

ONLY A DOG

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Only a Dog by Edis Searle

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EDIS SEARLE

ONLY A DOG



KIT AND THE PUPPY.

ONLY A DOG :

BY THE
AUTHOR OF "HETTY'S RESOLVE," "AUNT ANNIE'S STORIES,"
ETC., ETC.

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS.

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ONLY A DOG.

CHAPTER I.

ALONE.

A QUIET place to have a good cry in. That was what little Kit wanted one Sunday afternoon, one wild stormy afternoon in the month of March. Well, he must wait a while then, for though in the wonderful place where he found himself, in the great suburban cemetery, there were many shady nooks and quiet corners just such as he needed, he must wait till all the staring eyes were gone, and all the many strollers had passed by, ere he could feel quiet and alone.

Why should they see him cry? those boys who had come to watch him, who cared nothing about his heart trouble, and who, may be, would make fun of him to-morrow. What did they care for the sister who had been the only friend he ever knew, and whose poor pale face now lay deep underground, covered up

and hidden away from his sight for ever? Hadn't they, many of them, made a horrid noise beneath her window when she was dying, though he had found courage enough to beg them to be quiet? Was it anything to them that he had nobody now to love him, nobody to help him in the hard matter of earning daily bread, nobody to mend and wash his ragged clothes, in fact, nobody to be troubled if he too were laid in that dark grave to-morrow?

No, they would not care, so they should not see him cry, he would creep away somewhere, and hide himself from everybody till it grew dark, and he could steal home unnoticed. This was his thought, and so, though a kind woman, who had followed poor Alice Hunt to her grave, after doing many kind offices for her during her illness, would fain have persuaded him to come home at once, he broke away from her, and running down one of the narrow paths, was soon hidden from sight among the many grave-stones and monuments that were crowded together in this city of the dead.

"He was but a slip of a child to leave behind in that fearsome place," the woman said to herself; "but, there, he was used to caring for himself, and no doubt he would come home when tired and hungry." So she went her way, and after the earth had been thrown

into the grave the little mob of ragged boys and girls dispersed too, and no one thought any more of poor lonely Kit.

He had found what he wanted, a quiet place enough, There is no quietness and stillness like that to be found in a corner of one of these vast cemeteries. In woods and country vales there is the sweet rest of solitude, but the rustle of the leaves, the twittering or hopping of birds ever and anon, breaks upon the quiet, and reminds one that life is there. But the stones and the marble pillars are still and motionless as the dead forms beneath them, nothing stirs; and the quiet, if pleasant at first, becomes ere long solemn and awful.

And so, when he had cried his cry out, did this stillness become to little Kit. It was cold too, the wind was blowing uncomfortably through his scanty clothing, and the thought occurred to him that before long it would be quite dark. It would not be pleasant to stay among those white stones and those quiet graves when it was quite night, and besides, he had a dim idea that the gates would be shut before evening, and that he might find it hard to get out if he waited much longer. So he picked himself up, cold, stiff, and weary, and without looking much about him made his weary way towards the gate of the great cemetery.

He thought he would go home, for though the room which he called home would be cold and dark and dreary, it would be warmer and more comfortable than the street, at least now that a drizzling rain was beginning to fall, and the weather was becoming colder every moment. But home was a good way off, and Kit was very tired and done up. So before long the desire to rest became too strong to be resisted, and he sat down on the steps outside a church, and looked with sad wistful eyes at the lights in the great city, that busy place where he had spent the whole of his short life, and where, notwithstanding, he felt as lonely as any one could imagine.

And while he sat there the minutes flew by uncounted and unnoticed; nobody would care when he came home, and so he might as well sit where he was till he was rested. True it was cold, but he did not notice that much; he felt very sleepy, he thought he would doze a little before he went any farther, and so perhaps he would have done, had not the bell in the church tower began to ring, calling the people to the evening service. Then the church door was thrown open, and from the corner where he was crouching Kit could catch a sidelong glimpse of the bright light inside. It looked so warm and comfortable that he hoped the