

LEVELED BOOK • 0

Baltic Rescue



Written by John Rousselle • Illustrated by Cende Hill

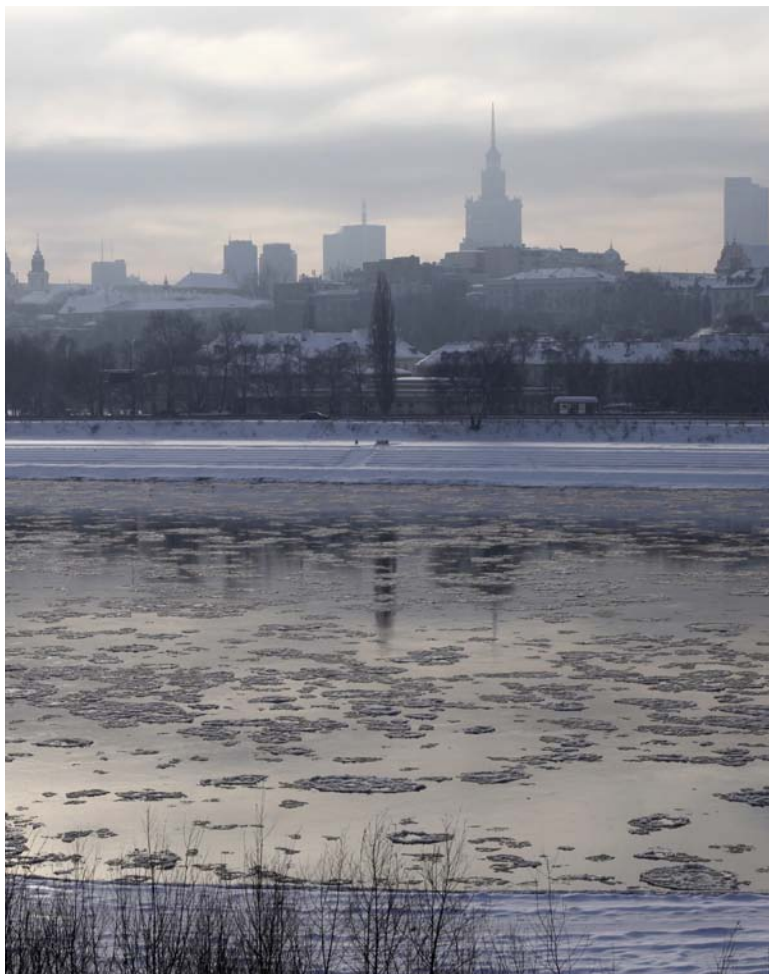
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One cold winter day, a dog walked to the edge of an icy river in Poland. Nobody knows for sure where the dog came from or what he was doing there. But he was about to have a big adventure.



Without warning, the ice that the dog was standing on broke away from the land. The dog was swept down the river on a sheet of ice half the size of a football field. The frightened dog looked for a way to get back to the shore, but he was trapped on the ice. The river was too cold for him to swim to safety.

Some firefighters saw the dog drifting down the river as he passed through their city. They tried to help him, but they couldn't reach him. The firefighters could only watch as the ice carried the dog farther down the river.



For three days, the dog drifted down the river on his raft of ice. He passed through several more towns. At least one other group of people saw him and tried to help him. But they weren't able to reach him, either.



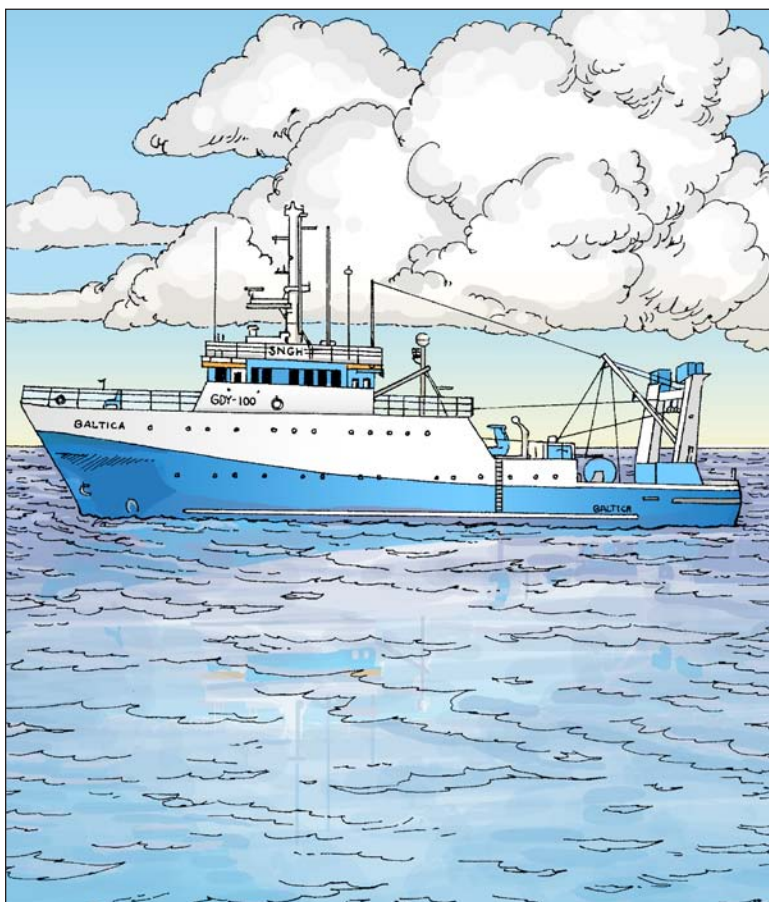


Each day, the hungry dog grew colder, weaker, and more scared. His ice raft was slowly melting and breaking up into hundreds of smaller pieces. By now, the piece he was standing on was not much larger than a small bedroom. If he slipped off, he might become trapped under one of the many chunks of ice around him and drown.



On the fourth day, the dog passed the mouth of the river and was swept out into the Baltic Sea. He had traveled more than 75 miles (120 km) from where he began. He was moving farther away from land and any hope of rescue. The piece of ice he was standing on had shrunk to the size of a picnic table.

The dog was facing a deadly end to his adventure, but his luck was about to change. Some scientists and sailors aboard a **research** ship named the *Baltica* were passing through the area. They saw an animal moving on the ice in the distance and decided to **investigate**.



At first, the people on the ship thought the animal was a seal. They were amazed when they got closer and saw that the “seal” had four legs, floppy ears, and a tail. They had found a dog floating on the ice 15 miles (24 km) from land!





The *Baltica*'s sailors were able to bring their ship close to the dog. They lowered a net next to the dog, but he was too scared to climb into it. The dog even slipped and fell into the cold water while they were trying to help him. Luckily, he was able to climb back onto the slippery ice.



Fearing that the dog would drown, the crew lowered a raft. Adam, the ship's mechanic, used the raft to get close to the dog. Adam grabbed the dog by the back of the neck and pulled him into the raft.

Once the dog was safe aboard the ship, the crew dried him and wrapped him in blankets. They rubbed him with towels to warm him up. At first, the dog was too weak to stand. He curled up and went to sleep on a blanket. After a good nap, the dog was strong enough to join the crew for breakfast and eat some sausages.



The crew named the dog *Baltic* after the name of the sea where they rescued him. Once the ship returned to port, they took Baltic to a **veterinarian**. The vet made sure Baltic hadn't suffered any serious **injuries** from his icy adventure. The crew also searched for Baltic's owners for several weeks but couldn't find them. Adam, the sailor who pulled Baltic into the raft, decided to **adopt** him.





Now, Baltic is the **mascot** of the research ship that found him and travels with the crew everywhere. He has many fans around the world who learned about his incredible journey and rescue. The president of Poland even wrote a letter to the crew of the ship, **praising** them for saving Baltic's life. Baltic started out cold, wet, and alone on the ice but ended up warm, dry, and surrounded by new friends.

Glossary

adopt (<i>v.</i>)	to bring into one's family and raise as one's own (p. 14)
injuries (<i>n.</i>)	harm or damage to the body (p. 14)
investigate (<i>v.</i>)	to try and find out about something (p. 9)
mascot (<i>n.</i>)	a person, animal, or thing that is a symbol of an event or organization (p. 15)
praising (<i>v.</i>)	saying good things about someone or something (p. 15)
research (<i>n.</i>)	careful, patient study to find facts about a subject (p. 9)
veterinarian (<i>n.</i>)	a doctor who treats illnesses and injuries in animals other than humans (p. 14)

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