

THE BOB HOPE THEATRE ACTORS' COMPANY PRESENTS...

ALYS, ALWAYS



12th - 15th March 2025

At 7.45pm Tickets £14

(Concessions £12 Not available Fri or Sat Eve.)

on-line at www.bobhopetheatre.co.uk

or call/visit Box office 0208 850 3702

Wythfield Rd, Eltham, SE9 5TG,

from 10am to 1pm Tuesday to Saturday.



BOB HOPE THEATRE ACTORS' COMPANY

Bob Hope Theatre, Wythfield Road, Eltham, London SE9 5TG

AUDITION NOTICE & PRODUCTION INFORMATION

ALYS, ALWAYS by Lucinda Coxon

Based on the novel by Harriet Lane

Director: Barrie Smith

Performance dates: 12th - 15th March 2025

Read Through: Sunday, 13th October at 10.30 am

Auditions: Monday 21st & Tuesday 22nd October at 7.30 pm

Rehearsals: Every Tuesday and Thursday evening at 7.30 pm, starting Thursday 7th November. Also Sundays at 10.30 am, starting Sunday 9th February. There will be a break in rehearsals over Christmas and the New Year.

For any questions or further details please email: auditions@bobhopetheatre.org.uk

Introduction

Described as “a study in stealth, in which we see the meek inherit the earth,” *Alys, Always* is a fast-paced, psychological thriller. When first published the novel was a best-seller and hugely popular. This stage adaptation (originally seen at the Bridge Theatre in 2019) will give those familiar with the novel a chance to see a gripping new version and those coming to it for the first time to experience a deeply unsettling and intriguing story which details the transformation of a ruthlessly ambitious “ugly duckling” into a beautiful and manipulative swan.

Plot

The play's central character, Frances, is a timid, unappreciated, but capable, office dogsbody, who works on the books section of a Sunday newspaper. Her life begins to change when she witnesses a fatal car accident and learns that the crash victim is Alys Kyte, wife of the famous novelist Laurence Kyte. When the Kyte family contacts Frances to thank her for comforting the dying Alys, Frances senses her chance to escape the humdrum life she leads and to enter the privileged world of the rich and famous. Frances becomes a trusted confidante of the Kyte family and shamelessly exploits her newfound connection to advance her career. Frances's principal target is Laurence Kyte, novelist husband of Alys and increasingly in thrall to his new muse, Frances. Laurence is so blinded by his own self-importance, he is easily wrong-footed and manipulated by the scheming Frances, who sees him clearly for what he is – a vain and ageing womaniser. By the end of the play, Frances has morphed from the perpetually put-upon skivvy to a self-assured and cunning sociopath, who is firmly established in the Kyte household and plotting her next move.

Principal Roles

Frances Thorpe – late 20s / early 30s. The play's central character who also acts as narrator. Shy and retiring at the start of the play, Frances gradually exploits her good fortune to become ruthlessly sly and manipulative. Displays increasingly disturbing behaviour.

Mary Pym – 40s. Books Editor, Frances's boss. Forthright, formidable, harassed, caustic.

Laurence Kyte – 50s. Famous novelist. Widower. Rich, smug, an ageing womaniser.

Polly Kyte – early 20s. Laurence’s daughter. A drama student. Insecure, fragile, shallow.

Supporting Roles

Alys Kyte – late 40s / 50s. Laurence’s wife. Injured in the car accident which opens the play. Kind, artistic, dignified. (Could be doubled with Mrs Thorpe.)

Female Police Officer – 20s/30s. Attends the car accident. Sympathetic, kind, helpful. (Could be doubled with Audrey Cullum.)

Oliver Culpepper – mid-20s. Deputy Books Editor. Loud, extrovert, lazy, displays an oily charm.

Sid – 30s. Work colleague attracted to Frances. Friendly, chatty.

Robin McAlfree – elderly. Harassed newspaper editor. (Could be doubled with Mr Thorpe.)

Charlotte Black – 50s / 60s. Family friend of the Kyte’s and Laurence’s agent. Warm, friendly.

Teddy Kyte – mid 20s. Laurence’s son. Taciturn, angry, suspicious of Frances’s motives.

Mrs Thorpe – 60s. Retired. Frances’s mother. Conventional, staid, set in her ways.

Mr Thorpe – 60s. Retired. Frances’s father. Kindly, conservative, respectable.

Audrey Cullum – 40s. Journalist. Loud, brash, extrovert.

Receptionist – will probably be recorded.

Non-Speaking Roles – Julia Price; Waiter; Courier

Audition Pieces – text used is the official playscript published by Nick Hern Books.

Pp 10-18 – Frances, Alys, Police Officer, Oliver & Mary

Pp 23-30 – Frances, Laurence, Charlotte, Polly & Teddy

Pp 35-39 – Frances, Mary, Mrs Thorpe & Mr Thorpe

Pp 40-43 – Frances & Polly

Pp 45-46 – Frances & Sid

Pp 46-51 – Frances & Polly

Pp 53-58 – Frances, Mary, Robin & Audrey Cullum

Pp 59-63 – Frances, Laurence & Teddy

Pp 74-76 – Frances & Teddy

Pp 79-83 – Frances & Charlotte

P 84 – Frances, Mrs Thorpe, Mr Thorpe

Pp 93-98 – Frances, Laurence & Oliver