# Writer reflects on coping with grief through adopting an Irish wolfhound



Christine Bouchea, a writer from Newburyport, reflects on her journey of coping with profound grief following the unexpected death of her brother. This emotional experience, compared to the tragic fate of singer Amy Winehouse, influenced her in a unique way. Bouchea’s teenage daughter had an unsettling reaction while listening to an Amy Winehouse song, linked to her sense of perfect pitch and an impending sense of doom.

In an attempt to address her profound loss, Bouchea decided to adopt an Irish wolfhound, despite previously avoiding dogs and the significant financial impact on their savings. This decision was met with disbelief and hesitant support from her family. Her husband and dancer daughter undertook a long trip to retrieve the puppy from a farm in the Adirondacks, bringing home a new companion who quickly became an integral, though chaotic, part of their lives.

The wolfhound, named Miss Fingal, grew rapidly and caused considerable disruption within their already tight living space, such as soiling the carpet. Despite these challenges, Miss Fingal was beloved by the family, providing comfort and laughter amidst their grief. Bouchea shared a poignant moment with her daughters, realizing that the seemingly impulsive decision to adopt the dog was a symbolic gesture: "Big loss, big dog," as her daughter succinctly put it.

This narrative underscores the varied ways individuals handle grief, using unique and sometimes unexpected methods to fill the void left by significant loss.