

Roberto's birthday was in the middle of the month of November. "November is an ugly month," Roberto thought, "because the skies are gray, and it is too cold to go outside and play." Roberto didn't have any brothers or sisters, so he missed having someone at home to play with. Roberto sat in a chair by the window watching the rain come down. Roberto thought, "Oh, how I would love to have someone to play with or something to do on this cold, gray November day."

As Roberto was wishing for someone to play with, he saw something move out in the rain. He pressed his nose against the cold glass to get a better look. Far out in the rain, next to the big oak tree, was a large, black, shaggy dog. The dog was walking toward the house with his head hung low. The dog's fur was as black as night and dripping with water.

Roberto ran to the door and opened it up to take a better look. The dog came to a stop in front of Roberto and looked up at him with big, sad eyes. "Mom, come look at what is outside!" called Roberto. Roberto's mother put down the book she was reading and came to the door. "I found a dog and I want to keep him. Can I, please?" pleaded Roberto. "Oh, no!" said Mother. "The last thing we need is a dog, because they are dirty and smelly." Roberto knew he would have to think quickly, because a dog would make a wonderful friend at home. How could he make his mother change her mind? Roberto's mind raced to all of the fun things he and the dog could do together.

Suddenly Roberto had a thought. "Mom, what if the dog is my birthday present?" Roberto asked. "What if the dog is my only birthday present? Can I keep him then?" Roberto's mother thought about what Roberto had asked. At last she smiled and said, "Well, if

you promise to feed him and take care of him, then you may keep him."

"Hurray!" yelled Roberto. "Thank you very much!" Roberto clapped his hands and bounded out into the rain to hug his new dog. This was the best birthday present he had ever had!

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