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## The Brave Little Sister

*Mary Graham Bonner*

There was once a boy who couldn't understand why his little sister was afraid of animals. He would have liked her to join him on long country walks and share his enthusiasm for the outdoor world, and when she hung back or flinched, he didn't help her — he laughed.

One afternoon they were walking along a quiet road in the country when they passed a small house where an old woman kept a great many cats. The cats were known to be unfriendly to strangers.

The boy didn't believe it. When his sister tried to hurry past, he laughed at her nervousness and called out to one of the cats. He bent down to pick it up.

The cat scratched him. Hard.

The boy yelled — and his sister ran straight toward him. Without stopping to think, she grabbed the cat firmly by the scruff of its neck and lifted it off her brother. "Shoo!" she said, loudly enough that the cat decided it wasn't worth the trouble, and stalked home.

The boy looked at the scratch on his arm, then at his sister.



"I'll never make fun of you again," he said, quietly. "You saved me from the very animal you were afraid of. And it was love for me that made you forget your fear. I haven't been a very good brother — but I promise you I will be, from now on. Because you're the brave one. Not me."

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