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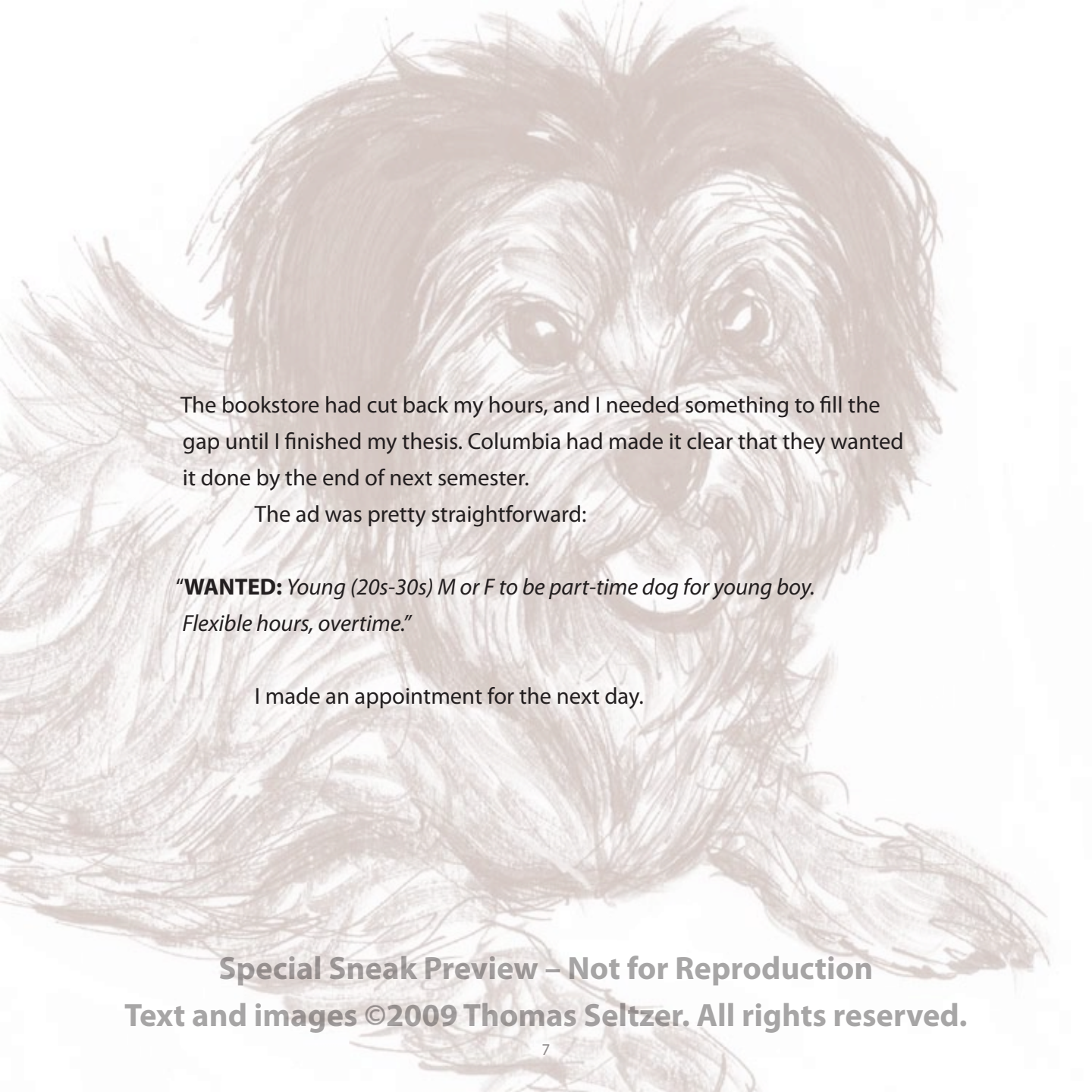
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So I got a job as a part-time dog.

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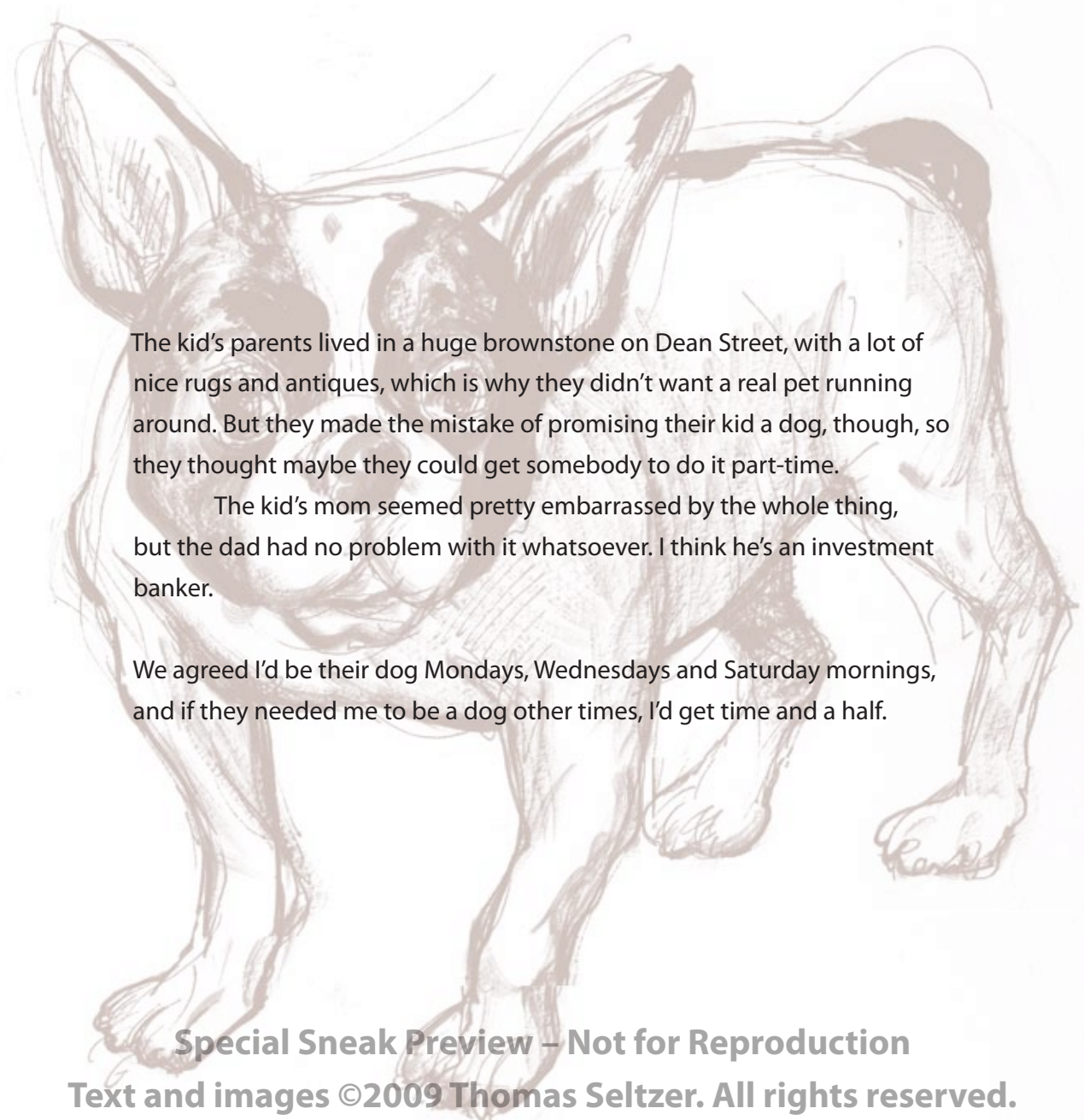
The bookstore had cut back my hours, and I needed something to fill the gap until I finished my thesis. Columbia had made it clear that they wanted it done by the end of next semester.

The ad was pretty straightforward:

“WANTED: *Young (20s-30s) M or F to be part-time dog for young boy. Flexible hours, overtime.”*

I made an appointment for the next day.

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The kid's parents lived in a huge brownstone on Dean Street, with a lot of nice rugs and antiques, which is why they didn't want a real pet running around. But they made the mistake of promising their kid a dog, though, so they thought maybe they could get somebody to do it part-time.

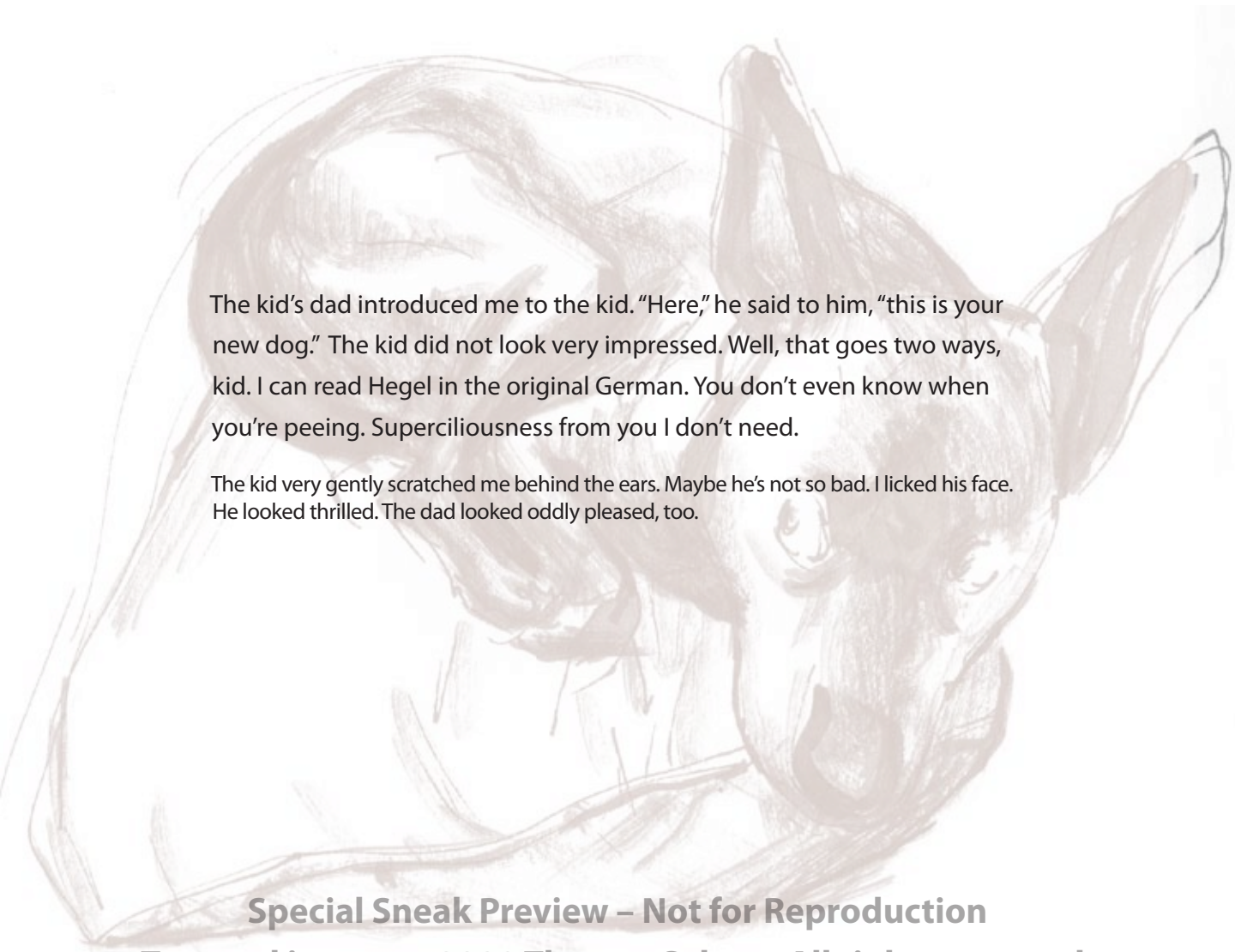
The kid's mom seemed pretty embarrassed by the whole thing, but the dad had no problem with it whatsoever. I think he's an investment banker.

We agreed I'd be their dog Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturday mornings, and if they needed me to be a dog other times, I'd get time and a half.

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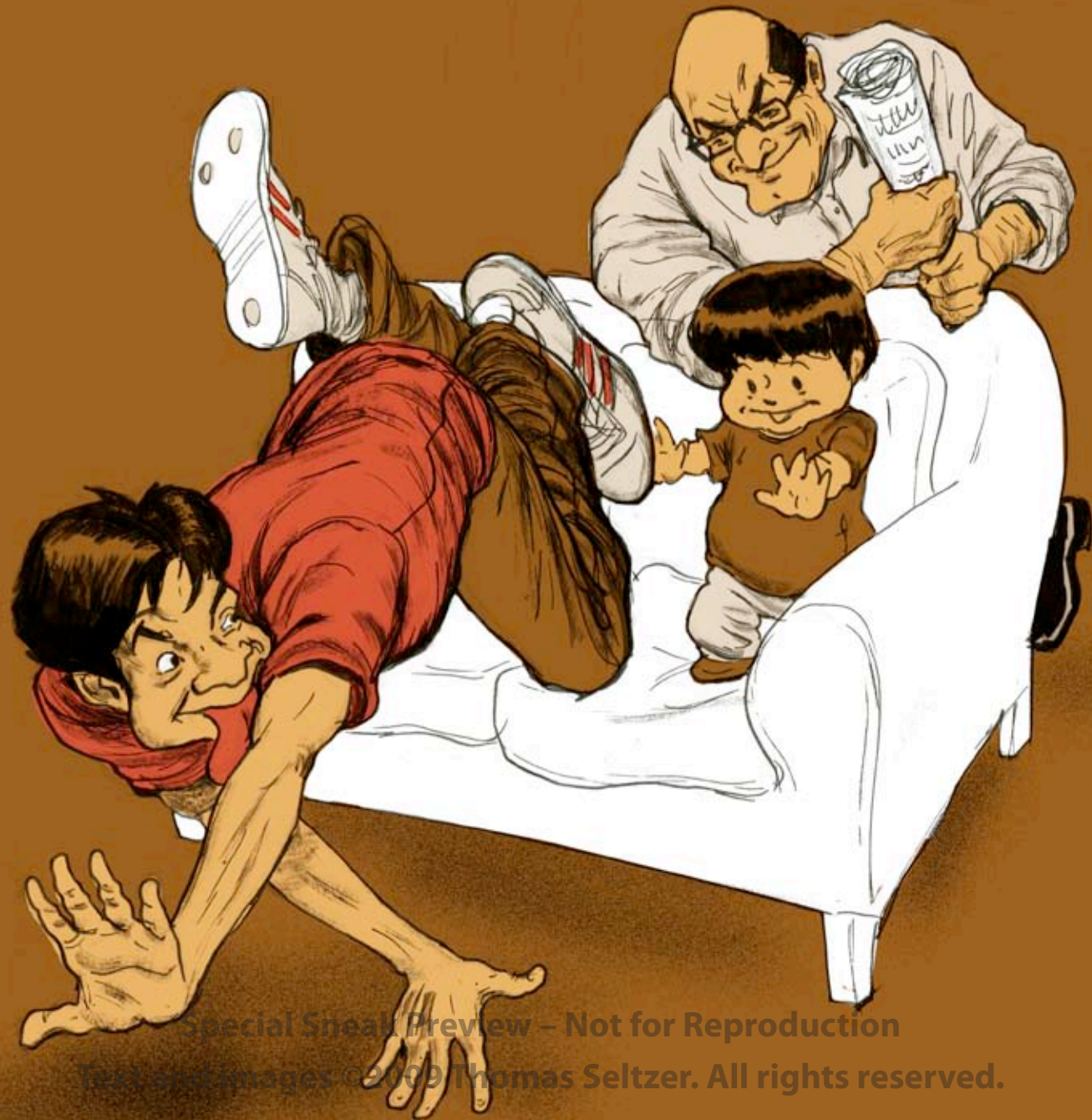
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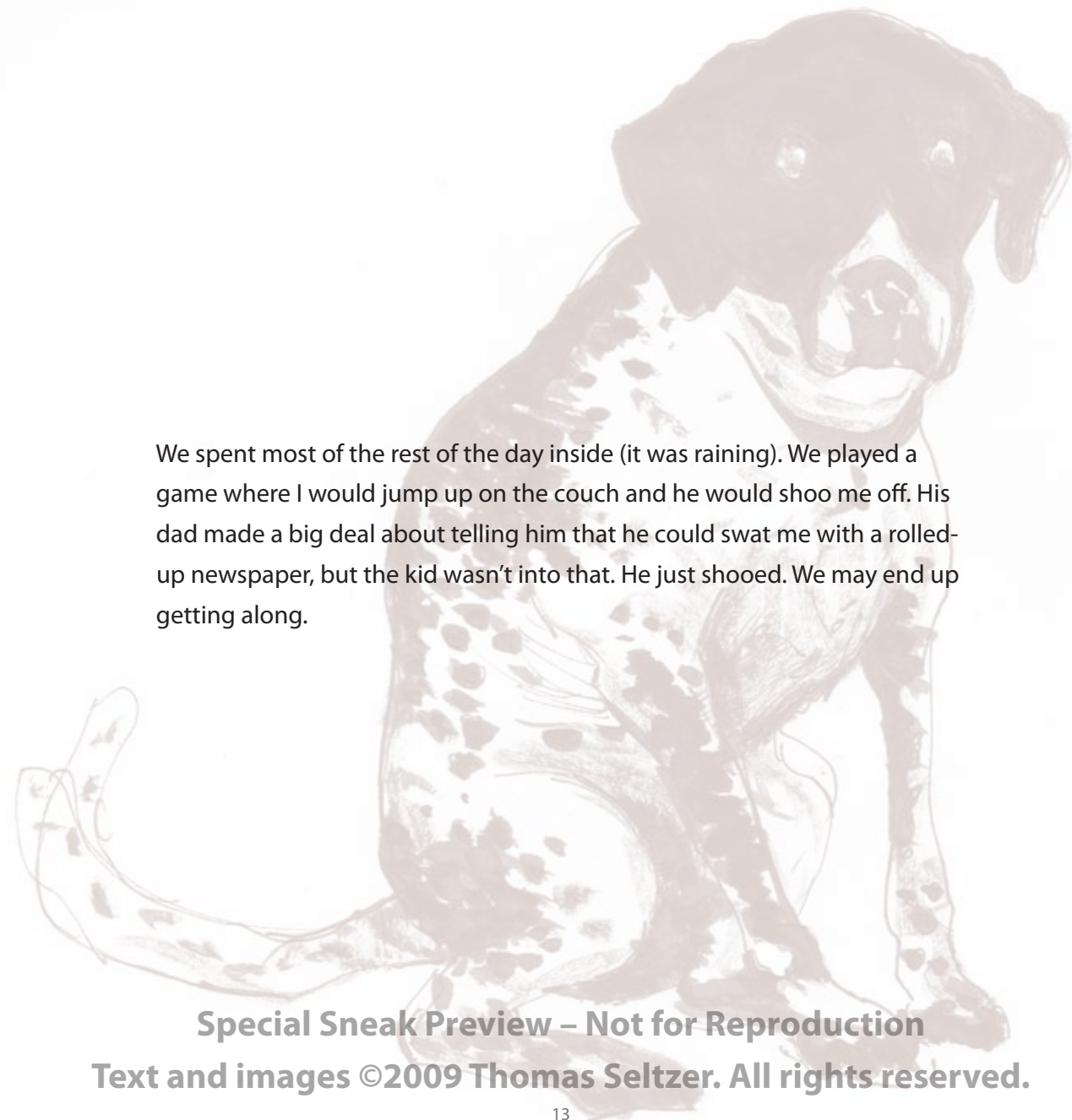
The kid's dad introduced me to the kid. "Here," he said to him, "this is your new dog." The kid did not look very impressed. Well, that goes two ways, kid. I can read Hegel in the original German. You don't even know when you're peeing. Superciliousness from you I don't need.

The kid very gently scratched me behind the ears. Maybe he's not so bad. I licked his face. He looked thrilled. The dad looked oddly pleased, too.

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We spent most of the rest of the day inside (it was raining). We played a game where I would jump up on the couch and he would shoo me off. His dad made a big deal about telling him that he could swat me with a rolled-up newspaper, but the kid wasn't into that. He just shooed. We may end up getting along.

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