

What Is It, Sarbi?

Sarbi barked and barked. Haz saw his mom frowning. “Shh, Sarbi. Shh.” Haz ran his hand down the dog’s soft, black back.

But Sarbi was half-way out the window now. Haz grabbed his dog’s collar. Under his hand, Haz could feel Sarbi’s tense muscles. Suddenly, Sarbi turned. He looked into Haz’s eyes.

Haz knew his dog. Sarbi was almost always a good boy. Sometimes he liked to steal one of Haz’s shoes as a game. He liked to be chased. But he was a good dog. Haz just knew that something was really wrong.

“Mom?” Haz saw his mother lift her big brown eyes up to look at him in the back seat. “Mom,” he said, “I think we should stop.”

“Stop? But Haz *joon*, you will be late for school.”

Haz could feel the car slowing down. He tried to look out the window to see what Sarbi saw. “Mom!” He pointed. “Mom, there is a fire!”

Haz’s mother stopped the car quickly. “Where, Haz? Where do you see fire?” Her face was scared. It was only May, but the weather was hot and dry. Wildfires were a serious danger.

“On the hill. Behind the old gas station with the blue roof.”

Sarbi’s harness was clipped to a seat belt. He could not really get out of the car. But Haz held his collar anyway. It made him feel better, and it calmed Sarbi down.

Haz’s mom was talking into her cell phone. She was telling the fire department how to find the fire. Her voice sounded calm, but Haz could see that she was worried. Wildfires could spread very quickly.

Haz’s mom ended the call. She started the car. “Mom, where are we going?” Haz was confused.

“To school, Haz *joon*. It is still a school day.”

Haz’s mother told him that even heroes have to go to school. “Heroes?” Haz sat up a little straighter. He felt proud that his mom said he was a hero.

“Sarbi is the real hero,” he said. He saw his mother smile at him in the mirror.

Haz was excited to tell everyone at school about spotting the fire. That night at dinner, there was a special dessert just for him. It was a cupcake with a firefighter's hat on top. Haz did not forget to share a little bit with Sarbi, the fire-spotting dog!