



CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE'S HENRY

By James Lewis Huss

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Christopher Marlowe's *Henry*

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Cast of Characters:

Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond

King Henry VIII of England

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey

Anne Boleyn, Queen of England

Mary Howard, Duchess of Richmond

Mary Tudor, Heir to the Throne

Thomas Cromwell, 1st Earl of Essex

Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury

Elizabeth (Bessie) Blount

Sir Thomas More

Mary Shelton

Papal Legate/Jester

Attendants

Bailiff

Men

1 ACT I [Hampton Court Palace, 1533]

2 Scene 1 [The Great Hall]

3 *A feast. Around the table sit HENRY FITZROY, DUKE OF RICHMOND, chatting with HENRY HOWARD,*
4 *EARL OF SURREY, to his right. The seat of KING HENRY VIII, centered and to FITZROY'S left, is*
5 *empty. Opposite HENRY VIII'S seat sit QUEEN ANNE BOLEYN and MARY HOWARD, DUCHESS OF*
6 *RICHMOND. To MARY HOWARD'S left are THOMAS CROMWELL, 1ST EARL OF ESSEX; and THOMAS*
7 *CRANMER, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY. To the right of HENRY HOWARD is an empty seat.*

8 HOWARD (*aside to FITZ*): No lie—I rode that hobby horse all night!

9 FITZROY (*aside to HOW*): If I don't get some circle soon, I'll die.

10 HOWARD (*aside to FITZ*): Be firm, dear friend—you're married now! Tonight

11 Your little one-eyed squire will be inside

12 Of Mary Howard's country chambermaid.

13 Tonight your blunted arrow will be safe

14 Within her clammy quiver. And tonight

15 Your—

16 FITZROY (*aside to HOW*): Howie! —she's your sister.

17 HOWARD (*aside to FITZ*): So? I care

18 Not what she does in bed. She's married now.

19 Besides, she's not my property. She's free.

20 But soft, my prince, my friend, my Fitz—tonight

21 Your little maidenhead will be undid!

22 FITZROY (*aside to HOW*): But Howie, I know not what I'm to do.

23 *HOWARD thinks.*

24 HOWARD (*aside to FITZ*): I'd start with Ye Olde Lancelot!

48 CROMWELL (*aside CRAN*): It matters not—if Anne Boleyn cannot
49 produce an heir with balls she'll be no use.

50 CRANMER (*aside CROM*): But soft! She's young and ... *fertile*. And besides,
51 We've Henry Fitzroy, Henry's bastard son.

52 CROMWELL (*aside CRAN*): And how's a bastard regent going to mend
53 This broken kingdom? Bessie Blount was but
54 A bloody chambermaid, a royal whore.
55 The Catholics in this country won't accept
56 The bastard baby of that bastard king
57 Who turned their dogma into blasphemy.

58 CRANMER (*aside CROM*): And what about the Protestants? They'll turn
59 Against that papist if she takes the throne.

60 CROMWELL (*aside CRAN*): There wouldn't be an issue if our King
61 Did not insert his prick in everything.

62 ANNE: Prince Henry, have you seen your royal pap?
63 FITZROY: Of course. He's blonde and tall and very fat—
64 ANNE: I mean *today*!

65 HOWARD: The Prince and I have all
66 Day long been chatting of our stay in gay
67 *Paris* last year. We haven't seen the King.

68 FITZROY: *Paris*! I couldn't get enough of that
69 Parisian cock ... of ... cock—
70 ANNE: It's *coq au vin*!

71 FITZROY: It was the greatest meat that ever graced
72 These lips of mine.

73 HOWARD: 'Tis what milady said.

74 *FITZROY and HOWARD giggle. ANNE is not amused.*

75 ANNE: Pray tell, is that the—

76 *Enter MARY TUDOR. Everyone but ANNE stands up.*

77 ANNE (*begrudgingly*): Lady Mary.

78 MARY: I'm.

79 *A. Princess—*

80 ANNE: *Lady Mary, have you seen—*

81 MARY: When last I saw my father, he was in
82 The royal kitchen eating all the balls
83 And sausage. That was earlier today.

84 *ANNE groans.*

85 CROMWELL: Your Royal Highness.

86 CRANMER: Praise to Jesus Christ.

87 *CROMWELL and CRANMER bow respectfully and take their seats. MARY H. curtsies and then sits.*

88 *MARY T. sits down in the empty seat next to HENRY HOWARD. HOWARD and FITZROY sit.*

89 FITZROY: It's nice to see you, Princess. Have you met
90 My best friend Henry? He writes poetry.

91 *HOWARD licks his index and pinkie fingers and smooths his eyebrows with them [fixes collar,*
92 *straightens shirt, etc.].*

93 HOWARD: I also joust and play recorder and—

94 MARY T: My father likes to play that ugly thing.

95 FITZROY: Yes—Henry prattles on about it all

96 The time. He wants to be just like the King.

97 MARY T: Oh really, best friend Henry? Why is that?

98 HOWARD: The King can joust and dance and write and sketch—

99 MARY T: And what of all the wanton maids he beds?

100 HOWARD: He’s such a stud!

101 MARY T (*disgusted*): You’re just like all the rest.

102 HOWARD (*desperately*): He talks philosophy with people like

103 The maven Thomas More and—

104 MARY T: Thomas More’s

105 About to lose his head, you knave. Go to.

106 FITZROY (*aside to HOW*): Ignore her, Howie. She’s just mad because

107 Your cousin wears the crown her mum once wore.

108 And ... Mary thinks your cousin is a whore.

109 HOWARD (*aside to FITZ*): My cousin *is* a whore.

110 FITZROY (*aside to HOW*): That’s not the point.

111 ANNE B. (*exasperated*): Have any of you creatures seen the King?

112 *KING HENRY VIII enters through the audience, singing loudly. The COURT stands. KING HENRY is*

113 *carrying a mug of beer and dressed in an ill-fitting Robin Hood costume.*

114 HENRY: My little brother comes with me

115 To all the jousting games you see,

116 For he a hardened warrior be!

117 My little brother dear.
118 He rides up front—erect, headfirst—
119 He penetrates the country first.
120 The jousting satiates his thirst!
121 My little brother dear.
122 He never pussy-foots around,
123 He bears a helmet smooth and round,
124 He likes to take the ground and pound!
125 My little brother dear.
126 His lance is long and strong as steel,
127 And when he enters for the kill,
128 He thrusts it in and out with skill!
129 My little brother dear.
130 But oh! when he ejaculates
131 That battle cry, his rivals shake!
132 And then a lengthy nap he takes—
133 My little brother dear.

134 *HENRY makes his way to his seat, pauses for applause from the COURT, then sits. The COURT sits.*
135 *HENRY basks in the applause. The applause wanes. HENRY encourages it. The applause gets*
136 *louder. HENRY stands. The COURT stands. HENRY feigns humility and encourages the audience to*
137 *stop applauding. The applause dies down. HENRY sits. The COURT sits. Continue ad nauseam.*

138 ANNE: Your Majesty.

139 HENRY: My darling.

140 *KING HENRY kisses her hand affectionately. ANNE looks askant at him.*

141 ANNE: What the deuce

142 Is that outrageous costume?

143 HENRY: Don't you know

144 The legend of the yeoman and his bow?

145 ANNE (*skeptically*): You're dressed as *Robin Hood*?

146 HENRY: That's me!

147 ANNE: It looks

148 More like you *ate* him. Why the devil are—

149 Oh never mind. It matters not. Aren't you

150 Forgetting something?

151 *ANNE gives him a moment.*

152 HENRY: What?

153 ANNE: The *monologue*.

154 HENRY: The monologue? (*thinking*) God's cock! The monologue!

155 *KING HENRY stands. The COURT stands. He starts his monologue from behind them.*

156 HENRY: Devoted audience and noble friends—

157 *HENRY realizes the audience cannot see him. He motions for the COURT to sit. The COURT sits.*

158 HENRY: Devoted audience and noble friends,

159 Before these royal histrionics end,

160 One member of this court will lose her head.

161 Another will by poisoning be dead.

162 I'm sorry if I've spoiled the story's plot,

163 But ere that tragic denouement, a lot
164 Of action comes along, and laughter too—
165 You'll get your fill of humor from this crew!
166 For only laughter matters after all
167 Is said and finished, and this curtain falls.
168 The tragedies are merely tragedies,
169 Romances fantasies of chivalry,
170 But comedy is all and everything,
171 And truly life itself is comedy.
172 So pay attention to this narrative,
173 For in between the acts and scenes, there lives
174 A tale of love and friendship. Let's begin!

175 *KING HENRY holds his mug high.*

176 HENRY: A toast to Henry Fitzroy, Duke and Prince!

177 *The COURT stands and drinks.*

178 HENRY: Another dram for Henry's dame! Hear, hear!

179 *The COURT drinks. KING HENRY sits. The COURT sits. CROMWELL stands.*

180 CROMWELL: A toast to Richmond's Duke and Duchess! Cheers!

181 *KING HENRY stands. The COURT stands. The COURT drinks. KING HENRY sits. The COURT sits.*

182 *CRANMER stands.*

183 CRANMER: A blessing to the newly coupled two—

184 May Jesus' grace and mercy follow you.

185 *KING HENRY stands. The COURT stands and drinks. KING HENRY sits. The COURT sits.*

209 Alas! The truest love however rests
210 Upon not fate nor ministers of state;
211 It's forced to heed its fickle heart's behest.
212 The love that lives unchained does not abate!
213 Here lies the truth behind the lover's cry—
214 Whoever loved that loved not at first sight?

215 *Applause around the table. HENRY HOWARD bows and sits down. MARY TUDOR applauds*
216 *unenthusiastically.*

217 HOWARD (*aside to MARY*): Your Highness, if you take a fancy to
218 My quips and writings, then perhaps you'd like
219 To meet me in my chamber-suite tonight.
220 My native tongue is love, and with these lips—

221 MARY (*aside to HOWARD*): Oh, did you think that you were going to bed
222 Me with that petty mess of maudlin words
223 And phrases? Pah! You men are all the same.

224 *HENRY HOWARD turns away dejectedly. FITZROY consoles him. KING HENRY raises his glass and*
225 *starts to stand, but ANNE pulls him back down. KING HENRY toasts from his seat.*

226 HENRY: Hear, hear!

227 ALL: Hear, hear!

228 HENRY: 'Twas quite a lovely piece,
229 Young Henry Howard. Now I'd like myself
230 To thus recite some verses to the Duke
231 And Duchess on their nuptial day. *Ahem.*