



Believe it or not, it's been two years since we started *Save the Crumbs*. It's been a labor of love for us and we couldn't have lasted this long without all the help from the talented people who have contributed to the pages of our "little 'zine" over the last two years. The positive response we've received from the readers for the past 12 issues is reason enough for us to continue on with "the Crumbs". We hope you enjoy Issue #13! If you keep reading 'em, we'll keep makin' 'em... - Dustin Wilmes, Editor

### What You're Reading...

Save The Crumbs is an independent 'zine written, designed, assembled and distributed by a handful of people in Mankato who think they have something to say. We started this publication because we feel the spirit of "do it yourself" is lacking in Mankato and the surrounding areas.

Save The Crumbs is a collection of writings, musings, opinions, reviews, observations, artwork, and basically anything we want to print. Save The Crumbs is the true spirit of D.I.Y.

No advertisements. No corporate pressure. No creativity-stifling forces. No "The Man."

So, grab a copy of this thing and show it to your friends. Lend it to people. Make copies of it at your place of employment. Get the word out. Be inspired. Make your own 'zine!

If you have any questions, comments, advice, or want to submit something... send e-mail to **savethecrumbs@gmail.com**.

If you can't secure your own copy of this issue, go to **www.savethecrumbs.com** for online versions of every issue.

#### **CONTRIBUTERS:**

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Once again, Thoroughly Surly is here to answer all your questions and make sense of the mysteries of the universe.

#### This month... Pizza Bagels

"Pizza in the morning, pizza in the evenin', pizza at suppertime! When pizza's on a bagel, you can eat pizza anytime."

The preceding passage was and forever shall be the Pizza Bagel song. What many people don't realize is that this seemingly innocent jingle refers to a very serious issue: The great Mealtime Divide of the late twentieth century. Once thought to be



a myth created by a pack of rogue ad reps, this insidious nutritional nightmare cast a dark shadow over kitchen tables throughout the world.

There was a time, brothers and sisters, when a bagel could only be eaten between the hours of 5 and 11 a.m. According to police reports, the brave souls who first tried to fight this mealtime tyranny sensed a great weight on their shoulders as they approached the bagel, then their minds clouded, finally, they would black out. Of course, there were cases with pizza as well. Pizza could only be eaten between the hours of noon and midnight. Some free spirits forced down pizza at 11 a.m., only to violently regurgitate it moments later.

The battle for digestive freedom was on. The earliest resistance fighters were a group of college freshman known as P.I.E (Pizza Ingestion Every Meal). They used controlled substances such as alcohol and marijuana to ward of the oppressive sickness that accompanied mixing meals and, in the process, became the first group to eat pizza for breakfast regularly. There are no free meals though, and these troopers who ate pizza mightily also became alcoholics and got really fat.

On the scientific front, a team of geniuses from across the globe convened in Dubuque, Iowa. Project Brunch was born. Thanks to their tireless efforts and for the sacrifice of the many double agents who warded off communist spies and the many test pilots who died consuming different types of Project Brunch trial food (Lucky Charms Lasagna and French Taco Toast to name a few), the glorious bagel became one with the majestic pizza. The Pizza Bagel was born and the curse of the mealtime divide lifted.

Even though the Pizza Bagel, the crowning achievement of years of research and testing, was the final answer, we should not forget those early freedom fighters in P.I.E. and the many unsung heroes that simply wandered out of bed at 3 in the morning for a bagel, only to be struck dead by the most evil curse known to man: the Mealtime Divide.

Sing the Pizza Bagel song with all your heart to your children and your children's children

Happy two years, Save the Crumbs!



# CAN A WARDEN BE A GOOD WIFE?

Mrs. X discovers how!







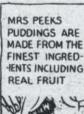






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### From the Angry Desk of Juston Cline...

Dear Everybody,

Why is it that people are so crazy about their musical choices? Or who's good and who's not and why? It's pretty sad that the "Top 40" radio is what shapes most of today's youth's musical outlook. For example. I was hanging with a woman the other day that is maybe five years younger than me. We were talking music and she noticed I had a Prince album in my car. She asks "Why do you have Prince?" in a "what is wrong with you" kind of tone. I proudly say "because Prince is the freakin' bomb, that's why!" I went on to explain how influential he is and how amazingly popular *Purple Rain* was and she says "What's *Purple Rain*?" Are you joking me?!!? I mean seriously? In just five years, all of Prince and his purpley glory get wiped out by boy bands and meaningless pop music.

I'm not here trying to spout about the underground, unreleased, basement-cut version of the super-ultra hippest of the hip, hip, hipster band's 15-year-old single that's not actually a single. It's more like a statement against singles. I'm just saying let's get down to basics. Like why do people not like Prince or Michael Jackson? Or why don't people know who James Brown is? Without James Brown we wouldn't have a multitude of other musicians and musical styles. Hell, we might not have the city of Boston without James Brown. The people just don't know.

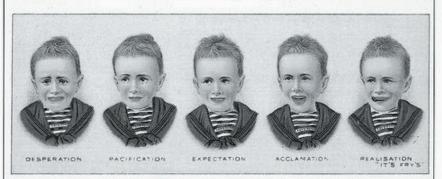
There is far too much worrying going on in regards to who you like or dislike in all manners of life. I am much more concerned with someone that is totally into, say, Hanna Montana than Prince. At least Prince had something to say. There is soul to his music, a message. Not just a machine-fed, pop-emitting robot bred and built to make hits and money in exuberant amounts. That's much scarier to me than a five-foot tall black man in high-heel boots and a purple suit doing the splits.

Your Friend, Juston

# Monkey Face by Barrie Evans

I must admit I don't trust anyone who doesn't take it easy on me. It works like this: The world provides and I take. Easily said, easily done. Don't like it? OK, then let's negotiate a different version some revision that suits you but still gets me by. I'm all out of the currency you'd consider gold. I'll bet you're thinking: He's only as good as his next line a turn of phrase to be repeated. But, you know, all this means nothing until you're in a series of commercials where you advertise yourself for sale. With nothing down, 0% financing.

# FRY'S CHOCOLATE



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# Twitter by Ellen Mrja

# HOW I HAD ONE MONTH OF MY LIFE SUCKED AWAY UNKNOWINGLY WHILE I WAS KNOWINGLY DOING IT DAILY:

-- twitter.com

Last August I entered into a new form of Web 2.0 communication and community called "twitter." As a professor I try to find ways to incorporate online content into my courses and so I thought it might be important to find out what the twitter buzz was all about. If this social media platform was something my PR and journalism students needed to know to be competitive, I wanted them to learn about it.

And so I jumped in. The only rule I gave myself is that I would never twitter from work, only from home. I didn't know what becoming a member of twitterville (not to be confused with Smallville) would entail so I didn't want to bring it to campus.

For those yet to be initiated, let me try to explain. Twitter.com is a social media channel where you can communicate (or "tweet") with others worldwide regarding anything that's on your mind.

Actually, the prompt asks you: "What are you doing?" which leads many people to tell others excruciating details of their personal lives such as, "Son up with stomach flu all night" Or "Am having latte and reading newspaper at Starbucks. Hoot!" or "At daughter's soccer game..she scores!" The only requirement is that your tweet must be expressed in no more than 140 characters.

So I might be tempted to write:

"Sitting in conference room during a meeting where we're discussing why paying attention to detail while at work is so important and wondering how I can sneak a text in to my sister in Wisconsin to ask how my niece's Girl Scout cookie sales are going"

but it would be rejected as a tweet. Too long. However:

"Help! I've fallen into a meeting and I can't get out!"

would -- with characters to spare.

The problem getting started with twitter is that when you send out your first tweet, you get {DEAD SILENCE} back. That's because no one knows you're there; you have to announce your presence in this community by finding other people to follow and at some point asking them if they'd be interested in following you back. In this way you slowly become part of a group that automatically receives your updates as you receive theirs. (Follow me?)

At first that feels sort of creepy. ("This is a stalker's dream," one of my seniors posted last semester.) After all, you are following people whom you don't know and who don't know you. But you must remember this: a kiss is still a

kiss and twitter is a social media site. If you're a recluse, don't join a social site. (Unless you're a stalker.)

You can also find groups to follow. For example, if you type into an open browser tab www.search.twitter.com between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. CST on Mondays and enter the phrase #JournChat into the prompt, you'll be part of a live conversation taking place with PR people and journalists in which members of both professions try to hammer out ways to get along. "How do you want me to contact you?" "Why won't you open attachments?" "Are newspapers dying, anyhow?" "Why do you ignore me?"

Or, if you want to find twitterers based on memes, you go to www.twemes. com. You'll find people there who are into Twins' baseball, Fords, AKC dog shows.

I told you I started out slowly, didn't I? Well, I did...just lurking at first to see who was writing interesting things about the fields I'm interested in -- PR, newspapers, university teaching, Web 2.0 apps. Then I began to ask a few **intelligent** sounding people who linked to information and resources I found helpful if they would let me follow them. Of course they did. I, also, appear to be quite normal online.

And so, I'd tweet for an hour at night when I got home from work. Soon that time grew to an hour before and then maybe an hour or two after dinner. I never really watched "The Simpsons" anymore, even though I was sitting in the living room with the TV on because I was also twittering. Like using a cell phone while driving, twitter would win. Sometimes I'd tweet until my eyeballs starting rolling in their sockets long about 10.

Weekends became a grotesque of leaving reality behind in order to keep up with the lives and thoughts of total strangers in Colorado, Chicago, California and a really nice lady I "met" from Boston whose name is also Ellen. She's a life coach who's encouraging me to find a dream I can follow. I think she's sort of insane because I just don't have time for life anymore let alone a dream life.

You can see where all of this is all headed, can't you?

I am now hooked. I can't read anything that's longer than 140 strokes without thinking, "Can't you learn to edit, you blowhard?" Reading books seems, well, sort of hard now. Books have really long sentences some times and I have 2 take a break 2 understand them.

During the past six months, I've had one of them sucked away by twitter. (180 days x 3 hours per day = 540 hours / 16 waking hours per day = 33.75 days. I think.)

Face it. I've got a monkey (a "thwonkey"?) on my back and I can't seem to shake it. I'm a playah on twitter; I don't have to ask people to buy my stuff anymore; now they come to me. As of today, I've got 130 followers (a rookie number. For now. Barack Obama has 261,033).

Still, it feels good to know I'm being followed 24 hours a day by someone named PRsDarkCircle. Right?





## Once Interviewed

#### by Joe Eggen

I recently spoke with Mark Hustad, the owner of the quaint, used bookstore 'Once Read' in downtown Mankato, who has been in business since 1975. I spoke with him about his thoughts of Mankato since he's been here and about his store and how in the turning tides of commercialism in Mankato he has stayed in business. I'll cut to the chase and show you how the conversation went.

Joe: So what attracted you to Mankato?

**Mark:** These types of businesses were cropping up since paperback prices were on the raise in those days and I was just looking for a town. I wanted to live further south because this weather is a bit cold but I came back to Minnesota to tie up some loose ends and sell my car and stuff and it was a beautiful summer day and I've never been in Mankato much before and told myself this place is as nice as any city down south and they didn't have a paperback exchange so I just came home.

Joe: When did you have the idea for a used bookstore?

Mark: I was getting through with VISTA and didn't know what I wanted to do and put everything I had into storage and put the rest in the backpack on my motorcycle. I was at that point totally free and had money in my pocket and had no job but I only lasted one day and found out people need something of an anchor. I was just too free and I camped out that night and told myself I need to have a base. My dad was self-employed and I thought "well, this is my chance," and basically it was that I never want to say I should've, you know, it might fail but at least then I'll never regret saying I didn't try starting my own business. So it was basically at that point an economic decision and in those years it was a niche. So I just kept going at it and that's how I got into it. I was 25 at the time and you take the paupers oath, you won't make a lot of money. A lot of people have the misconception that they'd love your job; that you just sit and read, but I did that for awhile in the '80s and the store suffered. I had some G.I. bill left so I went and took some classes at MSU in the '80s and kind of let the store go and it got in rough shape. I'll never do that again because if you sit and read to long it just piles up and overwhelms you. I do manage to find sometime to just sit and read but I pay for it later.

Joe: You've talked about how the malls have affected your block, but I'm curious how you've stayed in business this long?

Mark: Part of it is luck. A lot of people may age are baby boomers and wanted to start bookstores in the cities and its kind of the prestige to have hardcovers, but I've always like softcovers. A lot of people come in here and say "I only read hardcovers" but that's kind of a snob statement. The information in there is the same and that's what I'm concerned about. There are a few books that I like in hardcover, but those stores, since the Internet has come, those stores are closing and are going through rough times. I've also found people enjoy softcovers because they like to handle them, look at the picture on the cover and read the blurb. I believe I'm past the point of being scared of online book vendors because if they would've hit me they would have already. The other thing that helped me is that I have limited space because I

have to pre-select the content in my store. There are so many more books out now than there were. Here's a good quote, "I am the only baby boomer who has not written a book." I've had a lot of good help too. The number of years you've been in business helps too because a lot of people don't want to recognize you because a lot of people made backhanded comments, "Oh, I could do that better than you," but like the old saying "when you're a whore or an old building you really get respect." So that's helped, but I have to say it's also the books. I do like to travel and have seen different parts of the country read different thing so I like to have an eclectic selection. Possibly the biggest draw though has been the exchange system where you bring in books and get credit on the card, which has no time limit. Then you use that card to get half-off on your purchase. A lot of it is luck and any business man that tells you it's only their vision or wisdom is pulling your leg.

Joe: I always thought the secret of your success has been the cat.

**Mark:** Oh yeah, the cats. I never owned a cat before the bookstore. I really liked dogs and tried a couple here but since there's no lawn, its downtown, and I'm too lazy to walk them, they never really worked out. When I opened though, the first cat I got was out of the Home magazine and that was Dickens. He was around until about 1992. Now I have two cats. When these cats are kittens it's like they know their job the first day. It's the ideal environment for them, plus people are almost always in a good mood here. You hardly ever see anyone come in and be a jerk. They come in and see the books, I think books kind of intimidate people, they act nice and the cats like that so it's like they are made for it.

Joe: I always figured it was the atmosphere as you walk in and see the books and there's a cat and people who shop there like books so they're happy.

Mark: Yeah, well part of it with the exchange is the old hippy ideal. When I started here there were about three headshops; Last Cord, Baghdad Imports and another one, and there was a lot more here, but its been coming back because of these coffee shops. Back then it was headshops and record albums. In '75-'76, this was a major part of the downtown but in '77-'78, the downtown mall started drawing everything up that way and this block was in bad shape in the '80s. I can't remember how many empty buildings we had. Then the school moved up the hill because this used to be real close to the school so we'd have a lot of people here but after 1978 it moved to the mall and then River Hills after that, but these coffee shops have brought it back some and the parking here helps some, too.

Joe: When you heard Barnes & Noble was moving in how did or has that affected you?

**Mark:** Well, honestly I've just kept doing what I'm doing. It hasn't really affected me that much and because of the economy, that actually helps because I'm a budget store. That's also a different kind of customer that shops there because it's like \$30 a book. It's like comparing apples and oranges.

Joe: As I've grown older I've come to the understanding as the saying goes, "why buy new when used will do."

Mark: Yeah, well I think we're finally finding that out as a culture, too. We're learning the hard way. I'm not sure you've noticed, but there's a sign in my window that says "In the end, how is corporatism any different than communism?" Some of the younger people wonder what it means but anyone who went through the Cold War knows what it means because we were raised to believe that communism was the

ultimate evil. I was raised in a small town too, so I was suspicious of any type of big bureaucracy and that's just something I really believe in.

Joe: In your opinion do you think Mankato has a good reader turn out?

**Mark:** Yeah I think Minnesota is pretty good. I think the Twin Cities have better book stores than the likes of Chicago. There was something in the paper about a literary rating and they ranked the Twin Cities and Seattle as the best in the country. They used the number of libraries and library cards, number of book stores and books sales. So yeah, I think so.

Joe: Do you think people are more independent in what they read or do they follow trends?

Mark: You know, I can say some are, some aren't. I could make a case for either point. One thing I do like about Mankato is the variety of customer because I get toddlers, MSU professors, farmers, older folks and I get people from the coasts when they come back for the holidays. There's one thing I've noticed since the stores opened that is weird and I can't explain it. On certain days, one type of book will sell. On one day it might be romance on another day it might be westerns. The next day it might sci-fi, but its definitely true and I can't figure it out. I've tried to figure it out but it's not the sun, it's not the air pressure. Some people I've talked to said it might be the news or a popular movie, but that's not it either. There's no coloration in weather or nothing, but its definitely true.

Joe: What subjects do you think move the most in Mankato?

**Mark:** Again, it's the variety that I like and enjoy here. I try to have something for everyone. I do regret not having a bigger store so I could have more categories, but I don't have the room to do the subject justice. I would actually say that Mankato readers are like everywhere else; they read a range of topics.

Joe: Is there any advice for starting a business you'd like to share?

Mark: You want to take a look and find an economic niche. You also have to take a look at your life situation. It's harder to do these days because like I don't have life insurance. Just look at yourself as detached as you can, like in third person, and ask yourself what you want to do and where you want to be and how much you'd be happy with. Then do some number crunching. I also recommend using the Small Business Association.

Joe: Have you seen a lot of underground or DIY projects come and go since you've been here?

Mark: Yeah I have seen a lot of them. It's too bad more haven't lasted but it seems when people grow older reality seems to set in a bit and they realize they have to pay their electric, car insurance, rent and all that. Our economy has really made it harder for people to survive. Something I learned in business early on is that the numbers rule. The numbers will determine whether you stay in business or not. I didn't have a budget for the first year or two. I just ran it off the seat pants. A business usually does good the first year or two because people come in checking you out, but then you have to settle in for the long run. Well, I didn't have a budget and all of a sudden I was short of money and I had to call my parents to get by and I told them it wouldn't happen again because I'd setup a budget. I learned right then that the numbers rule. It's a cold fact, but it's just the way it is unless you get too big to fail.

Joe: From your perspective, do you think the commercialization Mankato's gone through is better or worse for the city?

**Mark:** Personally I come from a small town and I like that better, but it seems to be the way of America, the way of the malls, consolidation and concentration of economic power just keeps the big getting bigger. You go through every town of the country and it's the same thing. Not only do the downtowns suffer, but the first round of strip malls on the edge of town suffer because some of those are closed because someone opened a bigger mall. It's ridiculous. We're paying for it now. You got four gas stations on a corner, its ridiculous. I remember I was going through a small town in Wyoming, this town was only 100 people and by god they setup about a mile out of town on the highway a little strip mall of three or four stores just to satisfy that itch, you know. It's just laughable. It shows you where we're going.

Joe: Since you've been here, has your perspective of Mankato, as a town, changed from when you first wanted to start your store here?

Mark: Yeah, it was real interesting thing to watch. I've never been in Mankato other than driving through when I went to school in the cities. When I actually moved here I only knew like two people and I wondered if it was going to be like a small town, like Slayton, where I grew up or more like the cities. For the first many years, it seemed a lot more like the cities. When I'd go to a party where there'd be other kids from Slayton, we'd feel like we were in the cities. Over 15-20 years though it's changed. I think of it a lot more like a smaller town and that's more the way I like it. I think we're just perfect. We're 80 miles from the cities, so we can go there if we want. I'm glad we have St. Peter to block us off, the way it kind of creeps down the highway. I just hope in my lifetime it won't make it so we can keep our small towntype living. You see these booster groups saying "growth, growth, growth." Well I think it's just mindless as a national group saying the same thing, you know, growth for what? When I went to business school they said either you grow or you die. That means you always have to grow. I think it's what these economic people want. Nothing against the Japanese, but they won't be happy until we're all living in these little compartmental sized apartments. These little drawers you pull out, you sleep in and you go buy their stuff and go back. You know I'm biased. I'm from a small town, but since then I've traveled. I've been to New York. I'm less biased against people who want to leave to cities, but I used to think small towns were the only way to go. When I grew up in a small town I hated it because I thought people were nosey, but now I think there's an argument saying that humans self police each other.

Joe: Is there anything about the store coming up you'd like people to know?

Mark: Yeah actually. I haven't had any new books for sometime, but I'll be getting a selection of beat literature. They'll be a bit more expensive but they're not easy to find and not many places have them. I think people will be interested in that. Other than that just that it's an exchange and it's cheap reading. Also, the books are local books because people bring in their books and they stay here because I don't sell them on the Internet. The store started on the old hippy ethic. I still am a Grateful Dead head. I kind of admire their economic ideas.

Joe: If you could give Mankato as a whole any advice, what would it be?

Mark: I don't know about advice, but I'd like to thank the people in the area for patronizing my store. I'd like to thank you for this article, too. I like this magazine and I like the "do it yourself" theme. It's like the Bob Dylan song, Trust Yourself. You know if you have any advice to say just tell them that. Trust yourself.

## It

### by Esther Marcella

For the longest time I thought he was Chinese because he had dark hair and eyes, Donnie Something, the new kid at school. He wore pine-green corduroys; he could kick really high. His pencils were embossed with a golden Donald Something; he chewed them to bits, while holding my gaze during math class.

Convinced he was in love with Megan—all of the fourth grade boys were in love with Megan, the tiny, porcelain girl with long blonde hair and longer red ribbons—I walked behind the two of them on the way home from school. Donnie walked backwards and stumbled over each curb. After Megan hopped up into her porch, Donnie and I'd nod at each other, shout "Okay!", and race to the apartment building where we both lived, giggling.

One afternoon I got home and my mother stood at the yellow stove cooking noodles. "Ma," I said, still breathing hard. "I think I like a boy. But I think he likes Megan." Ma nodded, "Megan is a pretty, little, doll." I huffed and put my hands on my hips. Ma looked down at me and then at the ceiling. All answers to our childhood questions were existential and written on the ceiling. "Esther," Ma said. "If this boy likes Megan and he doesn't like you, you don't need to be liked by him."

I tried not to need to be liked by Donnie, but one afternoon during a "movie and popcorn reward", I found myself underneath a desk with him. Looking into my eyes, Donnie rubbed my forearm in circular motions all the way up to my shoulder.

"He did what?" Ma asked. "This is the boy who likes Megan? He sounds like a game player. Why don't you color something? Start liking boys when you're mature and secure enough to walk through their mind games unscathed?" I was so confused; "unscathed" (like no scales?) And how did I really feel? I just didn't know.

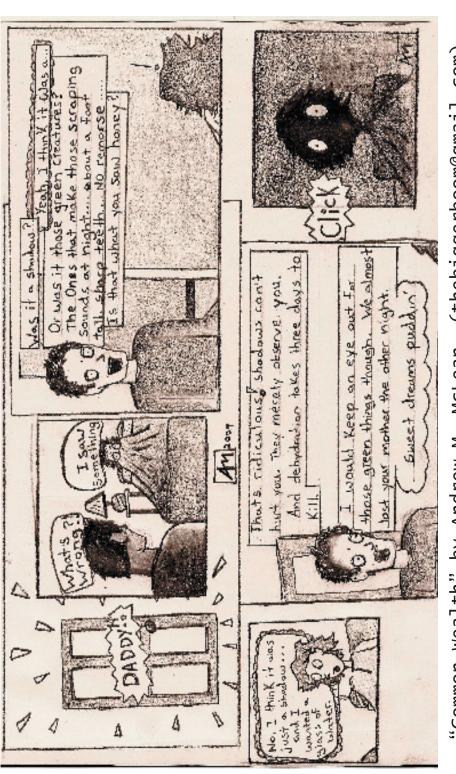
So when Donnie sat down at the lunch table I moved across the cafeteria. When he said "hi" at the drinking fountain I said I was "too thirsty to talk." Then Donnie started to walk home a different way and during math class he'd bite the heck out of his fancy pencils and stare at our teacher.

"He's returning your energy." Ma said, cuddling me on the couch. "You liked him. He liked you. Now you're withholding and so he's withholding. You're so young but you need to know that a risk needs to be taken. If you want to be his friend you'll have to tell him that."

Weeks later, during a game of tag, Donnie looked straight at me and charged. I ran and ran, all the way into the trees behind the school. I heard Donnie yell. "Esther! Why are you running? You're it!" I slowly walked from the trees. Donnie had his hands on his knees breathing hard. The play ground supervisor's whistle shrilled.

I'll never know the exact phrase that formed in my chest—as I responded with the phrase made by my brain—yet I imagine it was this: Donnie, I like you so much. And I think you like me so much, too. But you might not. And if you do and we admit it things will change. This fear is going to be a pattern. But in twenty-one years, I'll remember you and this very moment as I look someone I like so much in the face and take the risk of telling him how I feel, not knowing what will happen. And it's a beautiful thing.

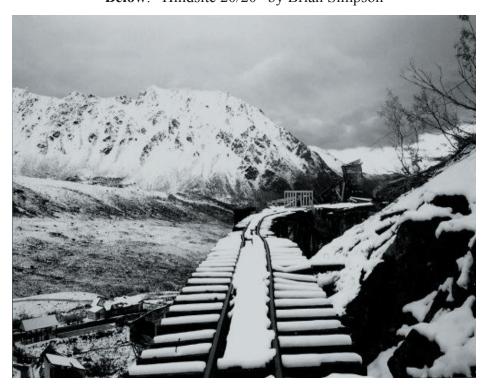
I touched Donnie's cheek, and said, "You're it." Donnie lowered his head, perhaps getting the gist of it.



(thebiggerboom@gmail.com) "Common Wealth" by Andrew M. McLean



**Photos: Above**: "Twilight" by Morgan Lust **Below**: "Hindsite 20/20" by Brian Simpson





**Photos:** 

**Above**: "Uncanny Valley" by Geneva Sarni **Below**: "It's What's For Dinner" by Ashley Birk

