home to Austin Friars by Wolsey's linkboys and guards.*)

WOLF HALL

by Hilary Mantel

adapted for the stage by Mike Poulton

16M, 5W (doubling, flexible casting)

Mike Poulton's two-part adaptation of Hilary Mantel's Man Booker Prize-winning novels is a thrilling portrait of a brilliant manipulator navigating a high-stakes political landscape. WOLF HALL begins in England in 1527. King Henry VIII needs a male heir, and his anger grows as months pass without the divorce he craves. Into this volatile court enters the commoner Thomas Cromwell. Once a mercenary and now a master politician, he sets out to grant King Henry's desire while methodically and ruthlessly pursuing his own Reforming agenda. In BRING UP THE BODIES, Anne Boleyn is now Queen, her path to Henry's side cleared by Cromwell. But Henry still needs a male heir, and he begins to fall in love with the seemingly plain Jane Seymour. Cromwell must negotiate an increasingly perilous court to satisfy Henry, defend the nation, and advance his own ambitions.

"The extraordinary enthusiasm for these books across page, stage and screen is partly due to the inherent dramatic power of the narratives ... [Mantel and Poulton] bring to the familiar tale of doomed wives and religious convulsion a thrilling originality of psychology and storytelling ... absolute dramatic clarity with tantalizing historical ambiguity ... Mantel and Poulton, while themselves rewriting history, show the king and his spin doctor doing the same."

—**The Guardian (London)**

"... opens like House of Cards and ends like Game of Thrones ... Mike Poulton's adaptations keep the language accessible and the political context lucid enough for a general audience. They are also surprisingly funny, with a more broadly comic tone than Mantel's books ... elegantly done ... History repeats itself, first as farce, then as tragedy ... masterful ... highly satisfying."

—**The Hollywood Reporter**

"... a superbly tense duet ... fiercely intelligent ... Mantel's inspired approach, echoed by adaptor Mike Poulton, was to take the decade covering the rise and fall of Anne Boleyn and present everything from an entirely unexpected perspective: that of Cromwell, who rose inexorably from being the son of a blacksmith to becoming the second most powerful man in the kingdom ... Poulton ensure[s] the stakes remain high and audiences engaged by the interstices of plots and counterplots."

—**Variety**

"... the real emotional tension resides mainly in the developing intimacy between Henry and Cromwell, and the disbelieving outrage that it provokes in the old aristocracy ... an inexorable tragic momentum ... a taut intelligence, and a subtle awareness of the parallels between Tudor times and our own ... their verve, intelligence and wit are exhilarating."

—**The Telegraph (London)**

Also by Hilary Mantel and Mike Poulton
BRING UP THE BODIES

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