

Phillip Thomas

"Henry: Portraits From Tudor Times"

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I. Fanfare

Heralds sound the fanfare at the opening of the court
of King Henry

Viii: a stately procession reveals lavish pageantry and
splendour.

II. Lutes Chorus

A great feast in the Long Hall is followed by dancing
and games at

Which the Master of the Revels presides; members of
the "King's

Musick" accompany, and Richmond Palace glows long
into the night,

Lighting the royal barges upon the river.

III. Misty Battlements

Dawn breaks on Gloucester Castle. A Knight looks out
over his misty

Battlements. There is talk of war with France; suddenly
the almost

Uneasy days of peace have ended and the air is filled
with excitement.

Once again he will ride with his King, for the honour of
England, and

Strive to do valiant deeds. Once again he will trust his
fate to the

Almighty and leave behind him a proud and gracious
lady, anxious both

For his speedy return and glory in the field. And yet he
is sad. As

The scarves of mist unfurl on the bare courtyard below
he raises his

Hands to his eyes, and scans the horizon, beyond the
necks of the

Trees, far away over the plains, over that broad stretch
of blue to

France and all that awaits...

IV. Henry Goes To War: France

Preparation for War: The Fleet assembles. Across the
fields and

Meadows of Brittany. The greasing of catapults and the
sharpening of

Arrows: -- the Siege of Tournai. Nightfall upon the

English camp: Sir
Guy dreams of Gloucester.
The Battle of the Spurs: Dawn carnage. The crash of
mace upon armour
And steel upon scabbard. The English are victorious
but many lie,
Seeing only a wide open sky...
V. Death Of A Knight On The Field Of France
The lady rises from her spinning-wheel and
approaches the window.
Gazing forth from her Tower she views the pleasant
verdant landscape.
Beneath her, the courtyard and paddocks are
deserted; beyond the
Gentle-sloping water and hillocks are dimming in the
crepuscular
Light. All is still save the occasional cries of curlews
fleeing the
Approaching night. She waits. No heavy voices or tramp
of hooves echo
From below. Somewhere, far beyond her sight, men,
deep in song and
Crowned in triumph, are swarming back along dusky
tracks to their
Shires. A door creaks, but all remains silent, unmoving.
No-one comes.
With a sigh she draws the heavy folds across the
awning, shutting out
The night.
VI. Triumphant Return From War
Heralds' Fanfare greets the returning, victorious army;
the streets
Are lined with folk shouting "Cry God For Hal," eager
for a glimpse of
Their bold and heroic prince.
Finally, all join in Prayer and Thanksgiving in the Chapel
Royal.

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