



AUDITION PACK
A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS
Tue 1 – Sat 5 March 2022, Seligman Theatre, Chapter

Robert Bolt
A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS
Sir Thomas More

More is a man of an angel's wit and singular learning: I know not this fellow. For where is the man of that gentleness, lowliness and affability? And as time requireth a man of marvellous mirth and pastimes; and sometimes of as sad gravity: a man for all seasons.

Robert Whittington

Director
Peter Harding-Roberts

Performance Dates Tuesday 1 March – Saturday 5 March 2022
N.B. There will be a matinee on the Saturday

Performance Venue Seligman Theatre, Chapter

Rehearsal Dates The first rehearsal will be before Christmas.
Rehearsals will generally be on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on Sunday in the daytime.
Not everyone will be called to every rehearsal.
Additional rehearsal days may be called nearer the production period.

Auditions INITIAL AUDITIONS
Mon 22 Nov, 7pm-10pm
Thu 25 Nov, 7pm-10pm
Fri 26 Nov, 7pm-10pm
Sat 27 Nov, 10am-1pm & 2pm-5pm

RECALLS
Sat 28 Nov, 2pm-5pm

Book your audition: CONTACT PETER HARDING-ROBERTS
Phone: 07813 798804
Email: peterhardingroberts@gmail.com
Please state your preferred audition date.

Preparation: For auditions, we will be using the script that is freely available online [here](#). Please note that this is for convenience only; the online script is different from the Samuel French script, which will be used for the production.

Please prepare one of the pieces provided in this pack, which are taken from the online script, or choose a passage of your own from the online script (in which case please bring two copies to your audition).

You do not need to learn the piece by heart, and someone will be on hand at the audition to read in for dialogue passages.

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CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

The playing ages are a rough guide. I am not seeking historical accuracy re the actual ages of the historical characters.

THE COMMON MAN	Everyman. The narrator who slips in and out of the action, performing the roles that are carried out by everyday people. Those for whom at their birth it could not be said that “The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes”. Playing age - 30 to 60.
THOMAS MORE	Sometime Lord Chancellor to Henry VIII. Playing age - 45 to 65.
ALICE MORE	Wife of Thomas. Born into the merchant class. Playing age - 40 to 60.
MARGARET MORE	More’s daughter. Playing age - twenties.
WILLIAN ROPER	Suitor for the hand of Margaret. Playing age – twenties or thirties
THOMAS CROMWELL	The Machiavellian ring master of the King’s “Great Matter”. Playing age – 35 to 65.
RICHARD RICH	Employed by Cromwell when More refuses to. He will happily sell his soul to thrive. Playing age 25 to 35.
DUKE OF NORFOLK	A great magnate of England, but not a great intellectual. Playing age 45 to 65.
CARDINAL WOLSEY	The once mighty and all powerful colossus who has decayed and is about to fall. Playing age – over 60.
THOMAS CRANMER	The Archbishop of Canterbury. Appointed to comply. Playing age - 40 to 60.
HENRY VIII	Henry in his prime. Not a good man to say no to. Not a good man not to say yes to. Playing age – 35 to 45.
EUSTACE CHAPUYS	Ambassador of Emperor Charles V (nephew of Catherine of Aragon) to England. Playing age – 40 to 60.
CHAPUYS’ ATTENDANT	Playing age 25 to 35.
A WOMAN	Playing age -30 to 60



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AUDITION PIECES

Please prepare one of these pieces or a passage of your own choice from the [online script](#). You do not need to learn the piece by heart.

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THE COMMON MAN

COMMON MAN

(Rises) It is perverse! To start a play made up of Kings and Cardinals in speaking costumes and intellectuals with embroidered mouths, with me. If a King or a Cardinal had done the prologue he'd have had the right materials. And an intellectual would have shown enough majestic meanings, coloured propositions, and closely woven liturgical stuff to dress the House of Lords! But this! Is this a costume? Does this say anything? It barely covers one man's nakedness! A bit of black material to reduce Old Adam to the Common Man. Oh, if they'd let me come on naked, I could have shown you something of my own. Which would have told you without words-! Something I've forgotten... Old Adam's muffled up. *(Backing towards the basket)* Well, for a proposition of my own, I need a costume. *(Takes out and puts on the coat and hat of STEWARD)* Matthew! The Household Steward of Sir Thomas More! *(Lights come up swiftly on set. He takes from the basket five silver goblets, one larger than the others, and a jug with a lid, with which he furnishes the table. A burst of conversational merriment off; he pauses and indicates head of stairs)* There's company to dinner. *(He pours a cup of wine)* All right! A Common Man! A Sixteenth-Century Butler! *(He drinks from the cup)* All right-the Six-- *(He breaks off, agreeably surprised by the quality of the liquor, regards the jug respectfully and drinks again from jug)* The Sixteenth Century is the Century of the Common Man. *(He puts down the jug)* Like all the other centuries. And that's my proposition. *(During the last part of the speech, voices are heard off. Now, enter, at the head of the stairs, SIR THOMAS MORE)*

COMMON MAN

(Descending) I'm breathing. Are you breathing too? It's nice isn't it? It isn't difficult to keep alive friends, just don't make trouble. Or if you must make trouble, make the sort of trouble that's expected. Well, I don't need to tell you that. You remember the old adage. "Better a live rat than a dead lion".

With reference to the old adage: Thomas Cromwell was found guilty of High Treason and executed on 28 July 1540. Norfolk was found guilty of High Treason and should have been executed on 27 January 1547 but on the night of 26 January, the King died of syphilis and wasn't able to sign the warrant. Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was burned alive on 21 March 1556. *(pause)* *(brightly)* And Richard Rich became a Knight and Solicitor-General, a Baron and Lord Chancellor and died in his bed. So did I. And so, I hope will all of you. Well, I'm off. If we should bump into one another, recognise me. Goodnight. *(Waves and exits)*

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HENRY

- HENRY Aye, before he died. Wolsey named you and Wolsey was no fool.
- MORE He was a statesman of incomparable ability, Your Grace.
- HENRY Was he? Was he so? *(He rises)* Then why did he fail me? Be seated-it was villainy then! Yes, villainy. I was right to break him; he was all pride, Thomas; a proud man; Bride right through. And he failed me! *(MORE opens his mouth)* He failed me in the one thing that mattered! The one thing that matters, Thomas, then or now. And why? He wanted to be Pope! Yes, he wanted to be the Bishop of Rome. I'll tell you something, Thomas, and you can check this for yourself-it was never merry in England while we had Cardinals amongst us. *(He nods significantly at MORE, who lowers his eyes)* But look now- *(Walking away)* -I shall forget the feel of that... great tiller under my hands... I took her down to Dogget's Bank, went about and brought her up in Tilbury Roads. A man could sail clean round the world in that ship.
- MORE When I took the Great Seal your Majesty promised not to pursue me on this matter.
- HENRY Ha! So I break my word, Master More! No no, I'm joking... I joke roughly... *(He wanders away)* I often think I'm a rough fellow... Yes, a rough young fellow. *(He shakes his head indulgently)* Be seated... That's a rosebay. We have one like it at Hampton-not so red as that though. Ha-I'm in an excellent frame of mind. *(Glances at the rosebay)* Beautiful. *(Reasonable, pleasant)* You must consider, Thomas, that I stand in peril of my soul. It was no marriage; she was my brother's widow. Leviticus: "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife." Leviticus, Chapter eighteen, Verse sixteen.
- MORE Yes, Your Grace. But Deuteronomy—
- HENRY *(Triumphant)* Deuteronomy's ambiguous!
- MORE *(Bursting out)* Your Grace, I'm not fit to meddle in these matters - to me it seems a matter for the Holy See—
- HENRY *(Reprovingly)* Thomas, Thomas, does a man need a Pope to tell him when he's sinned? It was a sin, Thomas; I admit it; I repent. And God has punished me; I have no son... Son after son she's borne me, Thomas, all dead at birth, or dead within the month; I never saw the hand of God so clear in anything... I have a daughter, she's a good child, a well-set child- But I have no son. *(He flares up)* It is my bounden duty to put away the Queen, and all the Popes back to St. Peter shall not come between me and my duty! How is it that you cannot see? Everyone else does.
- MORE *(Eagerly)* Then why does Your Grace need my poor support.
- HENRY Because you are honest. What's more to the purpose, you're known to be honest... There are those like Norfolk who follow me because I wear the crown, and there are those like Master Cromwell who follow me because they are jackals with sharp teeth and I am their lion, and there is a mass that follows me because it follows anything that moves-and there is you.
- HENRY Touching this other business, mark you, Thomas, I'll have no opposition.
- MORE *(Sadly)* Your Grace?
- HENRY No opposition, I say! No opposition! Your conscience is your own affair; but you are my Chancellor! There, you have my word-I'll leave you out of it. But I don't take it kindly, Thomas, and I'll have no opposition! I see how it will be; the bishops will oppose me. The full-fed, hypocritical, "Princes of the Church"! Ha! As for the Pope! Am I to burn in Hell because the Bishop of Rome, with the King of Spain's knife to his throat, mouths me Deuteronomy? Hypocrites! They're all hypocrites! Mind they do not take you in, Thomas! Lie low if you will, but I'll brook no opposition-no noise! No words, no signs, no letters, no pamphlets- Mind that, Thomas-no writings against me!

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CROMWELL

CROMWELL Now, Sir Thomas, you stand upon your silence.

MORE I do.

CROMWELL But, Gentlemen of the jury, there are many kinds of silence. Consider first the silence of a man when he is dead. Let us say we go into the room where he is lying; and let us say it is in the dead of night-there's nothing like darkness for sharpening the ear; and we listen. What do we hear? Silence. What does it betoken, this silence? Nothing. This is silence, pure and simple. But consider another case. Suppose I were to draw a dagger from my sleeve and make to kill the prisoner with it, and suppose their lordships there, instead of crying out for me to stop or crying out for help to stop me, maintained their silence. That would betoken! It would betoken a willingness that I should do it, and under the law they would be guilty with me. So silence can, according to circumstances, speak. Consider, now, the circumstances of the prisoner's silence. The oath was put to good and faithful subjects up and down the country and they had declared His Grace's title to be just and good. And when it came to the prisoner he refused. He calls this silence. Yet is there a man in 58 this court, is there a man in this country, who does not know Sir Thomas More's opinion of the King's title? Of course not! But how can that be? Because this silence betokened-nay, this silence was not silence at all but most eloquent denial.

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MORE

- NORFOLK *(Leaping to his feet; all rise save MORE)* Prisoner at the bar, you have been found guilty of High Treason. The sentence of the Court
- MORE My lord! *(NORFOLK breaks off. MORE has a sly smile. From this point to end of play his manner is of one who has fulfilled all his obligations and will now consult no interests but his own)* My lord, when I was practicing the law, the manner was to ask the prisoner before pronouncing sentence, if he had anything to say.
- NORFOLK *(Flummoxed)* Have you anything to say?
- MORE Yes. *(He rises; all others sit)* To avoid this I have taken every path my winding wits would find. Now that the Court has determined to condemn me, God knoweth how, I will discharge my mind... concerning my indictment and the King's title. The indictment is grounded in an Act of Parliament which is directly repugnant to the Law of God. The King in Parliament cannot bestow the Supremacy of the Church because it is a Spiritual Supremacy! And more to this the immunity of the Church is promised both in Magna Carta and the King's own Coronation Oath!
- CROMWELL Now we plainly see that you are malicious!
- MORE Not so, Master Secretary! *(He pauses, and launches, very quietly, ruminatively, into his final stock-taking)* I am the King's true subject, and pray for him and all the realm... I do none harm, I say none harm, I think none harm. And if this be not enough to keep a man alive, in good faith I long not to live... I have, since I came into prison, been several times in such a case that I thought to die 61 within the hour, and I thank Our Lord I was never sorry for it, but rather sorry when it passed. And therefore, my poor body is at the King's pleasure. Would God my death might do him some good... *(With a great flash of scorn and anger)* Nevertheless, it is not for the Supremacy that you have sought my blood-but because I would not bend to the marriage

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RICH

RICH But yes! In money too.

MORE *(With gentle impatience)* No no no.

RICH Or pleasure. Titles, women, bricks-and-mortar, there's always something.

MORE Childish.

RICH Well, in suffering, certainly.

MORE *(Interested)* Buy a man with suffering?

RICH Impose suffering, and offer him-escape.

MORE Oh. For a moment I thought you were being profound. *(He gives a cup to RICH)*

RICH *(To STEWARD)* Good evening, Matthew.

STEWARD *(Snubbing)* 'Evening, sir.

RICH No, not a bit profound; it then becomes a purely practical question of how to make him suffer sufficiently.

MORE Mm... *(He takes him by the arm and walks with him)* And... who recommended you to read Signor Machiavelli? *(RICH breaks away laughing-a fraction too long. MORE smiles)* No, who? *(More laughter)*... Mm?

RICH Master Cromwell.

MORE Oh... *(He goes back to the wine jug and cups)* He's a very able man.

RICH And so he is!

MORE Yes, I say he is. He's very able.

RICH And he will do something for me, he says.

MORE I didn't know you knew him.

RICH Pardon me, Sir Thomas, but how much do you know about me?

MORE Whatever you've let me know.

RICH I've let you know everything!

MORE Richard, you should go back to Cambridge; you're deteriorating.

RICH Well, I'm not used!... D'you know how much I have to show for seven months' work

MORE Work?

RICH Work! Waiting's work when you wait as I wait, hard! For seven months, that's two hundred days, I have to show: the acquaintance of the Cardinal's outer doorman, the indifference of the Cardinal's inner doorman, and the Cardinal's chamberlain's hand in my chest!... Oh-also one half of a Good Morning delivered at fifty paces by the Duke of Norfolk. Doubtless he mistook me for someone.

MORE He was very affable at dinner.

RICH Oh, everyone's affable here... *(MORE is pleased)* Also of course, the friendship of Sir Thomas More. Or should I say acquaintance?

MORE Say friendship.

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RICH Well, there! "A friend of Sir Thomas and still no office? There must be something wrong with him."

MORE I thought we said friendship... *(He considers; then)* The Dean of St. Paul's offers you a post; with a house, a servant and fifty pounds a year.

RICH What? What post?

MORE At the never school.

RICH *(Bitterly disappointed)* A teacher!

MORE A man should go where he won't be tempted. Look, Richard, see this. *(He hands him a silver cup)* Look... Look...

RICH Beautiful.

MORE Italian... Do you want it?

RICH Why?

MORE No joke; keep it; or sell it.

RICH Well- Thank you, of course. Thank you! Thank you! But-

MORE You'll sell it, won't you?

RICH Well-I- Yes, I will.

MORE And buy, what?

RICH *(With sudden ferocity)* Some decent clothes!

MORE *(With sympathy)* Ah.

RICH I want a gown like yours.

MORE You'll get several gowns for that I should think. It was sent to me a little while ago by some woman. Now she's put a lawsuit into the Court of Requests. It's a bribe, Richard.

RICH Oh... *(Chagrined)* So you give it away, of course.

MORE Yes!

RICH To me?

MORE Well, I'm not going to keep it, and you need it. Of course-if you feel it's contaminated...

RICH No, no. I'll risk it. *(They both smile)*

MORE But, Richard, in office they offer you all sorts of things. I was once offered a whole village, with a mill, and a manor house, and heaven knows what else-a coat of arms, I shouldn't be surprised. Why not be a teacher? You'd be a fine teacher. Perhaps even a great one.

RICH And if I was, who would know it?

MORE You, your pupils, your friends, God. Not a bad public, that... Oh, and a quiet life.

RICH *(Laughing)* You say that!

MORE Richard, I was commanded into office; it was inflicted on me... *(RICH regards him)* Can't you believe that?

RICH It's hard.

MORE *(Grimly)* Be a teacher.

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NORFOLK

- MORE Howard, they won't bring me a boat.
- NORFOLK Do you blame them?
- MORE Is it as bad as that?
- NORFOLK It's every bit as bad as that!
- MORE *(Gravely)* Then it's good of you to be seen with me.
- NORFOLK *(Looking back, off)* I followed you.
- MORE *(Surprised)* Were you followed?
- NORFOLK Probably. *(Facing him)* So listen to what I have to say: You're behaving like a fool. You're behaving like a crank. You're not behaving like a gentleman- All right, that means nothing to you; but what about your friends?
- MORE What about them?
- NORFOLK Goddammit, you're dangerous to know!
- MORE Then don't know me.
- NORFOLK There's something further... You must have realized by now there's a... policy, with regards to you. *(MORE nods)* The King is using me in it.
- MORE That's clever. That's Cromwell... You're between the upper and the nether millstones then.
- NORFOLK I am!
- MORE Howard, you must cease to know me.
- NORFOLK I do know you! I wish I didn't but I do!
- MORE I mean as a friend.
- NORFOLK You are my friend!
- MORE I can't relieve you of your obedience to the King, Howard. You must relieve yourself of our friendship. No one's safe now, and you have a son.
- NORFOLK You might as well advise a man to change the color of his hair! I'm fond of you, and there it is! You're fond of me, and there it is!
- MORE What's to be done then?
- NORFOLK *(With deep appeal)* Give in.
- MORE *(Gently)* I can't give in, Howard- *(A smile)* You might as well advise a man to change the colour of his eyes. I can't. Our friendship's more mutable than that.
- NORFOLK Oh, that's immutable, is it? The one fixed point in a world of changing friendships is that Thomas More will not give in!
- MORE *(Urgent to explain)* To me it has to be, for that's myself! Affection goes as deep in me as you think, but only God is love right through, Howard; and that's my self.
- NORFOLK And who are you? Goddammit, man, it's disproportionate! We're supposed to be the arrogant ones, the proud, splenetic ones-and we've all given in! Why must you stand out? *(Quietly and quickly)* You'll break my heart.

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- MORE *(Moved)* We'll do it now, Howard: part, as friends, and meet as strangers. *(He attempts to take NORFOLK'S hand)*
- NORFOLK *(Throwing it off)* Daft, Thomas! Why d'you want to take your friendship from me? For friendship's sake! You say we'll meet as strangers and every word you've said confirms our friendship!
- MORE *(Takes a last affectionate look at him)* Oh, that can be remedied. *(Walks away, turns; in a tone of deliberate insult)* Norfolk, you're a fool.
- NORFOLK *(Starts; then smiles and folds his arms)* You can't place a quarrel; you haven't the style.
- MORE Hear me out. You and your class have "given in"-as you rightly call it-because the religion of this country means nothing to you one way or the other.
- NORFOLK Well, that's a foolish saying for a start; the nobility of England has always been
- MORE The nobility of England, my lord, would have snored through the Sermon on the Mount. But you'll labour like Thomas Aquinas over a rat-dog's pedigree. Now what's the name of those distorted creatures you're all breeding at the moment?
- NORFOLK *(Steadily, but roused towards anger by MORE'S tone)* An artificial quarrel's not a quarrel.
- MORE Don't deceive yourself, my lord, we've had a quarrel since the day we met, our friendship was but sloth.
- NORFOLK You can be cruel when you've a mind to be; but I've always known that.
- MORE What's the name of those dogs? Marsh mastiffs? Bog beagles?
- NORFOLK Water spaniels!
- MORE And what would you do with a water spaniel that was afraid of water? You'd hang it! Well, as a spaniel is to water, so is a man to his own self. I will not give in because I oppose it-I do-not my pride, not my spleen, nor any other of my appetites but I do-! *(MORE goes up to him and feels him up and down like an animal. MARGARET'S voice is heard, well off, calling her father. MORE'S attention is irresistibly caught by this; but he turns back determinedly to NORFOLK)* Is there no single sinew in the midst of this that serves no appetite of Norfolk's but is just Norfolk? There is! Give that some exercise, my lord!
- MARGARET *(Off, nearer)* Father?
- NORFOLK *(Breathing hard)* Thomas. . .
- MORE Because as you stand, you'll go before your Maker in a very ill condition! *(Enter MARGARET, below; she stops, amazed at them)*
- NORFOLK Now steady, Thomas.
- MORE And he'll have to think that somewhere back along your pedigree-a bitch got over the wall! *(NORFOLK lashes out at him; he ducks and winces. Exit NORFOLK)*

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WOLSEY

(Enter WOLSEY He sits at the table and immediately commences writing, watched by COMMON MAN, who then exits. Enter MORE)

WOLSEY *(Writing)* It's half-past one. Where've you been? *(A bell strikes one)*

MORE One o'clock, Your Grace. I've been on the river. *(WOLSEY writes in silence while MORE waits standing)*

WOLSEY *(Still writing, pushes paper across the table)* Since you seemed so violently opposed to the dispatch for Rome, I thought you'd like to look it over.

MORE *(Touched)* Thank you, Your Grace.

WOLSEY Before it goes.

MORE *(Smiles)* Your Grace is very kind. *(He takes it and reads)* Thank you.

WOLSEY Well, what d'you think of it? *(He is still writing)*

MORE It seems very well phrased, Your Grace.

WOLSEY *(After a pause, briskly)* You're a constant regret to me, Thomas. If you could just see facts flat on, without that horrible moral squint; with just a little common sense, you could have been a statesman.

MORE *(After a little pause)* Oh, Your Grace flatters me.

WOLSEY Don't frivol... Thomas, are you going to help me?

MORE *(Hesitates, looks away)* If Your Grace will be specific.

WOLSEY Ach, you're a plodder! Take you altogether, Thomas, your scholarship, your experience, what are you? *(A single trumpet calls, distant, frosty and clear. WOLSEY gets up and goes and looks from the window)* Come here. *(MORE joins him)* The King.

MORE Yes.

MORE *(Starting up in horrified alarm)* For God's sake, Your Grace

WOLSEY Then the King needs a son; I repeat, what are you going to do about it?

WOLSEY Where has he been? D'you know?

MORE I, Your Grace?

WOLSEY Oh, spare me your discretion. He's been to play in the mud again.

MORE *(Coldly)* Indeed.

WOLSEY Indeed! Indeed! Are you going to oppose me? *(Trumpet sounds again. WOLSEY visibly relaxes)* He's gone in... *(He leaves the window)* All right, we'll plod. The King wants a son; what are you going to do about it?

MORE *(Dry murmur)* I'm very sure the King needs no advice from me on what to do about it.

WOLSEY *(From behind, grips his shoulder fiercely)* Thomas, we're alone. I give you my word. There's no one here.

MORE I didn't suppose there was, Your Grace.

WOLSEY Oh. Sit down! *(He goes to the table, sits, signals MORE to sit.)*

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- MORE *(unsuspectingly obeys. Then, deliberately loud)* Do you favor a change of dynasty, Sir Thomas? D'you think two Tudors is sufficient?
- MORE *(Steadily)* I pray for it daily.
- WOLSEY *(Softly)* God's death, he means it... That thing out there's at least fertile, Thomas.
- MORE But she's not his wife.
- WOLSEY No, Catherine's his wife and she's as barren as a brick. Are you going to pray for a miracle?
- MORE There are precedents.
- WOLSEY Yes. All right. Good. Pray. Pray by all means. But in addition to prayer there is effort. My effort's to secure a divorce. Have I your support or have I not?
- MORE *(Sits)* A dispensation was granted so that the King might marry Queen Catherine, for state reasons. Now we are to ask the Pope to-dispense with his dispensation, also for state reasons?
- WOLSEY I don't like plodding, Thomas, don't make me plod longer than I have to- Well?
- MORE Then clearly all we have to do is approach His Holiness and ask him. *(The pace becomes rapid)*
- WOLSEY I think we might influence His Holiness' answer
- MORE Like this? *(Indicating the dispatch)*
- WOLSEY Like that and in other ways—
- MORE I've already expressed my opinion on this
- WOLSEY Then, good night! Oh, your conscience is your own affair; but you're a statesman! Do you remember the Yorkist Wars?
- MORE Very clearly.
- WOLSEY Let him die without an heir and we'll have them back again. Let him die without an heir and this "peace" you think so much of will go out like that! *(He extinguishes the candle)* Very well then... England needs an heir; certain measures, perhaps regrettable, perhaps not- *(Pompous)* there is much in the Church that needs reformation, Thomas- *(MORE smiles)* All right, regrettable! But necessary, to get us an heir! Now explain how you as Councilor of England can obstruct those measures for the sake of your own, private, conscience.

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ALICE

(ALICE Enters at the head of the stairs in her nightgown)

ALICE Young Roper! I've just seen young Roper! On my horse.

MORE He'll bring it back, dear. He's been to see Margaret.

ALICE Oh-why you don't beat that girl!

MORE No, no, she's full of education-and it's a delicate commodity.

ALICE Mm! And mores the pity!

MORE Yes, but it's there now and think what it cost. *(He sneezes)*

ALICE *(Pouncing)* Ah! Margaret-hot water. *(Exit MARGARET)*

MORE I'm sorry you were awakened, chick.

ALICE I wasn't sleeping very deeply. Thomas-what did Wolsey want?

MORE *(Innocently)* Young Roper asked me for Margaret.

ALICE What! Impudence!

MORE Yes, wasn't it?

ALICE Old fox! What did he want, Thomas?

MORE He wanted me to read a dispatch.

ALICE Was that all?

MORE A Latin dispatch.

ALICE Oh! You don't want to talk about it?

MORE *(Gently)* No. *(Enter MARGARET with a cup, which she takes to MORE)*

ALICE Norfolk was speaking for you as Chancellor before he left.

MORE He's a dangerous friend then. Wolsey's Chancellor, God help him. We don't want another. *(MARGARET takes the cup to him; he sniffs it)* I don't want this.

ALICE Drink it. Great men get colds in the head just the same as commoners.

MORE That's dangerous, leveling talk, Alice. Beware of the Tower.

ALICE Drink it!

MORE *(Rises)* I will, I'll drink it in bed. *(They shove to the stairs and ascend, talking)*

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MARGARET

(She curtsys low)

HENRY *(Looking her over)* Why, Margaret, they told me you were a scholar. *(MARGARET is confused)*

MORE Answer, Margaret.

MARGARET Among women I pass for one, Your Grace. *(NORFOLK and ALICE exchange approving glances)*

HENRY Antiquone modo Latine loqueris, an Oxoniensi?
[Is your Latin the old Latin, or Oxford Latin?]

MARGARET Quem me docuit pater, Domine.
[My father's Latin, Sire.]

HENRY Bene. Optimus est. Graecamne linguam quoque to docuit?
[Good. That is the best. And has he taught you Greek too?]

MARGARET Graecam me docuit non pater meus sed mei patris amicus, Johannes Coletus, Sancti Pauli Decanus. In litteris Graecis tamen, note minus quam Latinis, ars magistri minuitur discipuli stultitia.
[Not my father, Sire, but my father's friend, John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's. But it is with the Greek as it is with the Latin; the skill of the master is lost in the pupil's lack of it.]
(Her Latin is better than his; he is not altogether pleased)

HENRY Ho! *(He walks away from her, talking; she begins to rise from her curtsy; MORE gently presses her down again before KING HENRY turns)* Take care, Thomas: "too much learning is a weariness of the flesh, and there is no end to the making of books." *(Back to MARGARET)* Can you dance, too?

MARGARET Not well, Your Grace.

HENRY Well, I dance superlatively! *(He plants his leg before her face)* That's a dancer's leg, Margaret! *(She has the wit to look straight up and smile at him. All good humor, he pulls her to her feet, sees NORFOLK grinning the grin of a comrade)* Hey, Norfolk? *(Indicates NORFOLK'S leg with much distaste)* Now that's a wrestler's leg. But I can throw him. *(Seizes NORFOLK)* Shall I show them, Howard? *(NORFOLK is alarmed for his dignity. To MARGARET)* Shall I?

MARGARET *(Looking at NORFOLK; gently)* No, Your Grace.

HENRY *(Releases NORFOLK; seriously)* You are gentle. *(To MORE, approvingly)* That's good. *(To MARGARET)* You shall read to me. *(MARGARET is about to demur)* No no, you shall read to me. Lady Alice, the river's given me an appetite.

AUDITION PACK
A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS
Tue 1 – Sat 5 March 2022, Seligman Theatre, Chapter

ROPER

- MORE *(A bit puzzled)* How long have you been here? Are you in the King's party?
- ROPER No, sir, I am not in the King's party! *(Advancing)* It's of that I wish to speak to you. My spirit is perturbed.
- MORE *(Suppressing a grin)* It is, Will? Why?
- ROPER I've been offered a seat in the next Parliament. *(MORE looks up sharply)* Ought I to take it?
- MORE No... Well that depends. With your views on Church Reform I should have thought you could do yourself a lot of good in the next Parliament.
- ROPER My views on the Church, I must confess- Since last we met my views have somewhat modified. *(MORE and MARGARET exchange a smile)* I modify nothing concerning the body of the Church-the money-changers in the temple must be scourged from thence-with a scourge of fire if that is needed! But an attack on the Church herself! No, I see behind that an attack on God
- MORE Roper—
- ROPER The Devil's work!
- MORE Roper!
- ROPER To be done by the Devil's ministers!
- MORE For heaven's sake remember my office!
- ROPER Oh, if you stand on your office
- MORE I don't stand on it, but there are certain things I may not hear!
- ROPER Sophistication. It is what I was told. The Court has corrupted you, Sir Thomas; you are not the man you were; you have learned to study your "convenience"; you have learned to flatter!
- MORE There, Alice, you see? I have a reputation for it.

AUDITION PACK

A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

Tue 1 – Sat 5 March 2022, Seligman Theatre, Chapter

CHAPUYS

- CHAPUYS Sir Thomas More!
- MORE Signor Chapuys? You're up very late, Your Excellency.
- CHAPUYS *(Significantly)* So is the Cardinal, Sir Thomas.
- MORE *(Closing up)* He sleeps very little.
- CHAPUYS You have just left him, I think.
- MORE You are correctly informed. As always.
- CHAPUYS I will not ask you the subject of your conversation... *(He waits)*
- MORE No, of course not.
- CHAPUYS Sir Thomas, I will be plain with you... plain, that is, so far as the diplomatic decencies permit. *(Loudly)* My master Charles, the King of Spain! *(Pulls MOBS aside; discreetly)* My master Charles, the King of Spain, feels himself concerned in anything concerning his blood relations. He would feel himself insulted by any insult offered to his mother's sister! I refer, of course, to Queen Catherine. *(He regards MORE keenly)* The King of Spain would feel himself insulted by any insult offered to Queen Catherine.
- MORE His feeling would be natural.
- CHAPUYS *(Consciously shy)* Sir Thomas, may I ask if you and the Cardinal parted, how shall I say, amicably?
- MORE Amicably... Yes.
- CHAPUYS *(A shade indignant)* In agreement?
- MORE Amicably.
- CHAPUYS *(Warmly)* Say no more, Sir Thomas; I understand.
- MORE *(A bit worried)* I hope you do, Your Excellency.
- CHAPUYS You are a good man.
- MORE I don't see- how you deduce that from what I told you.
- CHAPUYS *(Holds up a hand)* A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse. I understand. You are a good man. *(He turns to exit)* Dominus vobiscum. *(CHAPUYS exits. MORE looks after him)*