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**Footprints on a Small Planet**

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Footprints on a Small Planet

**Volume 1**

**Mesoamerica**

**Theodore P. Druch**

**For Maria**

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Without her, this book could never have been written.

It's not likely that, by myself, I'd ever have had the courage to do what she made us do together.

I can't imagine how dull my life would have been if she hadn't dragged us to ever more exotic adventures – now I no longer even know the meaning of the word.

The moral, I suppose fellas, is that if you want to run away and see the world but Footprints on a Small Planet feel a bit overwhelmed by the idea, find a born adventuress and hang on – she'll get Footprints on a Small Planet you there in spite of yourself.

Here's looking at you, kid.

## **Acknowledgements**

Authors, no matter how much they might like to, don't exist in a vacuum. Everybody's got an opinion about your writing, and if you ignore them completely, you might as well not bother to submit a manuscript; it'll never sell. That doesn't mean, of course, that you must tailor your work to every criticism – that's Footprints on a Small Planet just another way of not submitting a manuscript; it'll never get done.

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If you ask five people for Footprints on a Small Planet an opinion and get five positives, you're probably on the way to a Pulitzer. Five negatives point to the Recycle bin. Five mixed reviews means you're an equal opportunity offender and should be OK. The problem comes when you get mind breakers like four to one.

What to do?

My solution is to read aloud to large groups and see the reaction.

Luckily, I have one of the best such band of listeners anywhere; the Puerto Vallarta Writer's Group, a non-club of writers and readers who just love to get together for a couple of hours on a Saturday morning and listen to and encourage each other in all of their various maunderings.

Foremost among the listeners is the group's guardian angel, Don Gallery, who has kindly made reading time available almost every week, allowing me to submit large parts of my work to public scrutiny and get instant feedback.

The encouragement and help I've received from Don and the Writer's (not the 50's singing group) has been invaluable, and if my writing finds a wider audience, it will be in large part due to their trenchant criticism and refusal to allow me to get away with literary murder.

Many thanks as well to Heather Footprints on a Small Planet Wilson, the long-suffering editor of the Vallarta Tribune, who has made space available every week for my column in which large parts of this book first saw the light of day

I'd also like to thank my brother Howie who's support has been invaluable, and my daughter Darya whose merciless comments would warm the cockles (whatever those are) of any professional editor's cold heart.

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Likewise to Joyce Footprints on a Small Planet Oresman, one of my oldest and dearest friends, whose observations tended to make Darya's look like sycophantic encomiums.

And last but not least, I'd like to acknowledge my childhood buddy Ed Gaer, whose been encouraging me to write for something going on sixty years. He complains that not enough happens in my stories, but what can you expect from someone who continues to believe that the Milwaukee Brewers will someday win a World Series.

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