

TALES ABOUT TAILS

**True Stories of Street Dog
Rescue: No.2**



EMILY, KEN AND TIM

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A short Introduction to “Tales About Tales”

Hello and Welcome to TalesAboutTails,

Over the years, we’ve come to believe that every street dog has a story. A story of survival, of heartbreak, and sometimes, if they’re lucky, a story of second chances. Our home, once just a place for our family, has slowly grown into a safe haven for these incredible souls. Some arrive broken, some arrive terrified, and some simply wander in just like Audrey did when she just wandered up the path and made herself at home; others maybe just running the streets looking for food but finding love and safety instead.

In this book, we want to introduce you to three very special dogs: Emily, Ken, and Tim. Each of them came into our lives in their own unique way, carrying their own scars, fears, and silent pleas for help. None of them asked to be heroes, but in their quiet resilience and unwavering loyalty, in our opinion they became just that.

Emily was found on the edge of giving up, like her brother did, her spirit almost extinguished, yet she still managed to wag her tail at the smallest kindness. Ken, with his playful energy and mischief, taught us how to laugh even in the most challenging of days when a black cloud seems to follow you around wherever you go. And Tim, whose early life was a chain of disappointments, reminded us all that trust, once shattered, can still be rebuilt with patience and love.

These stories are not fake and made up - they are absolutely true, and they aren’t just about rescue either. They’re about connection. About what it means to help someone who has nothing left. They’re about the simple but profound idea that no life is too small, no dog too broken to deserve another chance.

I would like to point out one thing; the first four issues of Tales About Tails will focus entirely on the fifteen dogs who currently live with us in our home, as part of one big loving family. We will cover their story in detail, such as their rescue, where we found them, their condition, and their life now. After that, starting in Issue No.5 we will delve into the missions and attempts of rescue, some successful and some not, of all the other dogs that we helped.

Thank you for picking up this book. We hope that as you turn each page, you will not only see the journey of Emily, Ken, and Tim but also feel inspired to notice the quiet ones in your own neighborhood, those who are waiting for someone like you, to help and care.

This isn’t just our story. It’s theirs. And now, it’s yours too.

Thank you
Steve and Ruth

Emily–The Bag in the Ditch



It was just another January morning in 2025, the kind of day that you just know that you *really* must all do the things you've been promising yourself to do for ages, but never got round to it. The sun was high in the sky, warm but not too fierce, and I was outside in the garden, busy with the endless little jobs that come with caring for so many rescue dogs. I'd been picking out weeds, clearing some dry grass, tidying along the fence line—nothing special, just part of the rhythm of everyday life here in Palawan.

I've always enjoyed those peaceful moments when doing odd jobs and finally getting things done; days like that are very rare these days, when the only sounds are the distant barking of the dogs, the occasional motorbike passing by, and the soft sounds of one of your favourite songs playing on your earphones. My mind tends to wander in those quiet spells, but that day the calm was broken when I heard the sound of Joanne's motorbike, a neighbour of ours, pulling up beside me.

Joanne's a local lady; someone I've come to know quite well over time. Her family has a soft spot for animals too, I think they have three or four dogs of their own, not tied up or locked in a cage which is the usual custom here, but allowed to run and roam. She pulled off her helmet, looked at me with concern, and said, "Can you do me a favour? I just passed by the ditch, just past your land. I thought I heard something—whimpering, maybe a dog in trouble. Can you go and have a look?"

There wasn't a moment's hesitation. When you hear something like that, you just move. Maybe a dog had been hit by a passing bike or car and needed help. I put my tools down and walked straight down the road. The ditch she mentioned is one of those deep roadside channels, usually dry but sometimes holding a bit of rainwater after a hard rain. As I approached, I also heard it—a faint, desperate sound, the soft cries of something; something struggling. A familiar sound I've heard so many times now, over the years.

When I reached the edge and looked down, I saw it—a cotton shopping bag, tied tightly, just lodged in the mud above the waterline; and it was moving. The bag really was moving but ever so slightly. My heart sank. I scrambled down the embankment, half-slipping, half-sliding, and grabbed the bag. I climbed back up to the road as quickly as I could, my hands wet with mud as I fumbled to untie the knot.

Oh No! Inside were two tiny puppies.

On closer look, one was already gone; dead. His little body was still warm, but he wasn't breathing. The other, though—she was alive. Barely. She was gasping, trembling all over, but thank God she was alive.

I'll never understand how people can do this—throwing away a life like it's nothing, like it has no value. It's the kind of thing that cuts a big black hole into your heart. But there was no time to dwell on that right now. Yes, I felt it, I felt the hurt and the rush of anger, but I needed to act quickly. I held the lifeless pup carefully under one arm, and held the survivor close to my chest, and walked back home.

I didn't even have to think. I knew the routine well. I took the surviving pup straight to the laundry room, the safest place we have for emergencies. It's cool and fresh, quiet, and totally separate from the other dogs who were already gathered around the door, their tails wagging and noses twitching, curious as ever about the new arrival.

I put her down gently and gave her a shallow bowl of clean water and a little bit of soft meat. She wobbled over and began to eat—a shaky, clumsy attempt as I had no puppy food but thought that to a starving dog, any food would be welcome; it was a beautiful sight. Eating is always the first good sign. It means they want to live. I left her there to rest, closing the door behind me, and went to take care of the one who didn't make it.

At the far end of our land, we've made a small cemetery for the dogs we've lost. It's a peaceful place, shaded by trees, where I can bury them with dignity and love. I always wrap their bodies in one of my old T-shirts before laying them to rest. It's something I've always done—a way of saying, *"You were loved, you mattered, you're not just a number."*

I dug a small grave, gently lowered him in, and placed an aloe vera pot plant beside him, and marked it out with a cross made from stones. I always do that; it's a ritual for all of my beloved dogs who have passed over. Then I paused, said a quiet prayer, and took a deep breath. So upsetting.

There's no easy way to describe these moments. You carry them with you. You never get used to them. It can be heartbreaking, even with a dog you have never shared time with.

But life was calling me back. A little pup was waiting.

When I returned to the laundry room, the tiny girly-dog was curled up, fast asleep. Even then, I think I knew she would make it. There was something about her. A quiet strength.

We named her Emily. I don't know why exactly— as I explained before in Issue No. 1, we usually call all our dogs after TV characters, and this time it just seemed to fit. She was so small, yet her spirit was already showing. Emily. Sweet, simple, perfect.

The next morning, we took her to the vet, as we always do. The car rides with rescued dogs are always a strange mix of hope and fear. You never quite know what the vet will find. But this time, we were lucky. Emily was underweight, as expected, but otherwise healthy. No major injuries, no internal issues, no signs of infection. The vet smiled and said, “She’s strong. She’ll be fine. Just give her vitamins, good food, and lots of love.”

That, we could certainly do.

Every time, when I walk to the dog cemetery at the far end of our land, I take a moment to pause by the aloe vera plants that mark the resting places of those we couldn't save, or those who we did save and lived with us but passed away naturally of old age like Stinker and Claire. Each one has its own story. Each one carries its own weight. Some of those graves are so small you wouldn't believe a life could fit inside. But they did. They mattered.

On quiet days, I find myself sitting near the graves, remembering the dogs who passed through my life, even if only for a short time. The little one I buried that January morning rests there too. I still think about him. Sometimes I imagine what it would have been like if both pups had survived—if Emily had a brother to run with, to play with, to grow up with. That thought stays with me. But Emily made it. And she's made the most of her second chance.



The day when we brought her home from the vet, Emily's new life really began. She was still too small to be left unsupervised, but we slowly let her explore the garden and start meeting our other dogs; fourteen of them before Emily, and now fifteen with her. The moment the laundry door

opened, the first time I let her mix in, they all rushed to greet her—noses sniffing, tails wagging, circling her like she was the most exciting little thing in the world.

Out of all the dogs, one in particular formed an instant bond with her—Dixie. Dixie was a rescue too, just a couple of months older than Emily and rescued only a couple of months before her; so maybe there was a link. Maybe they recognised something in each other, that same shared story of survival. Over the next few weeks Dixie became like an older sister to her, always ready to play, and always ready to lead her into mischief; the kind of thing that pups always do!

Emily settled in quickly. She was fearless from the start, often running straight up to the biggest dogs and giving them a cheeky lick and nudge before sprinting off, tail wagging in triumph. She loved teasing them, dashing between their legs, making them chase her around the land. But she could be a complete rascal too. Yes – sweet and sour - Hahaha.

She developed a wild obsession with chewing—especially anything made of wood. Chair legs, broom handles, table corners—nothing was safe. She even started chewing on the wooden steps of the staircase! If you left a sandal lying around, Emily would seize it like it was treasure and dash off, carrying it proudly all the way to the far end of the land, her little tail wagging furiously, and of course, leaving it there after her fun and games had finished.

She also had this strange habit of venturing outside the property, onto the roadside, where she'd rummage through rubbish. She would return triumphantly with odd bits—plastic bottles, scraps of cloth, pieces of cardboard—and carefully deposit them on the balcony as if she'd brought home the greatest gifts for us – She always looked so proud as she sat there with her latest find in front of her. It was impossible to be angry. Her enthusiasm was infectious; naughty but nice.

Her friendship with Dixie blossomed into something really special. They were almost inseparable in those early months. I remember one afternoon when they found a worn-out tennis ball and spent nearly an hour chasing each other around the land, playfully growling, tugging, and pouncing like it was the greatest prize in the world.

But Emily's love for shoes became legendary – Seriously



We got used to the morning routine of searching for missing sandals. It was almost a daily ritual—walking around the property, calling out, “Emily, where’s my shoe this time?” And sure enough, somewhere near the back fence or under a shady tree, we’d find her lying next to it, her tail wagging in triumph, her eyes sparkling with pride as if to say, *‘Go away, this is mine, now’*

At one point, I started leaving old, worn-out shoes out on purpose, just to see where she’d take them. It almost became like our little game, a private joke between us. Funny enough, she always took them to the same corner of the land, like she was building her own secret collection. And as I mentioned before, the treasures she brought from the roadside—broken flip-flops, plastic wrappers, even an old pair of shorts, in fact anything that caught her attention was a daily affair. She would drag them all back to the balcony and sit among them like a queen in her castle, surrounded by her odd little kingdom.

Some days I’d sigh and moan and curse and sweep them all into a bin, but only for her to start again the next day. She was determined, was our little scavenger. But despite all the mischief, Emily was incredibly affectionate. She loved her cuddles, always pressing herself against our legs, always seeking out a friendly hand. Sometimes she’d just sit quietly beside us, her big, trusting eyes looking up as if to say, *I’m home now, right? I’m safe?*

Yes, Emily. You are.

Over the few months since we had her, she grew; grew and grew and grew, until she was almost as big as the bigger ones, even at her young age. The frantic chewing has now mostly faded and the wild energy somewhat settled, though her playful spirit still remains as strong as ever. She still loves to run with Dixie, rolling over onto her back when Dixie comes in for the play-bite; and she still loves to tease the older dogs, waking them from their afternoon nap and then dashing off

across the land to escape their barked moans and yelps of surprise. But, in general, she's a little calmer now, more content, more grounded.

Sometimes, when the day winds down and the place falls quiet, I find myself watching her as she sprawls out in the grass in front of the balcony, worn out from play, the evening breeze gently cooling her. I often think about that morning in January, about how lucky we were in finding her; how close we came to losing her. About how easily she could have been the one I buried that day. But she wasn't. She fought. She survived. And now she's here.

People sometimes ask me if rescuing gets easier over time. If you harden, if you stop feeling the weight of it all. The truth is, no, you never do.

Each dog, each story, cuts just as deeply. Every loss hurts really bad; every rescue matters. But each success you score, each life saved is a win, win situation— that's what makes you keep going. Emily's story will always stay with me. Not because it was the most dramatic rescue, not because she was the sickest or the hardest case—but because she survived something she never should have had to survive. She was thrown away like a bag of rubbish; tied in a bag and left to die in a water filled ditch. But somehow, she held on. She found her way to us.

And in doing so, she's reminded us—once again—that what we do here matters.

- Love matters.
- Kindness matters.
- Every life matters.



Emily isn't just another rescue. She's a little spark that keeps the fire burning, a little reminder that even when things seem hopeless, and I am talking about for all of us, humans, dogs and all animals, there's always a chance to make things right providing you never give up

She's proof that hope still lives, that love still works, that kindness still counts. Even now, as I write this, I can hear her in the distance—playfully barking, chasing Dixie, living her best life. And I know, without a doubt, that she's home and that's where she's going to stay.

Ken – From Shopping Mall to Home Sweet Home.



It was back in 2018, a typical hot and sticky afternoon in the Philippines. The sort of day where the heat bounces off you and makes you think twice before going out of the coolness of your house or doing anything physical. I'd taken a break from the usual chaos of the day and headed to our local shopping mall, a place I knew well by then. It is quite a big mall, with a nice and welcome air con system going on inside, or where you can sit outside if preferred, enjoy a coffee, watch the world go by, and, if you were like me, keep an eye on the many street dogs who had made the place their little home from home; begging scraps of food from the tables or searching through the outdoor rubbish bins that were situated further along .

That's when and where I first met Ken.

I wasn't looking for another rescue dog that day. Honestly, I was just there to enjoy a quiet moment with my first ever rescue, Stinker – a loyal, beautiful looking little dog with a permanent quest for

relaxation and a loving approach to everyone, humans and dogs, that she met. I'd claimed a table outside the café, Stinker happily sprawled under my chair as I sipped my coffee and nibbled on a sandwich. My partner, Ruth was just in town doing some errands but would be joining me as soon as she'd finished.

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw this young dog, maybe about twelve months old, full of beans, bounding around, playing with a little boy who was laughing his head off. The dog, slim with golden brown hair, and with the sort of long waggy tail that could knock a cup off a table, was leaping, spinning, chasing his own shadow, chasing the boy, jumping up and making a fuss of him. Obviously, I thought the dog belonged to the boy by the way they were playing together, but as it turned out he didn't belong to anyone. No collar, no lead, no one calling him back. Just a street dog, but a street dog who had somehow appointed himself as the mall's self-declared entertainment officer.

The boy eventually wandered off with his mum, and that's when this dog trotted over to our table like we were old mates. He gave me that look, the classic one when food is around – the “Go on, you're not going to finish all that, are you?” look. Stinker growled softly as if to say, “Oi, this is my human,” but I could see she wasn't really serious, or why would she be wagging her tail?

I broke off a chunk of my sandwich and placed it gently on the ground. The dog sniffed it, wolfed it down, then sat down, and looked up at me with the sort of gratitude that street dogs seem to carry in their bones. And just like that, we became part of each other's story. I went to my car and got a bowl of dog biscuits and a bowl of clean water and placed them by the table, for both dogs, my Stinker, and the new boy, to share. And they did share; side by side, almost taking it in turns.

His name, as I would later decide, was Ken. Why Ken? Because as I have mentioned before, I like to call all the dogs by names off the TV; of actors from the British soap operas, and this one was from Coronation street's 'Ken Barlow'. And, to be honest, I've almost run out of names now, there's been so many. Of these Mall Mutts.



Over the next four years, Ken became part of what I affectionately called the “Mall Mutts.” There were about five of them in total, regular faces who lounged around the café tables, darted between parked motorbikes, and did their rounds like little furry security guards. They weren’t anyone’s pets, but they were loved in their own way. Some shoppers, some, not many unfortunately, would throw scraps of food down when walking by, and of course, Ruth and I were there, rain or shine, bringing them food every single day.

It became our thing. Ruth and me and Stinker would show up, normally about the same time every day and the dogs would all come running as soon as they heard the noise of our car, tails wagging, some barking in excitement, others just doing that quiet happy shuffle when they see someone they trust and knowing that the ‘Meals on Wheels’ service has just arrived.

Ken was always there, always first in line, always a bit cheeky, nudging the others out the way if he thought he could nick a bit extra. He was full of life, and we loved seeing him every day. I’m sure the feeling was mutual too. Some of the other dogs seemed to come and go before we could really get to know them, but when you really took notice, more than less, most of the dogs had an uncanny resemblance to Ken; often we would laugh about Ken being a Daddy, and even a Granddaddy.

Around the time of the pandemic when Covid struck, so many dogs just disappeared from the mall. We knew what was happening but were helpless to interfere or make any complaints; but dogs were being taken away to be used for food. When money is short people get desperate, and food becomes top of the list, so if there is a chance of grabbing some free food in the shape of a live, healthy dog, then that’s what happens – But Thank God that Ken was safe and unharmed. And in time, after a few months when life slowly got back to normal, new dogs seemed to arrive and none of them were taken. Soon there was once more ,quite a big crowd of well-fed, happy looking dogs.

Then came 2022 – The Change of Policy. One early evening, as I was setting down the food bowls, one of the mall security guards approached me; I didn't know him and didn't like the look of the way he came up to me; something didn't seem right. Now, most of the guards that I knew were kind enough and usually just smiled as the dogs gathered around. But this one, wearing a serious face was different., "Sir, the mall management is not happy about the dogs. They think there are too many now, and they're saying they're going to call the dog pound."

I froze. Bad news indeed!

You see, the dog pound here doesn't have the best reputation – and that's putting it politely. Word on the street is that dogs picked up by the pound end up in overcrowded cages, often without proper care or food and water. There were even rumors that in the past the dogs were once sold to a local crocodile farm for feeding. Whether or not that was true or was still happening, I didn't know, but certainly didn't want to take any chances. When you've been feeding these dogs for years, looked into their eyes, stroked and patted them, sat with them and laughed at their tricks and games – they're not just street dogs anymore. They're your mates.

My heart was pounding; my head spinning. I knew I had to act fast. If this was company policy who was I to change it, or ignore it? No; this was serious and I had to think of a rescue plan and carry it out as fast as possible. Ruth was inside the car and hadn't heard what the guard had told me so I went and told her everything and asked her to call the head of security to see if this was true. She made the call, as her and the head guy were on good terms, coming from the same part of the country. He confirmed it. It was true – New policy! We asked if he could come down from his office and meet for a coffee and a chat. He was there in minutes and seemed as worried as we were.

He reckoned that him and a couple of the more likeable guards could round up the dogs and drive them out into the country and leave them there; better than staying put and ending up in that dreaded dog pound. We agreed; what else could we do? But we insisted that we would be the ones to take Ken and a young pup who we'd called Rita back to our house.

So that very day, without a second thought, we jumped into rescue mode. It was now dark and getting a little late, a perfect time to take action. I called Ken over – easy, he always came straight to us. But I also had my eye on another dog, a sweet little thing called Rita, who, only a few months old, had practically grown up outside that mall.

Ken came running, tail wagging, thinking it was business as usual – dinner time! But instead of just a meal, I opened the car door and patted the seat. "Come on, mate. Hop in." And just like that, he leapt in as if we'd done this a hundred times before. Rita was a little more cautious, but soon enough, with Ruth helping her up into the back seat, she joined him.

The other dogs? Well, the security chief was as good as his word. Him and two other guards took who they could catch to a nice, wooded area, a picnic kind of place, where with good luck, they could keep being fed by kind-hearted souls who would visit that area. He was honest and told us that they couldn't catch all the dogs because they had sensed trouble and bolted. But the next time

I went to the mall, not one dog remained so I like to think they found their way elsewhere, somewhere safe.

And that's how Ken, along with Rita, officially became part of our family. You'd think that would be the happy ending right there. Rescue complete, life at home, feet up. But no, Rita was happy enough settling in and getting to know her new pals, but Ken had other plans.

The first night went well. Ken settled in like he'd always been part of the gang. He mixed beautifully with the other dogs, didn't need to be isolated, and seemed perfectly content; eating and resting and acting as if he really knew the layout of the place. Job done, we thought. But the next day, we had to go out. Just a few errands, nothing major. When we came back later that afternoon, we couldn't find Ken anywhere. Gone. Rita was there but not Ken.

Panic mode again.

We looked everywhere, checked the house, checked the fence and gates; nothing. No sign of him anywhere. The gates were closed properly when we'd arrived and there were no holes been made in the bamboo fencing. What happened? Ken had most probably climbed right over the fence and vanished. Where would he go? He didn't know this area. Then it hit me – the mall. It's five miles away, but if you've got the determination (and Ken certainly did), that's not so far. We rushed over there as the sun was setting, and guess what? There he was. Sitting in his usual spot. Waiting. Like nothing had happened. Just another day in his life.

I half expected him to pull out a little pocket watch and say, "You're late, mate. Where's me dinner?" We bundled him back into the car and brought him home again, this time calling the local handyman who arrived the following morning. Looking around more carefully we guessed how Ken must have got out, now, and it seemed like the fence was too low beside the gates, so that had to be fixed and fixed quickly. "Mate, we need that fence higher. Much higher." We told him; the look on his face was a picture; the guy must've thought I was building a prison, like Alcatraz, for dogs.

The fence was reinforced, extended and raised, and since then, Ken's stayed put. Though I sometimes catch him in a half dream, laying on the balcony with a smile on his face, gazing wistfully in the direction of the mall – probably still day-dreaming of those café tables and his early days as the mall's unofficial mascot.



Life settled into a lovely rhythm after that. Ken thrived, made new friends with all the others, learned that food arrived on time every day (if you didn't steal it from the others first), and generally lived like a king. Because of the episode with him climbing the fence, which was impossible to do now, we had purposely made a small hole in the bamboo fence at the far end of the land, as these dogs, being street dogs and used to a certain amount of freedom must want to go out sometimes and have a change of scenery – And where we live is very safe as it's mostly countryside, with few houses and hardly any traffic passing by on the dirt road outside our house; well away from the main roads.

So Ken and some of the others, often squeezed through the hole and went walking around, quite safe and quite happy, chasing other dogs, exploring and having adventures. Sometimes, Ken, none of the others, stayed out quite late, just coming back for his evening meal and then going out again. We thought nothing of it as long as he was safe and as long as he came back.

But one day, we noticed something wasn't quite right. Without getting too graphic, Ken was having a bit of a *personal* problem. Let's just say things weren't looking too good in the "private parts" department. There was swelling, there was discomfort, and there were a few worrying drops of blood. It was obvious that something wasn't right as he was just not acting himself. Straight to the vet, of course. The diagnosis? A sexually transmitted infection, fairly common in unneutered street dogs. Dr. Dan, the vet laid out the plan – six weeks of treatment, regular medication, and careful monitoring.

But we didn't stop there.

I've got a wonderful friend back in England, Ros, who's a natural healer and practices Reiki. Both Ruth and I have used her for distant healing and it's been really helpful in speeding up recovery. I

called her up and asked if she could send Ken some distant healing. Ros, being the amazing soul she is, immediately said yes and worked with him for several weeks.

I don't know whether it was the Vet's medicine, the Reiki, or maybe just Ken's sheer willingness to be cured, but within six weeks, he was right as rain. No more swelling, no more dripping blood trails where ever he went, and most importantly, no more discomfort. He was back to his old, lovable cheeky ways in no time.

Ken's been with us ever since. He's happy, healthy, and still a little rascal to the other dogs, food-wise. If they're not watching their bowl, Ken will be watching it for them. He's got a knack for sneaking in and pinching food right under the noses of the others. And if you catch him, he'll give you this look like, "What? I was just checking if they wanted it."

But he's part of our family now, and I can't imagine our home without him. He might have started as the mall's cheeky street dog, but he's now a beloved, slightly mischievous, fully treasured member of our pack. And I still can't have a coffee without thinking of that day when he walked up, claimed a bit of my sandwich, and quietly claimed a piece of my heart. He's a darling and I can't ever imagine life without him!

Tim – The Dog with the Will to Survive



We first met Tim in the early part of 2019, back when life was a bit easier than it is now; not so busy for us and not so many dogs to feed, but even so, the days were filled with meaning. At the time we were living in a rented house while we slowly pieced together plans to build our own

home on a large plot of land that we had bought a couple of years earlier. I say big, it was the size of a football pitch, about four thousand square meters and perfect for the plans we were making about taking in more dogs off the streets. But the rented house was ok for the time being; it wasn't fancy, not by any stretch, but it was ours for the moment, and it had enough space for us and our growing family of rescue dogs, and importantly, the landlord didn't mind, or if he did, never said anything about the dogs. Back then, we had five: Stinker, Claire, and her three cheeky pups who always kept us on our toes, plus three or four street dogs that came and went, but were always fed whenever they came back for a visit.

The house was tucked away at the very end of a quiet cul-de-sac. It was safe there, peaceful in its own way, but just around the corner from us, life looked quite a bit different. A group of four or five building workers lived at the back of our house. They weren't bad guys, but they were rough, hardened by life and scraping by on whatever daily wage they could manage. Their home was a makeshift shelter—a ramshackle tent made from bits of tarpaulin strung between trees, and flapping noisily in the wind whenever we had a storm or hard rain. Inside were dirty looking camp beds and a fire pit where they cooked simple meals. They didn't have much, and they didn't seem to expect much as long as they could pass the bottle round at nights or afford a can or three of beer to share. We were on nodding terms with them but nothing more than that.

It was among this rough scene that we first noticed him—a tiny, scruffy pup who lingered on the edges like he didn't quite belong anywhere, but in fact, he was owned by one of the workers. He would stand at the corner of our road for ages, watching our dogs play in the street, his little head tilted in curiosity, but he never dared come too close. He seemed fascinated by them, maybe even a little envious, but he always kept his distance even if we called him or tried to get him to come closer.

He was so small that we naturally started calling him Tiny Tim, after the singer. The name just stuck; it seemed just right for him.

But really, we felt so sorry for him; he looked so lonely and so miserable, and that's awful to see a dog like that. There was something about him that got to you—this quiet, lonely little lad, a spectator to the world, never included, never invited. Our dogs would romp around the street, bowls clanging at mealtimes, tails wagging like little windmills, but Tim would just watch. He never made a sound. Never barked. Just watched.

At feeding time, mornings or nights, we started to notice that no one seemed to care whether Tim ate or not. I doubt the builders ever fed him properly. So, we began taking an extra bowl of food out to him. I'd set it down a few metres away, careful not to scare him, and then step back to watch what he would do. He wouldn't come near while I was there, but as soon as I walked away, he'd creep forward and wolf it down, as if he'd never had a full meal in all his life; he must have been around six months by then.

Every evening, we made sure he had a bowl of food. It became our little routine, a quiet sort of way to gain his trust and friendship. He still wouldn't let me near him, but I think he started to trust me in his own way. Then one day, something happened that I will never forget. One afternoon I was standing by our gate when I saw a pack of wild street dogs coming up from over the empty

land behind our house and run towards him. Tim had nowhere to go. It happened so quickly. He was trapped, outnumbered, and completely helpless. I watched in horror as they knocked him down onto his back, teeth bared, ready to tear him apart. And there, just a few steps away, one of the builders, I think it was actually his owner, stood watching, doing absolutely nothing. Not a word of protection for his dog, not a shout to ward off the strays; no movement at all from him. Just blank indifference.

I sprinted over, my heart pounding, shouting and waving my arms to break it up. The wild dogs scattered, and there was Tim, laying helplessly on his back, trembling and shaking, his eyes wide with terror. I scooped him up, glared at the builder, and told him exactly what I thought of him. I'll admit, I didn't hold back that day, and in my honest opinion, I think the guy deserved a good shouting at! Tim had a few scratches but nothing serious. It was the fear that lingered. I took him back to where he lived, in that scruffy, excuse of a tent that the builders lived in, left some biscuits for him, and went back to my house, once again, giving that builder a good earful as I passed him by.

About a week later, as if the poor dog hadn't had enough bad luck, I heard that a car had accidentally backed over his foot. Why Tim didn't run away as soon as he saw the car reversing, I will never know, because in my experience that trick of avoiding cars and bikes seems like a second nature to these dogs. But anyway, I wasn't there to see it, but when I found him, his foot was badly injured, his toes looked bloody and, in a mess, and he could barely walk. We rushed him straight to our vet, Dr. Dan, hoping for the best. They examined him and took X-rays, gave us painkillers and said that, unfortunately, nothing more could be done for his foot but that it would heal by itself in time. It wasn't something they could quick-fix.

After that, Tim was now hardly ever seen, and if he was, he was limping badly; he couldn't get to his usual feeding spot at the end of the road, so every night when we were feeding our own dogs, we carried his food and water directly into the builder's tent, ignoring their blank stares and smarty-pants comments. Tim was always hiding under one of the beds, so we had to get down on our knees and push the food over to him as he just lay there. They didn't care at all, just looking as though we were out of our minds to go to such trouble. Every morning, we would go and collect the bowls, but someone—one of those so-called 'kind-hearted men'—had taken to putting their cigarettes out in his food bowl. The water bowl and half empty food bowl would be full of half-smoked butt ends.

It's hard to describe the mixture of sadness and anger that we felt. Ruth wanted to go and tell them how she felt, but I stopped her as I didn't want to make the situation worse for Tim. But slowly, day by day, Tim began to recover. His foot remained slightly twisted, but he adapted and coped and after a week or two, he was back out sitting at his little spot on the corner again. He was a little survivor. And over time, he started to spend more and more time at our place, moving himself further away from the builders and closer to us. It wasn't a grand decision on his part—no moment of a big trumpet fanfare to welcome him in. Just little steps, day after day, until eventually, he was simply part of our family; just one more of the dog team.

To make it official, we offered the builders a few cans of beer in exchange for Tim. They shrugged as if they didn't give a stuff about what happened to him and were more than happy with the deal. I don't think they ever really cared about him, if they did, they didn't have a clue how to show it. When we eventually moved to our new home, of course, Tim came with us. By then, he was one of us. He had been with us for about a year, when we eventually moved from the rented house, and had experienced the rough and the smooth; the hunger, the lack of care, the rough times in that tent, then the street meals, and finally the quiet victory of finding a loving, caring family.

His first few days in our new home were special. It was like watching him experience life all over again. For the first time, he had proper grass to walk on, safe fences to keep strangers and traffic out, and no danger lurking around the corner. At first, he was cautious, sniffing every inch of the place, unsure if this was really his. But soon enough, he claimed it—curling up in sunny corners, learning the rhythm of the day, following the pack wherever they went.

He bonded quickly with the other dogs. He adored Stinker, often following her around like a little shadow, as if Stinker was his older sister. He played gently with all the dogs, running and chasing each other, though he always kept his movements careful because of his foot. He was never the fastest in a chase, but the others would often slow down, as if they knew about his injury, as if they wanted him to win just once.

In his new surroundings in the new house Tim developed a few quirky habits. For one, he had a favourite sleeping spot—a worn patch of grass under an old mango tree where the shade protected him from too much sun, and the breeze was just right to keep him cool. He loved sunbathing there, his eyes half-closed, his ears flicking lazily at the buzzing insects. If you called his name while he was lying there, he'd glance over, lift his head for a moment, and then promptly flop back down as if to say, "Not now, mate. I'm busy relaxing, thank you very much."



He also had this funny thing about food. Even after all those months of being fed regularly, he never quite lost the habit of guarding his bowl, just in case. He would sometimes pick up a piece of meat, carry it to a secret corner, eat it, and then go back for another, as if stockpiling in his own quiet way. And oh, he loved a good head and belly scratch. Once he trusted you, he'd lean into your hand, eyes closing, tail giving a soft, steady wag. It wasn't the frantic wag of excitement—it was the wag of contentment, of belonging.

Now, as I write this, Tim has been with us for six years. Six years of good meals, soft beds, safety, and love. He's not the frightened little pup anymore. He's a confident, quirky dog who knows his place in the pack. He still has that limp—he always will—but it doesn't slow him down. In fact, I think it's become part of his character. A badge of survival. A testament to the strength of his determination and will power.

Tim isn't the kind of dog who demands attention. He's not the loudest, not the boldest, but he's loyal, dependable, and quietly affectionate. There's something beautiful about the way he just *is*—no fuss, no drama, just steady, faithful Tim. And these days, he's not so tiny, so it's not 'Tiny Tim' any more, it's Tim or, when the mood suits, 'Timbo'!

Sometimes I catch him lying in the sun, his eyes half-closed, completely at peace, and I think back to that tiny, hungry little pup standing on the corner, too afraid to come close. I think about all the little choices that brought him here—one bowl of food at a time, one small act of kindness leading to another.

Tim's story isn't flashy. It doesn't have a dramatic rescue or a heroic turning point. It's a story of patience, of slow trust, of quiet resilience. He didn't come bounding into our lives. He drifted in gently, almost unnoticed, until one day, he simply belonged. And I think that's what makes his story so special, bless him. We love him so much.

A Few Thoughts

As we close this one, Issue No.2, we want you to know that this is only the beginning. The stories of Emily, Ken, and Tim are just a few among many. Every day, new faces appear—some cautious, some desperate, some simply in need of a friend. And we will keep showing up for them, just as we did for these three beautiful souls.

We're not stopping here. This journey continues, not only in future books but also in our growing series of videos on YouTube. We would like to invite you to join us on our video series, *Tales of Tails*, on YouTube. There, you can meet more of our dogs, see our daily work, and share in the real, unfiltered life of street dog rescue and survival. Through these true stories—both written and filmed—we hope to raise awareness, encourage kindness, and inspire others to help in their own way.

There, you can see their faces, their wagging tails, and their second chances come to life. You can join us, laugh with us, and maybe even shed a tear or two as we share more incredible stories of hope, healing, and the magic of rescue.

So, if these three stories, as above, touched you, we invite you to come along with us. Follow the journey, meet the next dogs who will change our lives, and maybe—just maybe—they'll change yours too.

Thank you for taking the time to read about Emily, Ken and Tim. Their stories continue, and so does our journey. Thank you for reading. We'll see you in the next story.

God Bless
Steve, Ruth and Rhea.

P.S. Please forgive any grammar, spelling or any other writing issues as I'm no professional writer – as anyone can tell – being an ordinary working man in my former life.

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Please be sure to check back regularly as more true stories of Street Dog Rescue are always on the way – Thank You

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Please Read My Disclaimer

I am not a veterinarian, or qualified in any medical way, and the information I give in this book is based purely on my own experiences gained from caring for rescue dogs here in the Philippines. Everything shared in my books — from natural remedies to feeding methods — has worked for my own dogs, but every dog is different, and I always urge you to test carefully before jumping right in to any new healing method. What worked for me and my dogs may not necessarily work for you or your dogs.

Always use your own judgement and, if you're unsure, consult a qualified vet before trying anything new. These natural methods are meant to support your dog's health, not always to replace professional care.

The aim of this book is simple: To help people care for their dogs safely, naturally, and affordably — especially when a trip to the vet isn't always possible or affordable.