

## MOTHER'S DAUGHTER

MOTHER'S DAUGHTER

BY KATE HENNIG

DIRECTED BY ALAN DILWORTH

### GRADE RECOMMENDATION

Suitable for Grade 9 and up.

### CONTENT ADVISORY FOR STUDENTS

Explores mature themes.

### STUDENT MATINÉE DATES

May 22, 28; September 4, 6, 11, 12, 17, 19, 26, 27; October 2, 3.

### ABOUT THE PLAY

This is the third play in Kate Hennig's "Queenmaker Trilogy." The first two were *The Last Wife* and *The Virgin Trial*, shortlisted for the 2017 Carol Bolt Award and for the Governor General's Literary Award for Drama.

### SYNOPSIS

Lady Jane Grey is crowned queen soon after Edward VI's death. She is placed on the throne in a secret agreement by Edward out of fear that Mary would try to restore Catholicism in England.

Mary is visited by the ghost of her mother, Catalina (Catherine of Aragon), who pressures her to seize the throne, reinstate her parents' legitimate marriage, re-establish Catholicism in the kingdom and kill both her cousin, Lady Jane Grey, and Mary's half-sister, Bess.

John Dudley, Jane's father-in-law has gathered a force together to capture Mary. With pressure from her advisors, Susan (Susan Clarencieux) and Bassett (Anne Bassett), Mary assembles her own followers and supporters. The government switches allegiance and declares Mary the legitimate heir to the throne.

As preparations for Mary's coronation are being made, Susan, Bassett and Simon (Simon Renaud), the Spanish Ambassador, put pressure on Mary regarding marriage, Catholic restoration, Lady Jane Grey's imprisonment, Bess's questionable loyalty and her leanings toward Protestantism, and the possibility of executing both Jane and Bess. Mary is indecisive and rebuffs Simon's attempt to have her consider marriage.

Mary is visited by the ghosts of Catalina and Anne Boleyn, holding the infant Bess. Catalina instructs her daughter to kill the infant, who is a threat to her throne. Mary demurs. At Mary's coronation, she pardons Edward Courtney and Henry Grey as an attempt to demonstrate tolerance. Bess questions Mary's judgement at not having Lady Jane Grey executed.



SHANNON TAYLOR (FRONT), IRENE POOLE

Mary's advisors, Susan, Bassett and Simon, present possible suitors for Mary's consideration. She chooses Prince Philip of Spain, but the marriage is unpopular with the English, who view this as unpatriotic and a further push toward Catholicism. As a result, insurrections break out. Thomas Wyatt, the younger, along with the Duke of Suffolk (Lady Jane Grey's father), lead a force from Kent to depose Mary in favour of Bess. Mary declares publicly that she will ask Parliament to decide if her marriage will hurt the kingdom in any way, and if so, she will abstain from marriage. Upon entering London, the traitors are captured. Mary has Wyatt, the Duke of Suffolk, Lady Jane Grey and her husband, Guilford Dudley, executed. Bess protests she had no hand in the rebellion, but is imprisoned in the Tower of London and later placed under house arrest at Woodstock Palace.

When Mary is believed to be pregnant, Bess is released from house arrest to witness the birth. However, it proves to be a false pregnancy, and Philip leaves England to command his forces in Flanders. Simon presents Mary with Philip's ultimatum to have him crowned King and lead the country. Mary balks at this suggestion.

Catalina and Anne visit Mary once again. Anne points out that Mary is childless and that Bess is Mary's rightful heir. An angry Mary issues a proclamation to compel her subjects to follow Catholicism or risk being burned as heretics.

Mary dies in 1558, leaving Bess (becoming Elizabeth I) as her heir. She is buried in Westminster Abbey in a tomb she would eventually share with Bess.

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

### GLOBAL COMPETENCIES:

- Creativity
- Learning to Learn/Self-Awareness
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Critical Thinking

### GRADES 9–12:

- Language/English (listening to understand, speaking to communicate, reading for meaning)
- Drama, Music, Visual Art

### GRADES 9–12:

- Health and PE (interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, harassment, bullying, leadership)

### GRADE 11:

- Introduction to Anthropology, Psychology and Sociology (explaining social behaviour and socialization)
- Gender Studies (power relations, sex and gender)
- Equity, Diversity and Social Justice (the social construction of identity, power and relations)

### GRADE 12:

- Equity and Social Justice: From Theory to Practice (power relations, historical and contemporary issues, leadership)
- World History Since the Fifteenth Century (social, economic and political context)
- Adventures in World History (politics and conflict)
- World Cultures (power relations)

## THEMES

- Women: Female Voices, Leadership and Empowerment
- Power: Political and Personal; Rivalry, Manipulation and Competition; Loyalty and Legitimacy
- Institutions: Religion, Monarchy and Government

## CLASSROOM WARM-UP

Look at the following nursery rhyme, which is sometimes attributed to Mary I of England:

*Mary, Mary, quite contrary,  
How does your garden grow?  
With silver bells, and cockle shells,  
And pretty maids all in a row. Or [And so my garden grows]*

Do some research to find out its history.

Why is it considered an allegory?

What does it tell us about Mary's life and leadership in terms of family, religion, power and manipulation?

What else can you discover or hypothesize from this nursery rhyme?

## ENRICHMENT

Private workshops and post-show chats may be arranged by calling the Education Department at 519.271.4040, ext. 2354.

Festival Theatre and Costume Warehouse tours may be arranged by calling the Box Office at 1.800.567.1600.

### BOOKING INFORMATION

**Online:** [www.stratfordfestival.ca/schools](http://www.stratfordfestival.ca/schools)

**Email:** [groups@stratfordfestival.ca](mailto:groups@stratfordfestival.ca)

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