

## The Dog whose Ears were Cropped

by Jean de La Fontaine

"What have I done, I'd like to know,  
To make my master maim me so?  
A pretty figure I shall cut!  
From other dogs I'll keep, in kennel shut.  
Ye kings of beasts, or rather tyrants, ho!  
Would any beast have served you so?"  
Thus Growler cried, a mastiff young;--  
The man, whom pity never stung,  
Went on to prune him of his ears.  
Though Growler whined about his losses,  
He found, before the lapse of years,  
Himself a gainer by the process;  
For, being by his nature prone  
To fight his brethren for a bone,  
He'd oft come back from sad reverse  
With those appendages the worse.  
All snarling dogs have ragged ears.

The less of hold for teeth of foe,  
The better will the battle go.  
When, in a certain place, one fears  
The chance of being hurt or beat,  
He fortifies it from defeat.  
Besides the shortness of his ears,  
See Growler arm'd against his likes  
With gorget full of ugly spikes.  
A wolf would find it quite a puzzle  
To get a hold about his muzzle.