

**KITTY ALONE. A STORY
OF THREE FIRES. IN THREE
VOLUMES, VOL. II**

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Kitty alone. A story of three fires. In three Volumes, Vol. II by S. Baring-Gould

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S. BARING-GOULD

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VOLUMES, VOL. II**

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A STORY OF THREE FIRES

BY

S. BARING GOULD

AUTHOR OF

"IN THE BOAR OF THE SEA" "THE QUEEN OF LOVE"

"MEHALAH" "CREAT JACK ZITA" ETC. ETC.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II



CHAP.	PAGE
XIX. SUGGESTIONS OF EVIL	7
XX. A FACE IN THE WATER	19
XXI. AN OFFER	28
XXII. A RACE FOR LIFE	37
XXIII. BORROWING	45
XXIV. SHAVINGS	55
XXV. BORROWING AGAIN	64
XXVI. SILVER PENINKS	73
XXVII. TROUBLE	83
XXVIII. ALTERNATIVES	92
XXIX. A FRIEND GAINED	104
XXX. UNDER THE MULBERRY TREE	111
XXXI. ON MISCHIEF BENT	122
XXXII. JASON IN THE WAY	132
XXXIII. ONE CRIME LEADS TO ANOTHER	140
XXXIV. AND YET ANOTHER	149
XXXV. UNSUCCESSFUL	159
XXXVI. ALL IN VAIN	168

KITTY ALONE



CHAPTER XIX

SUGGESTIONS OF EVIL

THE crowd in the market-place and in the streets of Ashburton began to thin as the afternoon crept on. In vain did the showmen blow their trumpets, ring their bells, and invite to their entertainments. Those who had come to the fair had spent their loose cash. The proprietors of the stalls offered their wares at reduced prices, but found few purchasers. Young men who had been hired by the farmers swaggered about singing or shouting, some tipsy, others merely on the road to tipsiness. The ostlers in the inns were harnessing horses to the traps, market carts, gigs, dog-carts, that had brought in the farmers and their wives. Empty waggons were departing. The roads were full of streams of people flowing homeward to the surrounding villages.

Pasco Pepperill started with the schoolmaster. He had surrendered Kate to her father. The reins were in his hand, and he had whipped the cob, when he saw Coaker,

the man from whom he had bought the wool, coming towards him.

The blood rushed into Pepperill's face.

"How d'ye do?" asked the farmer. "Going home?"

"I be," answered Pasco, with constrained anger.

"You'll find all the wool there. I sent off the lot this morning—three waggon-loads."

"Why did you not inform me?—and I would have waited for it, and not come to the fair."

"I did not know how the weather might be—and I wished to be rid of it." Coaker laughed.

This angered Pasco further, and, losing command of himself, he said, "'Twas scurvy—that selling me at such a price when you knew wool was down."

"That was your concern. Each man for himself. But I reckon you've made a worse bargain at Brimpts, if, as they tell me, you have bought the wood."

"How so? Is not the timber first-rate?"

"Oh, the timber is good enough."

"Then what is wrong?"

"Have you been to Brimpts?"

"No—but Quarm has."

"Then you don't know the road. It is thus"—Coaker made a motion with his hand up and down. "The waves of the sea mountains high is nothing to it—and bad—the road is! Lor' bless y'! the cost o' moving the timber when cut will swallow up all the profits."

"Pshaw! The distance from Ashburton is only three miles."

"Better ten on a decent road. You'll never get the