… he said to himself, “Today he’s coming! I know it!”

Reading Notes

June, 1294  
date the story begins

The Abbey of St. Alban  
monastery built on the site of St. Alban’s martyrdom

Roger Quartermayne  
Adam’s father; a skilled minstrel

Adam Quartermayne  
the main character; Roger’s son; wants to be a minstrel

Perkin  
Adam’s friend at St. Alban’s school

Nick  
Adam’s cocker spaniel

Vocabulary

Write the meaning of each bold word or phrase.

1. disappointed but not **daunted**  
discouraged

2. sons of **franklins** and burgesses  
landowners who were free but not of noble birth

3. a length of cloth for a **surcoat**  
loose outer coat made of rich material

Comprehension Questions

Answer the following in complete sentences.

1. Why is Adam at the Abbey School, and where is his father?  
   His father had left him at the Abbey to study while he went to minstrelsy school in Cambrai, France.

2. What do the boys of St. Alban’s do while they are eating dinner?  
   They listen to the Master reading from the lives of the saints in Latin.

3. What language is spoken by all the boys at the Abbey?  
   They all speak Latin.

4. Name the three things that comfort Adam as he waits for his father to return:
   1) **his harp**  
   2) **Perkin**  
   3) **Nick**

5. There are three languages spoken in England at this time. Name them and tell who spoke them.  
   Latin was spoken by everyone at the Abbey; people in the courts spoke French; most everyone spoke (Middle) English.
Discussion Questions

1. Who says the quotation? ___________________ Who is coming? ___________________
2. Contrast Roger Quartermayne with “ordinary minstrels.”
3. Why is Adam well-liked at school?
4. Why is Perkin so serious about his education? What are his career plans?

Enrichment

1. Look at the picture preceding Chapter 1. Identify the characters, place, and what is happening.
2. Memorize the Norman kings from England’s Sovereigns in Verse in the Appendix.
3. Chapter 1 describes Adam’s life at the Abbey. Imagine that you could tell Adam about your day. Write a letter to Adam and tell him about your daily routine. To help him understand, explain what you are doing during each of the seven hours of the Divine Office. The Divine Office refers to special hours of each day at which the monks would say prayers, read the Bible, and sing the Psalms. Answers will vary.

The Divine Office

- **Matins** - 4:00 a.m. (This service was named many years after it was first practiced.)
- **Lauds** (Praises) & **Prime** - 6:00 a.m. (The first hour after sunrise)
- **Terce** - 9:00 a.m. (The third hour after sunrise)
- **Sext** - 12:00 noon (The sixth hour after sunrise)
- **None** - 3:00 p.m. (The ninth hour after sunrise)
- **Vespers** - 5:00 p.m. (Also called “evensong,” this service involves singing the Psalms.)
- **Compline** - 7:00 p.m. (The final service of the day is quiet and contemplative.)