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**Clarion Review**

**Saving the World one Dog at a Time: Dogs of the Yucatan**
Frank L. Barham
Wasteland Press
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Three Stars (out of Five)

Nothing is as compelling as a book about dogs. The astounding success of John Grogan's *Marley & Me* is proof that a good story about a family dog can attract a huge audience.

There is another kind of dog story—one that tells of the plight of helpless homeless dogs. This is the particularly poignant story readers will find in *Saving the World One Dog at a Time*. Retired medical doctor Dr. Frank Barham planned to relocate to the Mexican state of Yucatan and found himself becoming involved with stray dogs in the area.

Readers learn about such dogs as Chico a stray puppy in horrible physical condition that the author finds at a construction site. Chico is bloated and has bright red skin—a condition later identified as red mange. Barham is taken with the dog's pathetic state. He feeds him and gives him water and then brings him to a veterinarian. The dog eventually recovers and Barham adopts Chico. He becomes the resident watchdog at the doctor's beach house.

Of course not every story has a happy ending. The author happens upon other strays that are simply too weak or sickly to be saved. Barham is devastated for example when he tries to care for a pregnant stray. He visits her day after day at a dump only to discover one day that the dog and her newborn puppies have died.

Thankfully there are also moments of humor in the book. In one episode a dog appears to have rabies and terrifies two of Barham's friends chasing them home. But the dog ends up being quite safe—she "adopts" the friends and then gives birth to a litter of puppies under their RV.

*Saving the World One Dog at a Time* is essentially a loosely knit short collection of life-and-death adventures conveyed by a man who is truly passionate about animals. In fact Barham says that profits from the sale of the book will be used for dog rescue efforts in several states and Mexico.

This book offers an unvarnished picture of the hard life many dogs lead in the Yucatan. Barham's first-hand intimate account allows readers a rare glimpse of canine street life in a foreign place. At times the writing is sloppy as is the proofreading but Barham's heartfelt

observations manage to shine through. As they witness the doctor's heroic attempts to save as many dogs as he can readers can be hopeful that someone is looking out for these desperate creatures.

*Barry Silverstein*