

Fable

"THE LION AND THE CUB"

By

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Freeditorial 

*How fond are men of rule and place,
Who court it from the mean and base!
These cannot bear an equal nigh,
But from superior merit fly.
They love the cellar's vulgar joke,
And lose their hours in ale and smoke.
There o'er some petty club preside;
So poor, so paltry is their pride!
Nay, even with fools whole nights will sit,
In hopes to be supreme in wit.*

*If these can read, to these I write,
To set their worth in truest light.
A lion-cub, of sordid mind,
Avoided all the lion kind;
Fond of applause, he sought the feasts
Of vulgar and ignoble beasts;
With asses all his time he spent,
Their club's perpetual president.
He caught their manners, looks, and airs;
An ass in every thing, but ears!*

*If e'er his highness meant a joke,
They grinned applause before he spoke;
But at each word what shouts of praise!
Good gods! how natural he brays!
Elate with flattery and conceit,
He seeks his royal sire's retreat;
Forward, and fond to show his parts,
His highness brays; the lion starts.
'Puppy, that cursed vociferation
Betrays thy life and conversation:*

*Coxcombs, an ever-noisy race,
Are trumpets of their own disgrace.'
'Why so severe?' the cub replies;
'Our senate always held me wise.'
'How weak is pride!' returns the sire;
'All fools are vain, when fools admire!
But know what stupid asses prize,
Lions and noble beasts despise.'*

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