

Fable

***"THE WILD BOAR AND THE
RAM"***

By

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Against an elm a sheep was tied,
The butcher's knife in blood was dyed:
The patient flock in silent fright,
From far beheld the horrid sight.
A savage boar, who near them stood,
Thus mocked to scorn the fleecy brood.
'All cowards should be served like you.
See, see, your murderer is in view:
With purple hands and reeking knife,
He strips the skin yet warm with life;

Your quartered sires, your bleeding dams,
The dying bleat of harmless lambs,
Call for revenge. O stupid race!
The heart that wants revenge is base.'
'I grant.' an ancient ram replies,
'We bear no terror in our eyes;
Yet think us not of soul so tame,
Which no repeated wrongs inflame;
Insensible of every ill,
Because we want thy tusks to kill.

Know, those who violence pursue,
Give to themselves the vengeance due;
For in these massacres we find
The two chief plagues that waste mankind:
Our skin supplies the wrangling bar,
It wakes their slumbering sons to war;
And well revenge may rest contented,
Since drums and parchment were invented.'