

The Girl Who Grew Up Saving Animals

Karen Burnett

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In this book about animal rescues, basic guidelines for acquiring puppies or adult dogs come alongside accounts of the joys of giving rescued animals a second chance.

The Girl Who Grew Up Saving Animals is Karen Burnett's heartfelt account of her decades' worth of work in animal welfare and rescues in the UK.

Rooting Burnett's love and respect for animals in early childhood experiences, as when she worked on pig and dairy farms during school breaks, and at a kennel and cattery, the book says that her dedication to animal welfare were encouraged at boarding school. She relocated to Ireland to invest in rescue work, helping thousands of dogs, cats, and ex-commercial hens. Aiming to reveal the realities of animal abuse to others, the book encourages its audience to adopt rescued animals, too. Brief introductions to some of Burnett's own rescues amplify these encouragements.

But the book's topical shifts are abrupt. In addition to its personal work, it includes coverage of the suggested preparations for getting a puppy and adopting a grown dog, and extends to warnings and advice to prospective dog owners. Indeed, the book's basic guidelines for acquiring puppies or adult dogs take up much of its limited space, alongside accounts of the joys of giving rescued animals a second chance.

The book intones that relinquishing a dog to the pound may result in its being put to sleep, and suggests that thought be given to the eventual needs of a dog, and to whether or not conditions exist for meeting them. Topics like a dog's expected size, need for attention and exercise, and potential health and temperament issues are designed to facilitate decision-making. A list of dog breeds according to size and suitability is included in the brief book, as are suggested questions to ask when buying from a breeder. Swift stories of sad situations witnessed by Burnett during the course of her career demonstrate the need for change in the treatment of animals, too.

Still, the book is impeded by its brevity, grammatical errors, and syntactical missteps. Sentences like "Ear mites are a concern in cats. These are black," create confusion, as does the advice not to buy a dog from a breeder, though no arguments against good breeders are presented. Some of the book's photographs are blurry, and some of its captions are incomplete or are incorrect.

The Girl Who Grew Up Saving Animals is a brief, informative, and personalized guide to animal adoption and rescues. It draws on a woman's personal experiences to do its work, sharing eye-opening accounts of animal abuse.

KRISTINE MORRIS (January 13, 2022)

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