

Henry V

3.2

Enter Nim, Bardolph, Ensign Pistol, and Boy

BARDOLPH On, on, on, on, on! To the breach, to the breach!

NIM Pray thee corporal, stay. The knocks are too hot, and for mine own part I have not a case of lives. The humour of it is too hot, that is the very plainsong of it. 5

PISTOL

'The plainsong' is most just, for humours do abound. Knocks go and come, God's vassals drop and die, *[sings]*

And sword and shield
In bloody field 10
Doth win immortal fame.

BOY Would I were in an alehouse in London. I would give all my fame for a pot of ale, and safety.

PISTOL *[sings]*

And I.
If wishes would prevail with me 15
My purpose should not fail with me
But thither would I hie.

BOY *[sings]*

As duly
But not as truly
As bird doth sing on bough. 20

Enter Captain Fluellen and beats them in

FLUELLEN God's plud! Up to the breaches, you dogs! Avaunt, you cullions!

PISTOL

Be merciful, great duke, to men of mould.
Abate thy rage, abate thy manly rage,
Abate thy rage, great duke. Good bawcock, bate 25
Thy rage. Use lenity, sweet chuck.

NIM These be good humours!
[Fluellen begins to beat Nim]
Your honour runs bad humours.

Exeunt all but [the Boy]

BOY As young as I am, I have observed these three swashers. I am boy to them all three, but all they three, 30 though they should 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 35 means whereof a breaks words, and keeps whole weapons. For Nim, 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±± 40 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'. Bardolph stole a lute case, bore it twelve leagues, and sold it for three halfpence. Nim and Bardolph are sworn brothers in 45 filching, and in Calais they stole a fire shovel. I knew by that piece of service the men would carry coals. They would have me as familiar with men's pockets as their gloves or their handkerchiefs±±which makes much against my manhood, if I should take from another's 50 pocket to put into mine, for it is plain pocketing up of wrongs. I must leave them, and seek some better service. Their villainy goes against my weak stomach, and therefore I must cast it up.

Exit