



# How to Save a Life

*Eli Easton*

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## How to Save a Life Eli Easton

Rav Miller looked into the terrified, intelligent eyes of the chocolate Labrador on death row, and knew he'd do anything to save him. When the dog, Sammy, escapes and heads to Mad Creek, Rav follows. Mad Creek. The town had become legendary in Rav's mind after he'd met that bizarre group last year. Rav dismissed his crazy suspicions back then, but when he arrives in Mad Creek, he knows it's true. Dog shifters exist, and apparently they all live in the California mountains. It's enough to blow a bad boy's mind.

Sammy has something in common with Rav—neither one of them trusts people. After Sammy's abuse as a dog, he particularly dislikes tough-looking men like Rav. But when Sammy gets a chance to work with rescued dogs at the new Mad Creek shelter, his deep compulsion to help others overcomes his fear. Rav and Sammy bond over saving strays. If they can each find the courage to let someone else in, they might find their way to love.

Sheriff Lance Beaufort doesn't like humans moving into Mad Creek, especially not the tattooed and defiant Rav. When Rav starts a rescue shelter, the town thinks he's wonderful! But Lance isn't fooled. He doesn't buy Rav's innocent act for one second. How much does Rav know about the quickened? What is his game? And why did he have to show up now, when Lance and the other town leaders are overwhelmed by all the new quickened pouring in?

Rav knows how to save a life. But can he save an entire town? Can he rescue Mad Creek?

## How to Save a Life Details

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## From Reader Review How to Save a Life for online ebook

~☆~Danni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

~4.5~

This series could have been written only by someone who loves dogs. **That loves shines through on every page!**

Sammy, a chocolate lab, reminds me of my white lab, Magnum. I am his person, and he would follow me to hell and back. He gives and comforts without asking for anything in return.

Sammy loved his mom, but he couldn't save her. When his mom's sister takes him in, her abusive husband takes out his rage on Sammy. Sammy ends up alone in the snow chained to a tree. The next morning he's in a cage at a kill shelter.

**Sammy is smart and more cognizant every day; he knows his clock is ticking.**

*"I know what it's like to love someone and lose them, and end up in a bad place because ... because you were not good enough. I know what it's like to be one of a whole bunch of dogs in a cage, to think no one will ever come for you. To know something bad is going to happen and not to be able to get free ... I know what it's like to want love, to want to give love, with all of your guts and your head and your teeth and everything, but to be afraid to try because it hurts."*

When Rav, the owner of the dog refuge in Arizon that played a prominent role in book 3, rescues Sammy, Sammy is terrified. Rav is big and has a beard, just like the mean, scary man who hurt Sammy. But Rav's eyes are kind.

Labs are not guard dogs. They are loyal, playful, goofy, and affectionate. Sammy personifies these traits. He has the corniest sense of humor, but Rav would have it no other way.

*"How about a new saying? 'When a man is a hero, he deserves to be sexed in the ass.'" Sammy cracked up, like this was the funniest thing.*

*Rav rolled his eyes.*

*"Your sense of humor Sammy ...."*

*"It's good?" Sammy looked at Rav hopefully.*



In *How To Save A Life* Rav takes one of his monthly trips to Flagstaff to a high-kill shelter to save some dogs that have a low chance of being adopted and ends up saving a chocolate lab named Sammy who has haunting eyes the like Rav had only ever seen once before.

*Those eyes took Rav's breath away. There was so much wisdom in them. Knowing. Anguish. The dog **knew** he was about to be put down. Rav was sure of it. He was **trying** to interact, to ask for help, even though he was frightened. This dog had guts.*

When Sammy eventually breaks out of Rav's shelter and heads for Mad Creek, Rav is able to follow him. Rav can *see* beneath the surface of the people of Mad Creek and is blown away by the discovery of dog shifters. In a spur of the moment decision, Rav decides to completely uproot his life and move to Mad Creek.

*Because he **wasn't** going back. He wasn't leaving Mad Creek to find a hotel room. He wasn't leaving Mad Creek, full stop. The words "pry" and "cold dead hands" came to mind.*

*And fuck Sheriff Lance Beaufort.*

**I absolutely loved the way the story progressed.** Rav is in it for all the right reasons and quickly falls in love with the town and with Sammy.

Sammy is newly quickened, and there is a definite learning curve, but he has such a brilliant mind and learns things so quickly. This also definitely answers the question I've had since the beginning about what the quickened do when certain medical procedures have occurred in the dog's life before his quickening.

Rav and Sammy rival my love of Matt and Roman as a couple. Told from multiple third person points of view (Sammy, Rav, Lily, Lance) **this story struck all the right notes, has tons of feels, is a beautiful love story, and has a well-deserved happy ending.**

**I loved it all!** This is definitely on my Favorites shelf!

### **Recommended!**

*Advanced Review Galley copy of How to Save a Life provided by the author in exchange of an honest review.*

*This review has been cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews.*

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### **Lyn says**

5 Goofy and Brave stars for Sammy..

This cannot be the end...it just can't!! I need more!!

## Wendy says

I have read and loved every single book in this series and this one was no exception. I think every one who loves dogs as much as I do, should give this series a go. These books are sweet and cute and fluffy !!!!

Even though every book is about a different couple, I really think you should start with book 1 , How To Howl At The Moon, because of the worldbuilding.

This book is about Sammy and Rav. Those of you who have read the previous book ( How To Wish Upon A Star ), already know Rav, since he was introduced in in this one. He runs a dog shelter in Arizona and he goes out of his way to save dogs who are about to be euthanised.

This is how he meets Sammy. Sammy is a chocolate lab, who's owner/human/person has died. She loved him and he really loved her with all his heart, he is so sad that he couldn't save her. We all know that "love" is what causes "the spark" so dogs can become "quickend" (able to change into a human). Because of this, Sammy is getting smarter and smarter every day.

Now he is stuck with another family member who is supposed to take care of him. The man of the house doesn't like Sammy though, and he treats him very very bad. Thankfully we don't get to read too much about the abuse, because I would have closed the book if that was the case.

Anyways, the woman knows that Sammy isn't safe with them, so she takes him to a shelter. Now Sammy might be a very cute dog, but the fact that he is now afraid of men, doesn't help with him getting adopted. As time goes by....the day that Sammy will be put to sleep, gets closer and closer....

Rav, being known for saving dogs "on death row", gets him out and takes him to his own shelter. But to Sammy, this is just another prison. Rav might act like a nice guy, but he's still a big scary man, so Sammy sees only one solution...escape, which is what he does....to Mad Creech.

Rav, having seen the security tapes of Sammy escaping, knows that something fishy is going on. Not to mention his interactions with Milo and Jason in the previous book. So he tracks Sammy's gps chip and ends up in Mad Creech as well.

It doesn't take him long to figure out what is going on. Since Rav isn't exactly a people person, but a dog person, he decides this would be the perfect place for him to stay. He loves the town and the "quickend". Of course they don't know that he knows ;) He is especially drawn to Sammy.

I really enjoyed this one. Rav was such an amazing man. He wanted to do everything he could to help the

quickness and their town. He also took such great care with Sammy.

Not everyone is happy with Rav's arrival though. I know you all remember Sheriff Lance...sigh.... That protective border collie is still my favorite, probably because I have an awesome Border Collie myself !! He will do anything to keep his little town safe from intruders and that includes Rav.

All in all, this was another awesome addition to this series. If you love dogs and cuteness and fluff, you should really give this series a try. It's unlike all the other shifter books out there.

*My reviews are posted on Dirty Books Obsession*

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## Gigi says

Let's go back to Mad Creek, CA for another dog shifter adventure!

Rav is a human who runs a no-kill animal shelter in Arizona. (We met him in book 3 when Jason was trying to find a cure for the virus.) He makes monthly trips to the nearest high-kill shelter that can't keep up with the serious over population problem. Rav chooses dogs that have a low chance of being adopted; Older dogs, black dogs and dogs with chronic medical issues. On one of his trips he meets a terrified chocolate lab named Sammy.

Sammy is a newly quickened, a dog that can now turn into a human. He was verbally, emotionally and physically abused during his short life as a dog so he has some serious trust issues as a human.

You'll need to read the book (which is KU people!) to find out how these two land in Mad Creek and develop their bond. It would also be a good idea to read at least the first book *How to Howl at the Moon* to understand the hierarchy of the town and the ins-and-outs of being a dog shifter. And read book 2 as well. Roman is to **DIE** for! If you need a push to read the other books, all you need to do is read Gay Book Reviews reviewer's take on the series. Universally loved by *all!*

Dog lovers will especially love this book because Ms. Easton obviously did her homework or she's

volunteered or worked in an animal shelter before and worked in rehabilitation. As an 8 year training volunteer at our local Humane Society, I've seen it all and I saw no flaws in Ms. Easton's portrayal. Dog lovers are going to lose their shit over this one. Dogs! Hurt/Comfort! Romance! Hot sex! Gah, is there anything more perfect?

**Highly, highly recommended.** On my *absolute* favorites shelf and in the running for my favorite book of the year.

Enjoy my friends!

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### **Nick Pageant says**

Loved it! Lots of great reviews already written of this and I'm only on my first cup of coffee so... great, fun book with lots of extra sugar.

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### **Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says**

While I absolutely ADORE the Howl at the Moon series by Eli Easton, I have to say that How To Save A Life was my least favorite of the bunch.

Don't get me wrong, this book is CUTE. This series practically defines sweet and fluffy, but certain things that didn't bother me as much in previous books didn't sit right with me here.

For one, I struggled a bit with the innocence of our dog-shifter MC, Sammy. I couldn't get past the fact that he seemed almost child-like, much too much for my comfort. It felt a bit icky, for some reason, and though the other books have very similar set ups, Sammy was too "new" for me.

The overall plot was engaging and sweet, but it didn't grip me like in the other books in the series. I liked Rav and I liked him with Sammy well enough, but their storyline wasn't as exciting for me.

Rav was a good character in theory, but I struggled with him in reality. His upperclass, well moneyed past and high level of education didn't seem to fit with his current personality and the way he acted. And I absolutely *loathed* how he used the word "bae." Bae is NOT something a man who went to Harvard and is in his 30s should or would say. For some reason, bae is like a trigger word for me, and I get a visceral reaction every time I read it. It honestly detracted from my enjoyment a good deal.

While I wish I could gush over this story, I didn't exactly feel the love. It still has that sweetness and charm as the previous stories in the series, but just missed the mark for me.

\*Copy provided in exchange for an honest review\*

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### **Lost in a Book says**

Tag Team with Adam and Chelsea

3.5 Stars

Mad Creek. How I love thee. After googling Mad Creek, California and finding out it's just a stream, my plans for moving have been placed on hold until a real shifter town opens. \*sigh\* I love this series and have loved each and every book...until this one. We met Rav in book three and I was excited to find out that the broody, growly, tattooed dog shelter owner was going to get a starring role in this book.

In *How to Save a Life*, we are introduced to Sammy, a sweet chocolate lab. Sammy got the spark when his original owner passed away. He moved to a new home that was full of abuse and unfortunately shaped the way he interacted with men. He was terrified of them. Sammy ended up at the pound and met Rex, another quickened who told him about Mad Creek. When Rav rescued him from the pound, Sammy cowered and waited for his opportunity to get to Mad Creek. Using his advanced Quickened brain, he was able to escape from the shelter and start the journey to a town where dogs were like him.

Rav tracked Sammy with his GPS microchip to Mad Creek and immediately realized that either he was crazy or dog shifters were a real thing. Looking into the golden eyes of Sammy the person, he came to terms with shifters pretty quick and wanted to know more. So of course, Rav moves to Mad Creek.

This book follows the transformation of sweet, terrified, and skittish Sammy as he gets to know Rav in a different capacity. Rav gets to know Sammy and the two have quite the journey. Being newly quickened, Sammy is SO innocent.

That's how I pictured him throughout much of the book. He hasn't had any life experience and is still suffering from traumatic events and the abuse that followed. Rav does a great job of pulling him out of his head and showing him that not all men are like "Bad Man."

**"The more Sammy watched Rav with the dogs, the more new feelings stirred inside him. He wanted to play with Rav too. No, that wasn't right. He wanted to be touched. He wanted to sit in Rav's lap and feel his strength, feel safe. He wanted to be soothed by those hands. He craved it very much! He felt jealous of the dogs."**

Sammy and Rav stayed platonic for a lot of the book. Their touches and kisses didn't hold heat, serving mostly as comfort. While their growth individually and together was realistic considering their past, this book had a much different feel than the previous ones. It was hard coming to terms with their relationship even being a possibility for a lot of the book due to Sammy's childlike thoughts, actions, and emotions. An intimate "mate" relationship seemed icky... until it didn't.

There was a turning point in the book which I am thankful for. Prior to this turning point, anything outside of their platonic comforting touches would have been creeper status to me. But, we were able to gradually see the transition from innocent, childlike Sammy to sweet, brave, I-want-to-have-butt-sex, Sammy. \*whew\* When they *finally* took the intimate steps in their relationship, I was no longer in the omg-wtf mind frame and was able to appreciate how far they had come.

**"It was almost sad to see the shy, awkward Sammy ebb away. Or it would have been, if the new, more confident Sammy were not so damned appealing. Rav loved seeing Sammy happy."**

One other teeny tiny little nit picky thing that caused a few eye rolls was when broody, growly, and grown-ass-man Rav's inner frat boy and part teenage girl came out. Nothing wrong with frat boys or growly tattooed men. I like them both. Separately and possibly even as part of a trio. What was annoying was the "bruh" and "bae" that kept on coming. It didn't fit Rav's personality and I was pulled out of the story each time.

This book was a decent addition to the series. Milo and his enthusiasm when welcoming Rav still makes me giggle. Definitely my least favorite out of the four but I would recommend it if you're a fan of the series. There is just something about this quirky town that keeps me coming back.

**"When a man is a hero, he deserves to be sexed in the ass."** ~Sammy

<https://boymeetsboyreviews.blogspot.com>

*Copy provided for honest review.*

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## Jaime says

This book is brilliant!! I loved every. Single. Word.

*How to Save a Life* is book 4 in Eli Easton's must read series, *Howl at the Moon*. I have loved every single story and adore all the characters in this series. This story just added two more loveable characters to the mix and I feel like the series just gets better and better!

If you have not read any of the stories in this series then you are seriously missing out on a fantastic series! While I personally would recommend you start at the beginning of this series, I guess this story could sort of be read on its own. Again, I would recommend starting at book one because you will know so much more about the characters, their little personality quirks, and how the world of Mad Creek is structured.

The MC in this story are Rav, who we met in book 3 and a new little cinnamonroll named Sammy. I just wanted to eat him up...Sammy is the epitome of a kind soul. When we first meet him he is still in his dog form, and we experience the world of Sammy as a heartbroken doggie.

With those puppy dog eyes you would think nobody could ever resist his huge heart. However, situations lead him to a shelter and his time is close to running out. While at this shelter late one night he runs into a strange man-dog who tells Sammy about a mystical place called "Mad Creek" he tells Sammy that he has to escape, he is special, and he must travel west to Mad Creek. When Sammy wakes the next morning, the man-dog's cage is empty and Sammy wonders what happened, but he can't dwell on it long because a man is in the shelter adopting dogs and Sammy knows he is running out of time. So, it is within a paw of his life that he meets Rav for the first time.

When Rav enters the animal shelter to see his usual adoption candidates, the dogs that are hard to place, who are close to taking their final sleep, or those who just call out to him. There is something about the chocolate lab that just calls to his soul "Help me...See me" and even though Rav has his allotted adoptees already, he

makes one last concession. He is adopting the chocolate lab named Sammy.

This story moves quickly from there and you can truly tell that the author adores dogs, it is in everything about this story. I felt that love and devotion shining through while reading this story and the authors creativity astounded me!

Sammy only stays with Rav very briefly before his stellar getaway. What he doesn't count on his leading Rav to Mad Creek.

So, yes - this is a shifter book. However, it is not your typical paranormal story or wolf shifter story. This story, while it does focus on each of the quickens inner dog - it also, really focuses on the transition to learning and being human. The shifters in this story were almost all born as dogs. They lived as dogs. Then, something (its still not totally scientifically proven what) causes certain dogs to get "the spark" and transition from pure dog to dog/human shifter. Then all these full-grown adults have to learn how to be human and they all live in a mountain town called Mad Creek. While in their human forms its not uncommon for quicken to have some of their dog personalities and traits come through. Such as, rolling in the grass, shaking their butts, getting easily excited etc., - now imagine driving into a town and seeing an entire town behaving this way. This is the situation Rav finds himself in...

**"Maybe there was a mental health facility in town. Maybe Rav should check himself into it right the fuck now."**

**"It was as if he had one of those old View-Master toys installed in his brain, the kind where you looked through the eye holes and saw an image of a running horse, but when you toggled the button, a rider appeared on the same horse's back. Watching the citizens of Mad Creek was like that. Toggle: human. Toggle: dog."**

**"This was dogs. That was like saying your superpower was being sweet and loving and exuberant. That wasn't a superpower. That was... heaven."**

As you can imagine their secret has to be protected. Which is why Rav finds himself on the very unwelcoming end of Sheriff Beauforts interrogation as to why he is in Mad Creek. A welcome that doesn't get any warmer when Rav makes his intentions known.

The romance between Rav and Sammy is one that grows naturally. Rav is very patient with innocent Sammy and they deal with life's problems as they happen. Sammy is a pure soul who just wants to love, be loved, and help others. However, when he is finally alerted to the carnal pleasures that can occur between two men, he goes after what he wants. No games. No pretense.

**"When a man is a hero, he deserves to be sexed in the ass."**

**"He who loves the loudest, loves the best."**

I highly recommend this series and of course loved this book!  
5 Amazing stars!!

## ? Todd says

**I'm a huge fan of this series** and totally loved the first seventy percent or so of this story. It was pretty much perfect.

**Sammy's innocence** and **Rav's curiosity** were very entertaining to watch play out as the story progressed.

The **irrepressible exuberance of all of the quickened**, especially Milo was so much fun to see. Like when Rav first showed up in Mad Creek, I thought Milo was going to freaking pee on the floor like a butt-wiggling, tail-wagging cocker spaniel. Those parts made me laugh so hard.

And don't even get me started on the "**job interview**" part of the story. I was dying, and loving every word of it. "**You WON!**" heh

Then **the tone of the story changed a bit**, with Rav trying to save the town from rampant unemployment, while still trying to guard its most dangerous secret.

And **Sammy's developing sense of humor** was just so... **corny**, which definitely made me roll my eyes, as he tried what I felt was *waaaaaaay* too hard to be funny. **#MomHumor**

Plus, "**BAE**". Rav was a **Harvard MBA turned badass, tattooed biker**, I assumed in his 30's. And he was **calling Sammy "bae", like some teenage girl?** Just... ugh. That felt really out of place to me and I was *\*not\** a fan. At all.

So yes, those parts fell a bit flat for me, but **I loved seeing all of the previous MC's making frequent on-page appearances** throughout the book, including Lance being extra prickly and protective. (I snorted extra hard at **Tim mouthing "valium"** to Rav.)

This story, much more so than the previous three books, did rely heavily on the reader already being familiar with the goings on up to this point in the series, so I would definitely *\*not\** **recommend reading it as a stand-alone** story.

I'd rate this story at **around 3.75 stars** and, while it wasn't my favorite of the series, it was still **definitely worth a read**.

**\*\* NOTE: This story is now \*FREE\* with Kindle Unlimited membership.**

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*My ARC copy of the book was provided by the publisher in exchange for a fair, unbiased review.*

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## Shile says

#### 4.25 stars

It would have been 5 if not for the **bae thing** nope, no that's just unacceptable.

The rest i loved.

The first chapter had me crying, what Sammy went through as a dog was heartbreaking. I hate animal abusers. The story was a nice super slow burn. I loved Rav he ran a shelter for rescued dogs that alone earned him my love.

Sammy! he broke my heart, i loved his innocence but at times he was so childlike. I loved him and his newly discovered quickened body.

I was so happy that the whole town got their HEA.

Honestly i thought i had already read book 3 but turns out i haven't, off to read Milo's book.

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#### **R \* A Reader Obsessed \* says**

#### **4 Stars!**

Oh how I love this unique series! It's perfect for when you just want to feel good and get some wonderful warm cuddles.

What makes this installment different is that Rav is basically in the *know*. He loves his isolated life, saving dogs one at a time and not having to deal with greedy backstabbing humans. Rav prefers his 4 legged comrades as they don't have any devious expectations of him other than companionship and care, and he doesn't regret for one second leaving his corporate cutthroat past behind. When he saves Sammy, a scared skittish Labrador, Rav can't ignore his fantastical suspicions (from book 3) as he tracks his charge after he escapes. Once he arrives in Mad Creek, Rav can no longer deny what he knows in his heart to be true - Mad Creek is full of dog shifters, and he can't believe his luck.

Because Rav is the ultimate dog lover, he's in literal heaven. Being surrounded by those who epitomize everything he admires - honesty, truth, guilelessness, simple in their wants and needs with no artifice - he appreciates their straightforward enthusiastic way of living. It's the perfect environment he wants to be in, and he revels in it, loves it, and never wants to leave. It doesn't hurt at all that the more Rav gets to know Sammy, his attraction for him only grows. That proprietary feeling he has slowly comes to include all of Mad Creek and their citizens, and Rav knows he would go to extreme lengths to keep it safe and help it thrive.

Sammy in turn, has had it rough, and though he's grateful to Rav for saving his dog form from a kill shelter, it takes him awhile to warm up to the big tough guy. Eventually though, he sees beyond his intimidating exterior, and these two fall hard, and it was oh so sweet.

As always, Easton excels at poignant vulnerability, and her quickened characters are a joy to read as they tug at my heart and make me smile hard, swooning constantly at their awesome earnestness. They truly are kind and genuine, and I melt every single damn time. I only hope we have many more stories to look forward to!!

## Jewel says

4.5 Stars

This is one of my favorite shifter series. It's cute and delightful and adorably endearing and it doesn't take itself too seriously. Except for Lance -- he takes everything too seriously (I love him, anyway).

*How to Save a Life* is the 4th book in Eli Easton's *Howl at the Moon* and it is brilliant! The innocence and enthusiasm of the quickened in Mad Creek is enough to make me smile for days. I smiled the whole time I was reading this story (well, except for the beginning, which was sad) and I haven't stopped, yet.

Sammy was my favorite breed of dog -- Labrador. He was a chocolate lab whose first human, Mama Charlotte, died in a fall. That was when Sammy first got the spark. It sometimes happens during times of intense grief. But after that, Sammy's life was full of trauma and then he was taken to an animal shelter. And it was horrible and Sammy was so scared. He was terrified of men and so no one adopted him. But just before his time is up, Rav comes and rescues him and takes him to his no-kill shelter, called Hold My Paw.? But Sammy is no ordinary dog, of course.?

We first met Rav in *How to Wish Upon a Star*, when some of our Mad Creek guys travel to Arizona in search of one of their own, and a cure for a virus that was spreading? through the quickened? in Mad Creek. Rav looks like a big, tough, tattooed biker, but the man is a teddy bear?, especially? when it comes to dogs. In this book, we get Rav's background and we get to see lots of his teddy bear side. He and Sammy were downright adorable.

Sammy was brave. He didn't see that in himself, but he was brave and kind and very loyal. He reached out even when it made him feel uncomfortable and even when he thought he would fail. All he wants is to be the best person he can possibly be. He wants to make a difference. So he learns what to do and he does it.? I fell in love with Sammy in about two seconds flat. He was amazing with the shelter dogs, especially those that were skittish or had been abused.

Rav was compassionate and kind. After walking away from the family business after finding out how the money was made, Rav spent his time and money saving dogs and finding them forever homes. He'd take every stray if he could, because his heart is just that big. And even though he can only take so many, he does everything he can to find them families that will love and cherish them.

?There are so many things I love about Mad Creek. I love how they all work together. The quickened may not often be skilled, but they are enthusiastic and I loved just how patient Rav was with the volunteers at the new shelter. And ?I really enjoyed watching Sammy and Rav interact and get closer and watching Sammy come into his own.

??*How to Save a Life*? was everything I'd hoped it would be and if you're a fan of this series, you won't be disappointed here.

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ARC of ??*How to Save a Life* was generously provided by the author, in exchange for an honest review.

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## Susan says

### Re-read July 2018 - audio edition

I really love Matthew Shaw's narration of this series. He was perfect for these cute books.

I still loved this just as much as the first time I read it. Even though I hope Eli Easton will never ever write a character who uses the endearment Bae... I cringed every time Rav said it. \*shudders\*

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### 4.5 stars

This series is too adorable for words. I really love these fluffy feel good books about dog shifters.

I think this is now my favorite in this series. And I was so happy this one didn't feel as rushed as the 3rd book. I was really missing some character and relationship development in that one. And I was so happy to see we did get that here!

Sammy is a chocolate Labrador who is now living with mom Marie, since Mom Charlotte died. But mom Marie has an abusive boyfriend and the Bad Man likes to hurt dogs as well as humans. And that's how he ends up in a shelter, because mom Marie takes him there for his own safety.

It is there that he gets rescued by Rav, the owner of a dog shelter (who we previously met in the 3rd book), 2 days before Sammy was supposed to be put down. But Rav is big and scary looking with his big physique and his beard. He reminds Sammy of the Bad Man, so he has a hard time trusting him.

Sammy has felt himself become more intelligent the last few weeks. And he has a feeling he could become more than what he is now. So when he escapes the shelter one night, he runs off to the little town of Mad Creek, since he heard that's where dogs go who are more than just dogs.

Rav is upset the cute lab went missing, so he goes out to find him. Luckily he had Sammy inserted with a tracker chip. And that's how Rav ends up in the weird town Mad Creek. But it is not before he sees the big beautiful eyes of the cute man in the diner, who so look like Sammy's, that he makes the connection. He already had his suspicions when he met Jason and Milo a couple of months back, but now he knows for sure that there is such a thing as a dog shifter. Unfortunately the town's sheriff isn't very welcoming. But that doesn't stop Rav from moving to the cute town and opening up a shelter there.

Sammy is my new favorite character of this series. I loved the others, but Sammy was something special altogether. He was shy and scared at first, but once he gets used to being a person instead of a dog he really comes into his own skin. I especially loved his sense of humor, and the way he found his own jokes so funny. He was just too cute.

The sexy times happened when the relationship was already in full force but that's because Sammy needed some time to adjust physically because he was neutered as a pup. But once everything was in working order, Sammy had no problem at all letting Rav know what he wanted. I loved how the innocent Sammy learned about sex. First from Milo, who explained the basics so Sammy wasn't totally ignorant. And after Sammy and Rav had been experimenting for a while, he then learned about 'butt sex like they do in the porn movies' from Simon..... hilarious!

There was one thing that bothered me in this though. And that was Lance and how he acted. I could understand where he was coming from and how his doggy instincts rode him hard, but he was still a complete ass to Rav. I did like him in his own book, but not so much in the other books. So I'll try to remember how he was in the first book so I can still see him as someone I like (even though that was really hard in this book).

This town and the people (and dogs!) in it were just adorable to read about. One of my favorite scenes was when over a hundred people came for the job interview and Rav had to interview every single one of them.

And now I'm sad it's over. I really hope this wasn't the end of this series. I want Simon to get his own book too. I love him.

And I want more of all these cute doggies.

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*An ARC of How To Save A Life was generously provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.*

*This review has been cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews.*

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**Eve Recinella (Between The Bookends) says**

[neutered (hide spoiler)]

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