



Saving Molly: A Research Veterinarian's Choices

James Mahoney

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James Mahoney, author of this heartfelt and compassionate accounting of the many hard decisions facing an animal lover, practiced as a country vet before becoming a researcher whose animals have been used in AIDS and hepatitis research. He also worked as director of the Laboratory for Experimental Medicine and Surgery in Primates (LEMSIP). *Saving Molly* isn't an especially linear narrative and the deep conflict between Mahoney's occupation and his instincts remain unresolved. His concerns are mirrored in the touching tale of Molly, a Jamaican bush dog pup that the author and his wife save from a medically hazardous beginning and then raise. Molly comes close to death on several occasions, loses her sight in one eye, and becomes a loyal and loved family pet. The narrative repeatedly interrupts Molly's tale to discuss the primates in Mahoney's care. The author believes both in the value of research and the humane care of the animals in his charge, acknowledging the often callus approach taken by the medical community who routinely risk the lives of these animals to preserve human life. There are no easy answers, and Mahoney doesn't come close to finding them. He does however provide his readers with a sympathetic counterbalance to the oft-stated vilification of vivisection, and a heartwarming tale of a brave dog and a determined medical practitioner.

PETER ROBERTSON (July / August 1998)

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