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A Little Dog

Mary Graham Bonner

Soot was a small black dog, out for his morning run, when he spotted something wrong out on the lake: an overturned canoe, far from shore, and two girls struggling to swim with their clothes on.

Oh, how he wished he were bigger. He was so very small. He couldn't swim out there — not far enough, not fast enough. He couldn't do anything at all, except what he could.

So he ran.

Back into the village he tore, barking with everything he had. He found some men and danced around them, urgent and desperate, his little face creased with worry.

"Something must be the matter," one of the men said. "He doesn't carry on like this usually."



Soot led them down to the water. They saw the overturned boat. They saw the girls. The boathouses were all locked up for the end of the season, but the men broke one open and took out a launch. They reached the girls just in time — another three minutes, and the girls couldn't have held on.

The girls had been calling for help, but the wind had carried their voices the wrong way. Only Soot had seen them.

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