



Dougal  
We miss you  
The Abrahams Altass family  
October 2008 – 6 August 2013

*I remember the first time I ever met Dougal. It was December 2008, and my parents had agreed to come and pick me up at the end of the first term of my last year of University. So there I am in my grotty student house, when not only do they turn up, but they're accompanied by the largest dog I've ever seen, without any warning. My mum proceeds to comment on all the failings of my house, which I mostly tune out. On the drive back to London, I'm sat in the back with Laura, my then girlfriend. Dougal is back there with us too, and he's being the cutest, most lovable dog ever. From that fateful day, roughly five years ago, to when I sat with Dougal as he passed away, he had been the most wonderful canine shaped human I have ever known. He will be dearly missed, not just by those who knew him well, but by all those whose lives he has touched at some point or another. I can only say that I feel blessed to have known him as long and as well as I did. So long Dougal, your presence is sorely missed.*

Josh Abrahams Altass

*The gentlest of giants.*

Dulcie Abrahams Altass

*He would look at me like he understood everything - gave unconditional love - and was fun.*

Lynn Altass

*Lynn would say I have been having a midlife crisis since I was 30. I had never worked out how to move forward. I've spoken with friends and colleagues for advice. Nothing has helped. Then we got Dougal. And the intensity with which he and Charlie enjoyed their walks, so 'living in the moment', made me take notice and 'tune in'. It was infectious. Soon, I was 'there'. Every day, every walk, was different. Individual. Beautiful. Alive. I was aware of the slight changes in the weather, the light and shadows, colours, breathing, sounds, smells, every instant. Oneness. And now, making this book, I have realised the wonderful gift Dougal has been. For me, for my family, for our friends. Thanks Dougal. I'll miss your massive physical presence, but never forgotten. In every conscious moment!*

Michael Abrahams



A – Award

*At the East of England Springer Spaniel show you won the award for ‘The dog the judges would most like to take home’. Nuff said.*



B – Balls

*You could always find them.*

*Tennis balls and footballs, in the grass, in the ditch.*

*Not good at giving them back though because you loved the attention.*



C – Charlie

*Dougal and Charlie. The best pair ever ever.*

*Tavaritch and Currants.*

*Hector and Pluto.*



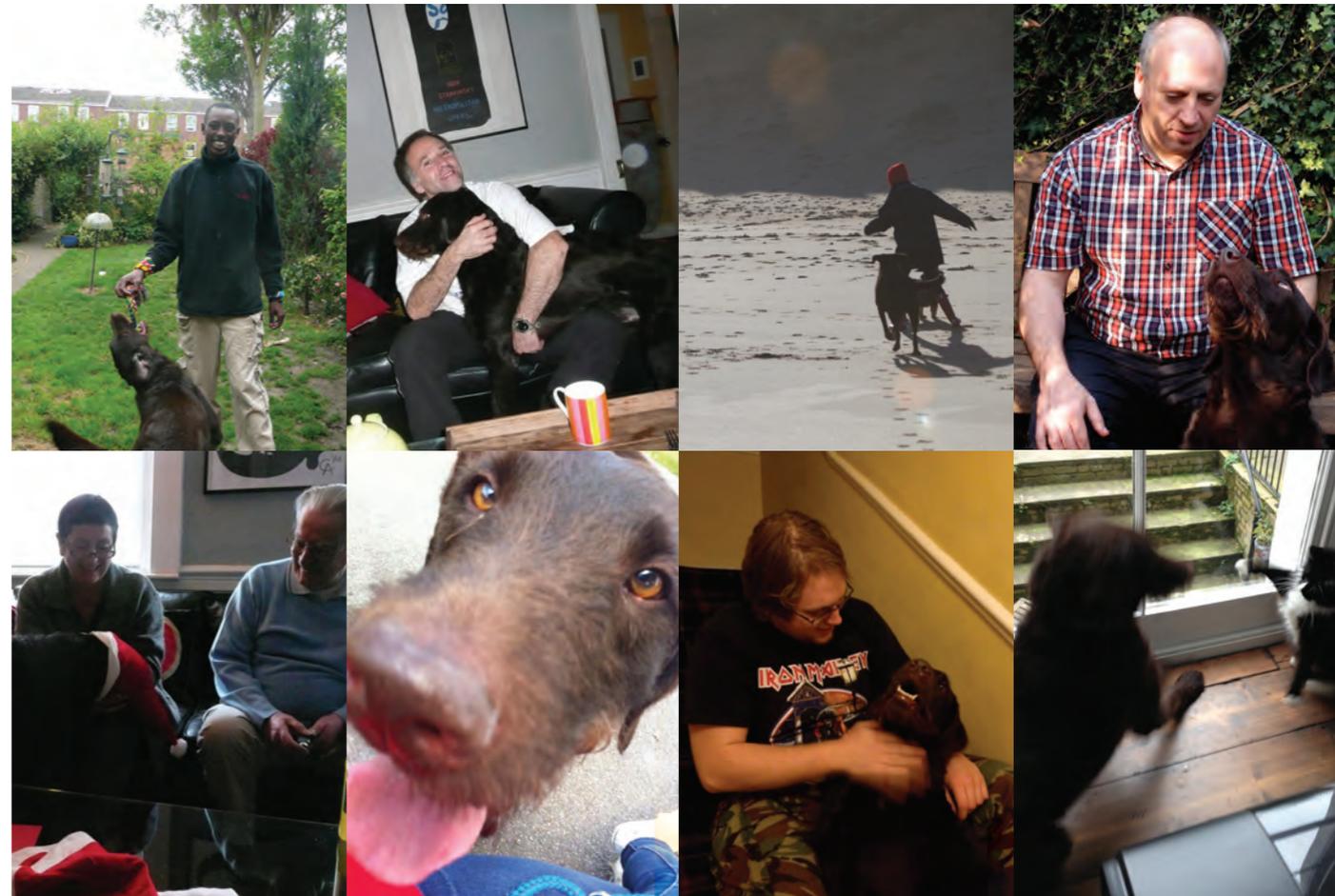
D – Dog breath

*An acquired scent, warm with a hint of happiness,  
overtones of the latest bin offering, sometimes a nappy  
or even, your favourite, horseshit.*



E – Everyone loved Dougal

*Solomon, Mike, Teoh, David,  
Lynn, Peter, Dulcie, Josh, Heston.*



F – Food

*You loved it more than us.  
Cat food, crap food, every morning you'd run off to the bins by  
the bridge to seek and eat what the foxes wouldn't.  
And at home nothing was safe on any work surface.*



G – Grapes

*And still on the subject of food.*

*Half one kilo in, one OK dog after stomach pumped at the vets.*

*You ate everything. Even snow.*



H – Heaven

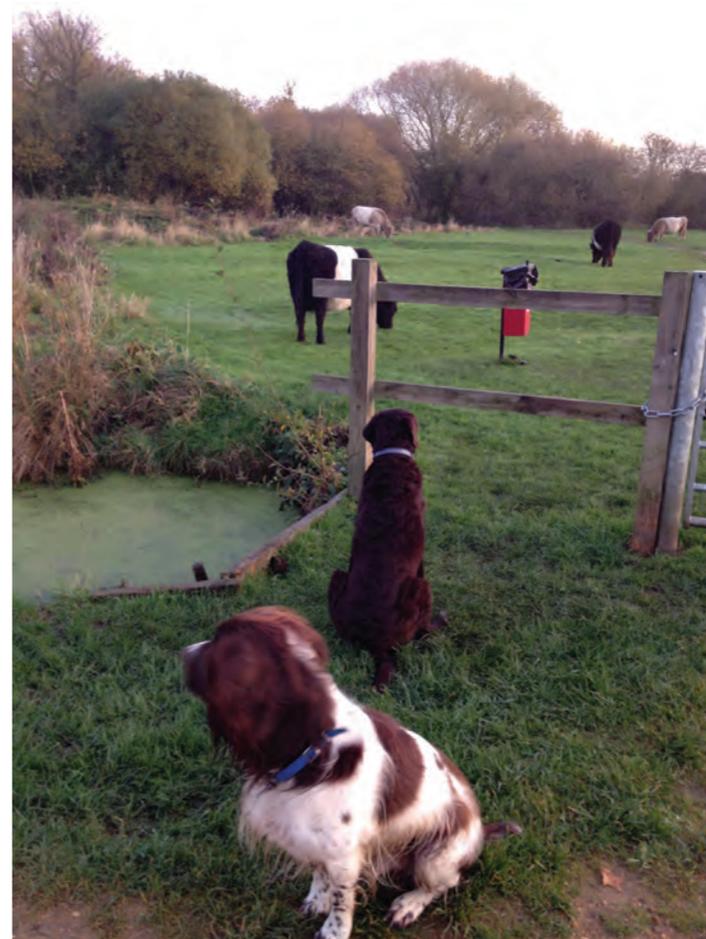
*We hope there is one and you can hang out with Tavaritch,  
Currants, Pluto and Hector. Send them our love.*

*We miss them too. Hope to see you there one day!*



I – Intelligent

*You knew hup, sit, stay, come, wait, heel, down, leave, twirl, left and right (for a biscuit). You watched TV and cattle. You recognised yourself in the mirror (once) and could open doors and cupboards. But best of all, you knew how to make people happy.*



J – Jumping

*On Dulcie's bed (upon Lynn's command) to lick the faces of her at first shocked and then completely smitten bedfellows. Jumping up and opening the back door to chase cats. Jumping up as the postman posted post but never at Leila.*



K - Knickers

*A delicacy only when used, and you were so careful about which bit to eat.  
Old bones were a poor substitute., but they'd do.*



L - Leaning

*On anyone who would let you.  
And if we moved you fell over!*



M - Marshes

*We loved our walks and runs and they will never be the same.  
Rain, sun, winter, summer. Sodden marshes, with water flooding over the top of wellies.  
You running through the puddles, Charlie springing to chase.*



N – Newspaper

*After our walk and before breakfast, to the papershop without lead.  
Never managed to train you to do it yourself  
thought we are sure you could have. You had a very soft mouth.  
But often a bit dribbly beard.*

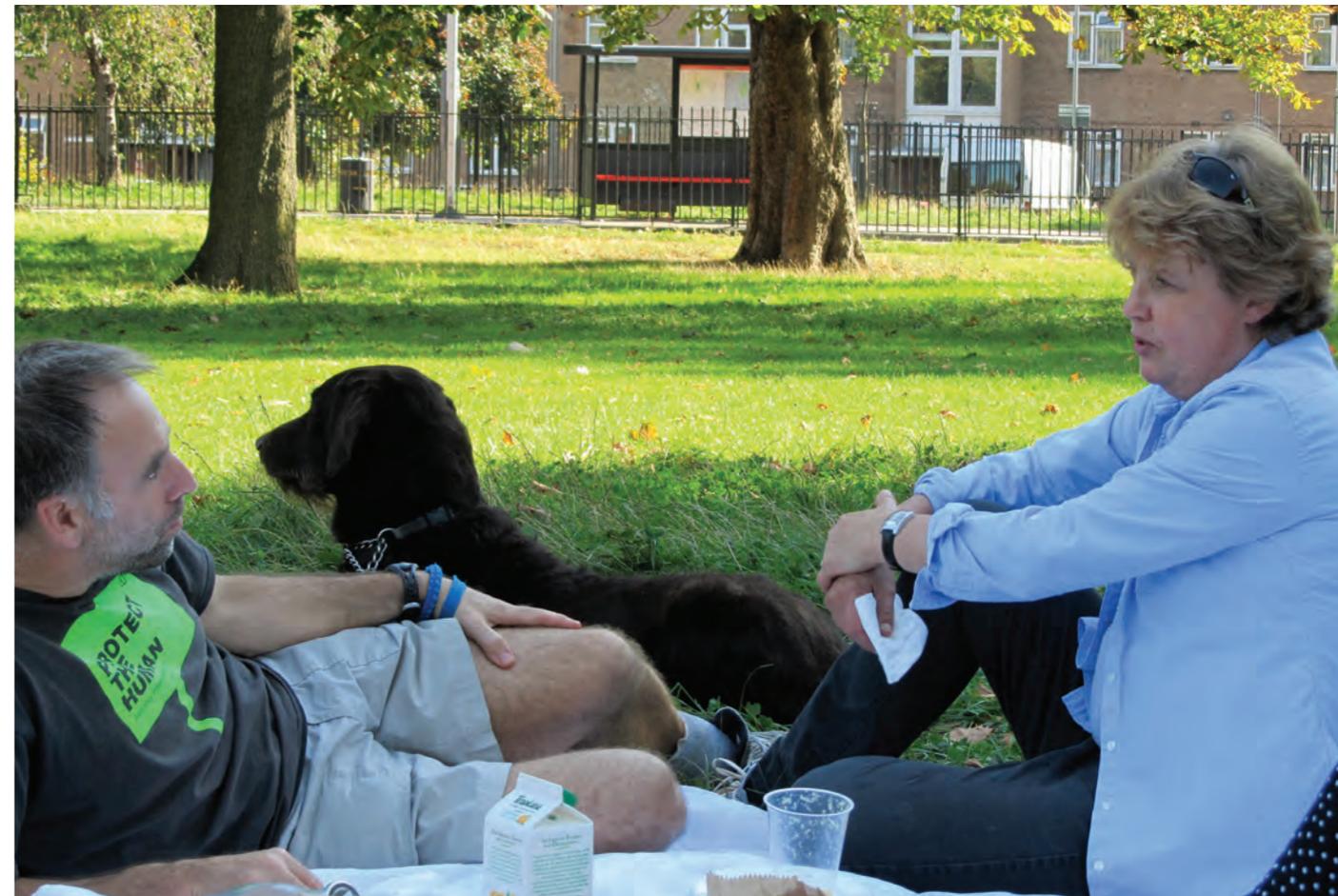


O - Office

*It was sometimes a chore leaving the studio in Indigo Mews to dog walk at lunchtime, but when I got home and we went out - it was the best.*

*When you and Charlie came to the studio, you always wanted to join in, fine with me but not with Myra and Ben. So it was brilliant moving the office home.*

*We had a year of constant companionship, walks and runs to suit.*



P – Person

*Everyone agreed that you were a person in dog's clothes.  
It would not have surprised us if one day you had said 'sausages'.*



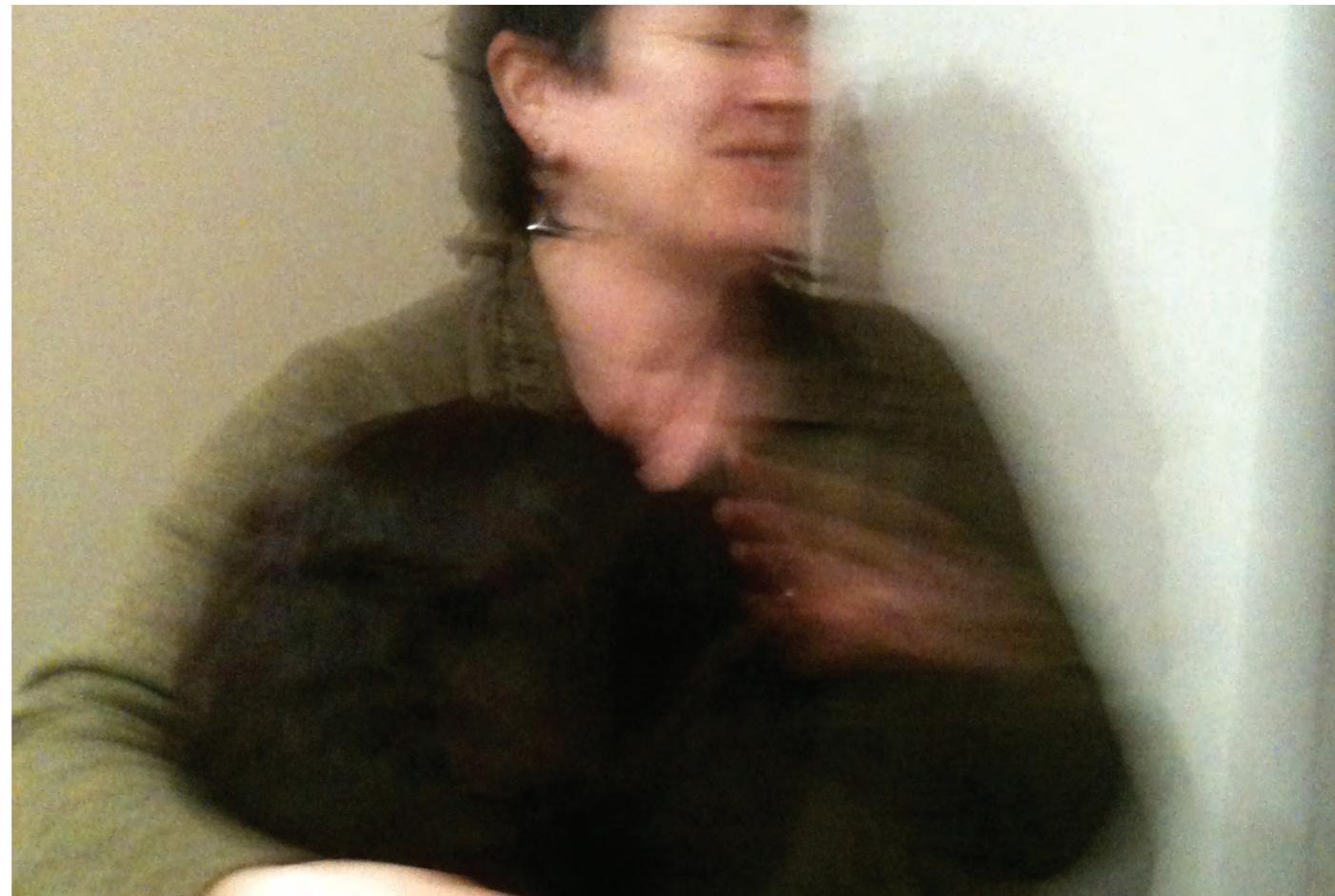
Q - sQuirt

*Charlie's distractor,  
your treat!*



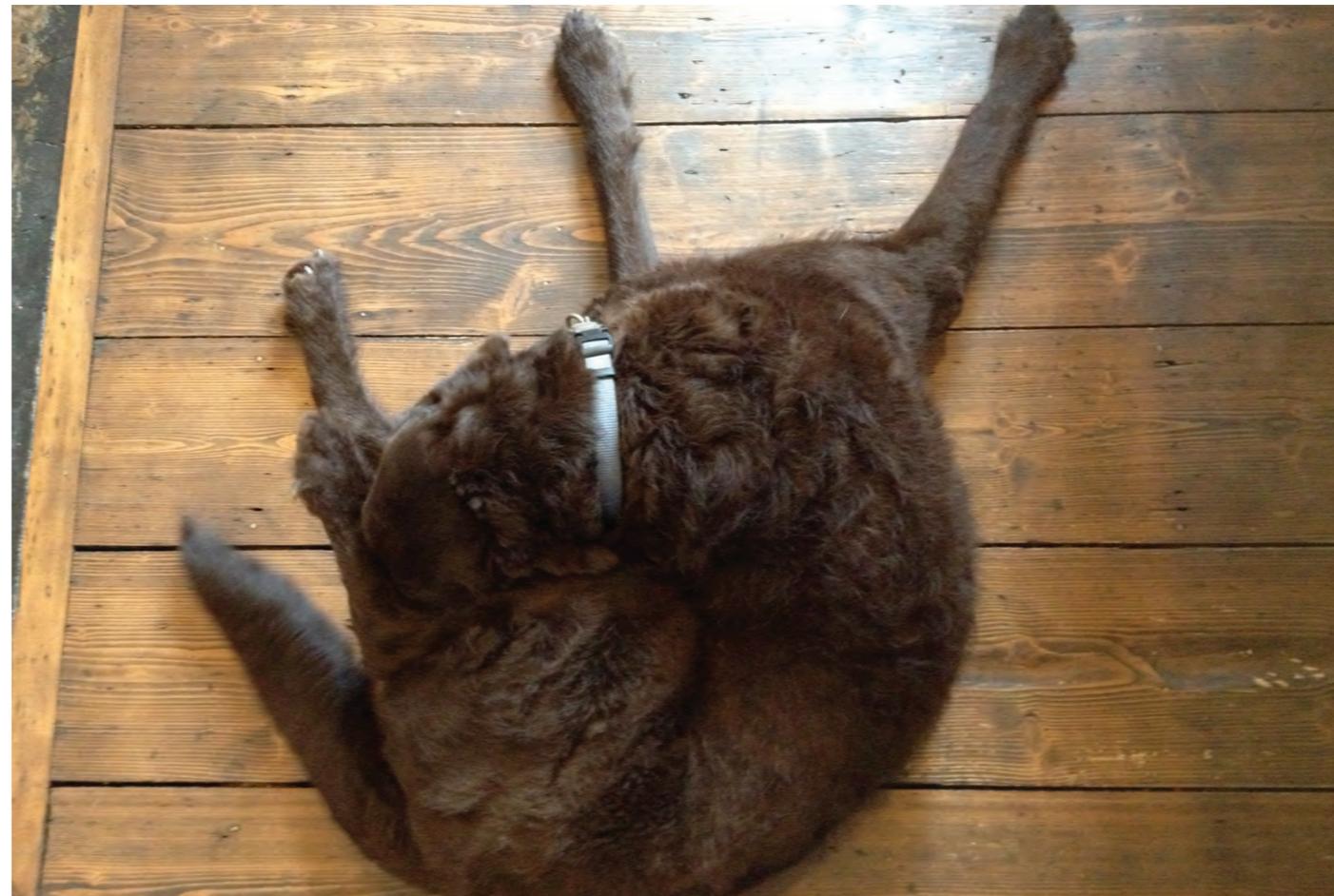
R - Rescue dog

*Lynn chose you at the Dog's Trust. I went there for a Springer, but they had all gone. She liked the look of you. I thought you were too big. We loved having you as our dog and we know, you loved being our dog.*



S - Sniff

*It was OK you sniffing your parts, but you did  
like to sniff the parts of visitors - particular females.  
Bad dog!*



T - TV

*With Brian Blessed, runner up on the Underdog Show and the public's favourite. The Paul O'Grady show - £100 and chauffeur driven car. You were a star.*



U – Unconditional love

*You wrote the manual.*



V - Vicious

*Vicious dogs really didn't like you.*

*Was it was because you were big and so friendly?*

*When we first got you, you were attacked by two American Bulldogs  
and then another time by a big Staffy.*



W - Welcome

*Every time we got home it was as if we had been away for a month...  
head down and jumping up, no one welcomed us like you did.  
And you knew when we were nearly there.*



X - Xmas

*So much part of the family.  
Now you are not here, the house is so quiet.  
Empty.*



Y - Yuck

*You loved to roll in stuff.  
Did you love the hosepipe afterwards as well?  
Anything for attention.*

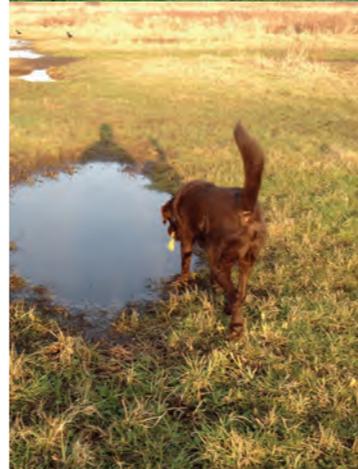
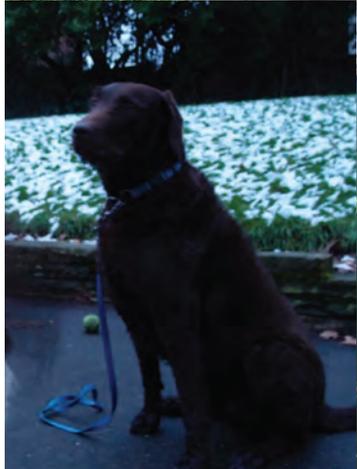
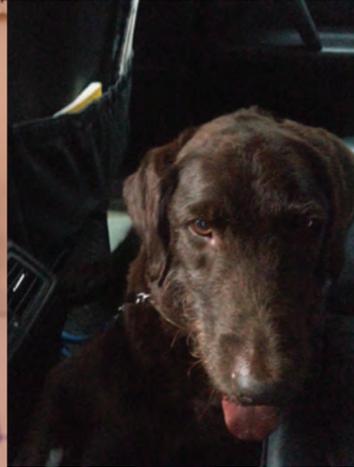


Z - Zdenka

*You made a book commemorating her sister, Bela, into a joyous experience.*







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*An Alphabet for Dougal  
Abrahams Altass*



*An Alphabet for Dougal* is an artists' book that has evolved from the *Twenty Six Alphabets* project by Michael Abrahams and Richard Berry comprising 26 volumes containing 26 sequential photographic images of letterforms.

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