

**HERVÉ RIEL; A POEM, SET
TO MUSIC FOR BARITONE
SOLO, CHORUS, AND
ORCHESTRA**

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Hervé Riel; A Poem, Set to Music for Baritone Solo, Chorus, and Orchestra by Robert Browning & H. Walford Davies

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ROBERT BROWNING & H. WALFORD DAVIES

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ORCHESTRA**

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HERVÉ RIEL

A POEM

BY

ROBERT BROWNING

SET TO MUSIC

FOR BARITONE SOLO, CHORUS, AND ORCHESTRA

BY

Wm H *Wm* WALFORD DAVIES.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

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TO MY DEAR FRIEND

M. G. M.

HERVÉ RIEL.

I.

On the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred ninety-two,
Did the English fight the French,—woe to France!
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks pursue,
Came crowding ship on ship to Saint-Malo on the Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

II.

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in full chase;
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship, Damfreville;
Close on him fled, great and small,
Twenty-two good ships in all;
And they signalled to the place
"Help the winners of a race!
Get us guidance, give us harbour, take us quick—or, quicker still,
Here's the English Can and Will!"

III.

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt on board;
"Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to pass?" laughed they:
"Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage scarred and scored,—
Shall the 'Formidable' here, with her twelve and eighty guns,
Think to make the river-mouth by the single narrow way,
Trust to enter—where 'tis ticklish for a craft of twenty tons,
And with flow at full beside?
Now, 'tis slackest ebb of tide.
Reach the mooring? Rather say,
While rock stands or water runs,
Not a ship will leave the bay!"

IV.

Then was called a council straight.
Brief and bitter the debate:
"Here's the English at our heels; would you have them take in tow
All that's left us of the fleet, linked together stern and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound?
Better run the ships aground!"
"Not a minute more to wait!
Let the Captains all and each
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on the beach!
France must undergo her fate."

V.

"Give the word!" But no such word
Was ever spoke or heard;
For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid all these
—A Captain? a Lieutenant? a Mate—first, second, third?
No such man of mark, and meet
With his betters to compete!
But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville for the fleet,
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisicquese.

814 17

VI.

And "What mockery or malice have we here?" cries Hervé Riel:
 "Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you cowards, fools, or rogues?
 Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the soundings, tell
 On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell
 'Twixt the offing here and Grève, where the river disembogues?
 Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the lying's for?
 Morn and eve, night and day,
 Have I piloted your bay,
 Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.
 Burn the fleet and ruin France? That were worse than fifty Hogues!
 Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs, believe me there's a way!
 Only let me lead the line,
 Make the others follow mine,
 And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well,
 Right to Solidor past Grève,
 And there lay them safe and sound;
 And if one ship misbehave,—
 —Keel so much as grate the ground,
 Why, I've nothing but my life,—here's my head!" cries Hervé Riel.

VII.

Not a minute more to wait.
 "Steer us in, then, small and great!
 Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron!" cried its chief.
 Captains, give the sailor place!
 He is Admiral, in brief.
 Still the north-wind, by God's grace,
 See the noble fellow's face
 As the big ship, with a bound,
 Clears the entry like a bound,
 Keeps the passage, as its inch of way were the wide sea's profound!
 See, safe through shoal and rock,
 How they follow in a flock,
 Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the ground!
 The peril, see is past,
 All are harboured to the last,
 And just as Hervé Riel hollas "Anchor!"—sure as fate,
 Up the English come,—too late!

VIII.

So, the storm subsides to calm:
 They see the green trees wave
 On the heights o'erlooking Grève.
 Hearts that bled are stanch'd with balm.
 Out burst all with one accord,
 "This is Paradise for Hell!
 Let France, let France's King,
 Thank the man that did the thing!"
 What a shout, and all one word,
 "Hervé Riel!"

HERVÉ RIEL.

ROBERT BROWNING.

Allegro marcato.

H. WALFORD DAVIES.

PIANO.
♩ = 104.

The musical score is arranged in systems. The first system shows the piano introduction with treble and bass staves. The second system continues the piano accompaniment. The third system introduces the vocal chorus with four parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: "On the sea and at the Hogue, six-teen hun-dred nine-ty - two, Did the". The fourth system continues the vocal parts with the lyrics: "Eng-lish fight . . the French, - woe . . to France!". The piano accompaniment continues throughout the vocal sections. The score concludes with a piano part marked "Ped." (Pedal) on the bass staff.

CHORUS. SOPRANO.
ALTO. On the sea and at the Hogue, six-teen hun-dred nine-ty - two, Did the
TENOR. On the sea and at the Hogue, six-teen hun-dred nine-ty - two, Did the
BASS. On the sea and at the Hogue, six-teen hun-dred nine-ty - two, Did the
On the sea and at the Hogue, six-teen hun-dred nine-ty - two, Did the

Eng-lish fight . . the French, - woe . . to France!
Eng-lish fight . . the French, - woe . . to France!
Eng-lish fight . . the French, - woe . . to France!
Eng-lish fight . . the French, - woe . . to France!

Ped. Ped.

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