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The Telephone Dog

Mary Graham Bonner

Rogue was a collie, and he had come to understand that the telephone was important.

He had watched his mistress receive calls that made her drop everything and rush out — someone ill, something urgent — and he knew the ringing meant something. He couldn't have said what, but he knew it mattered.

One day she was working in the garden and didn't hear it ring. It rang and rang. Rogue paced the floor, unsure what to do. He couldn't answer it — that wasn't possible — but he could do something.

He ran outside, stood in front of her, and barked without stopping.

She petted him. "Do you want to play, Rogue?"

He kept barking. He started toward the house, turned around, checked whether she was following. She wasn't. He went back and tugged at her skirt.

She followed.

He led her straight to the telephone and stopped there, barking.

She picked it up. It had been ringing for a very long time; the call was important enough that the caller had kept trying. She was very glad she hadn't missed it.

That was how Rogue learned what to do — and from then on, he always told her. She works in her garden a great deal, but she has never missed a telephone call since.



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