



King Henry V

William Shakespeare, adapted by LAMDA

King Henry V has ascended the English throne and is invading France. During the assault on Harfleur, Boy observes the criminal behaviour of Bardolph, Pistol and Nym. In this speech, Boy reflects on their pickpocketing schemes and decides to remove himself from their company.

BOY: As young as I am, I have observed these three swashers. I am boy to them all three, but all they three, though they would serve me, could not be man to me, for indeed three such antics do not amount to a man.

For Bardolph, he is white-livered and red-faced, by the means whereof 'a faces it out but fights not. For Pistol, he hath a killing tongue and a quiet sword, by the means whereof a breaks words and keeps whole weapons. For Nym, he hath heard that men of few words are the best men, and therefore he scorns to say his prayers lest 'a should be thought a coward: but his few bad words are matched with as few good deeds, for 'a never broke any man's head but his own, and that was against a post when he was drunk. They will steal anything, and call it purchase.

I must leave them, and seek some better service; their villainy goes against my weak stomach, and therefore I must cast it up.

Act 3, Scene 2