

PROLOGUE

I remember riding the subway in my mid-twenties while reading about New York City's Center for Animal Care and Control in *New York Magazine*. The article talked about how many dogs and cats were euthanized every year, month, week, and day. The numbers were staggering, and the description of conditions in the shelter was shocking.

I was not focused on animals at the time and had none in my life since leaving home, but the feeling I had after reading that piece was that I had peeked into a hidden world. It seemed like a secret the public had been unaware of until now, and most likely did not want to be aware of. It was a horrible secret that made me feel helpless on the deepest level.

I put the story out of my mind. After all, there was nothing I could or really wanted to do about it.

Years later, as I was running around Los Angeles rescuing dogs from the streets, protecting animals from neglectful homes, and saving them from shelters, I remembered that article and wondered if it was some kind of omen. Was I meant to read it back then? Was it a glimpse into what I would be dealing with in the future? Maybe it was the universe saying: *Ready yourself. You will feel a calling that will shake up your world. You will save innocent lives from death row and find them loving homes. It will be emotionally rewarding, extremely challenging and push you to your limit, but you will be an animal rescuer. And though crushing on the mind and heart, your soul will have a purpose, and your life will be worth living.*