

**Issue #20**



**Save The  
Crumbs**

# THE GRAPEVINE

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**HOW  
DO YOU  
STOP  
A ONE  
MAN  
GANG ?**



# What You're Reading...

*Save The Crumbs* is an independent 'zine written, designed, assembled and distributed by a handful of people in Mankato. We started this publication because we felt the spirit of "do it yourself" was 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 corporate 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.

Also, don't forget to join us on Facebook and Twitter.

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**Dustin Wilmes, John Maiers, Juston Cline,  
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Nick Swede, Natasha Theissen, Zachary Zoet



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

## This month... **Oil**



In the wake of the greatest man-made natural disaster in the history of the United States, it's easy to point fingers and play the blame game. Sure, I too was initially outraged at BP for cutting safety measures to save money, and with our corporate kowtowing government whose limp-wristed attempts at discipline make new age anything-goes hippy parents look like Stalin, but the truth is these corporations are the real patriots. They understand that unbridled capitalism means doing anything you can to make as much money as you can, because personal liberty is only fully realized when your decisions destroy the environment and the lives of those inhabiting it. Sure, they could half-ass it and care about who and what they hurt, but they throw off the chains of compassion and accountability to soar. What dedication!

After some reflection, I decided to become a patriot myself. Reports say that 70,000 barrels of oil are leaking into the Gulf of Mexico each day. According to NYMEX crude oil is going for about 70 dollars a barrel. That's almost 5 million dollars worth of oil a day! Each barrel contains 159 Liters of oil, which is 42 gallons. So the million-dollar question is: how do you separate oil from water? The million-dollar answer: with a separatory funnel.

I'm not going to claim I know what a separatory funnel is or how they work, but I do know they exist, and that if I make one big enough I can skim oil off of the water. Is the oil still good? Who cares, it's oil! Worst-case scenario I give a discount, an oil-spill special. Everything must go. As for quitting my job, no worries, I don't have a job to quit. I can't even find a job to be hired for and than laid-off from.

Unemployment isn't enough to live off of these days, but think of all the garbage bags (or whatever one makes separatory funnels out of) it would buy, and no I don't own a boat but there are thousands of bored fishermen who would probably lend me theirs.

Call me an opportunist, and a pig, but just know all I'm doing is realizing my free-market potential, and becoming the type of American that our current government can be proud of.

# Basement

By Ruby Nelsen

What was the dog toothpaste driving?

A dinosaur!

The hedgehog food clawed my face.

The hedgehog food was as fierce as a bear.

We listened to Mick Jagger go cha-cha-cha.

The drumsticks were heavier than a whale.

Well, at least they are as smooth as a tabletop!

The magic in Erica's basement.

# Evolution

by Jason Frazier

Monkey Learns to think

Monkey becomes Modern

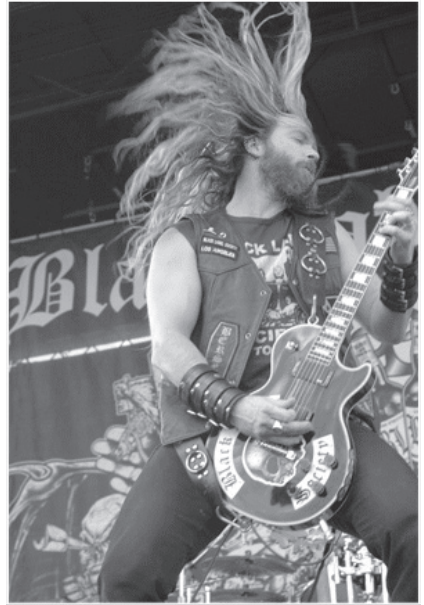
Man invents the bomb



# From The Metal Desk of Juston Cline...

Dear Everybody,

I have come to realize recently that there is nothing like wielding an axe hung low between your legs. Gripping the neck like it's an extension of your manhood while you chunk out extreme heavy riffs. Yes, I'm talking about playing guitar in a heavy metal-type fashion. I have been playing for many years, mostly focused on the blues side of things, forever chasing tones and feelings and connections with my guitar. It took a lot of time and money to achieve just a small amount of what I could hear in my head. Only to realize that a huge amount of the mojo found in that sort of playing is not only in your heart, but also in your hands. I have found that strength and finesse are the keys. Being able to bend a note and keep control of that illustrious sustain and feedback of your cranked Fender tube amp. To be able to play soft and clear or to build your volume and attack into a fiery flail of notes. A beautiful mastery of being able to speak through your guitar. In recent times however, I have taken a different road. Down a path of ultimate destruction some might say. These days I have found solace in a much different style of playing. I know take my Dean guitar armed with stainless steel blade humbuckers and plug directly into my Krank amp head that is feeding huge amounts of fire breathing gain into my Randall cabinet. This combination feels and sounds to me like a symphony of Mack trucks breathing forced air from multiple turbos, each breaking the sound barrier in a melodic order only to hit their Jake brakes before railing into a warehouse of explosives that erupts into a high pitched banshee wail of a finish. Needless to say, I enjoy melting faces on a regular basis. The real point here is how great it feels to have something that is all your own, that brings you pleasure. No matter your medium. Artistic or not there is nothing like expressing one's self without words.



Your Friend,  
Juston

# Regional Folklore for the Fireside #508 1/2

## By Zachary Zoet

If one swallows the lemon seed which sat in the bottom of one's water-glass at the restaurant, a lemon tree will grow out of one's butt. The tree will begin to sprout in one's sleep, while dreaming. In the morning, one might notice a sapling has grown out of the place where, ironically, no sun shines.

One could tug on the sprout, try to uproot it. The nature of lemon seed, however, prescribes them to grow into the lining of one's belly, and through the tunnel of intestines. They are very hardy. Probably, one would need to prune the stick back every morning, after shaving and brushing teeth.

Should one neglect the growth, say on vacation or during hospitalization, one might consider joining a freak-show or museum.

Relatively recently, one could tour Monticello, the dream home of Tomas Jefferson (better known as an author of the American constitution) and locate the lemon tree behind the louvered panels which flank the home on both sides (the panels are painted green and are intended to provide a place of cool and breezy air, relief from the sticky southern summer afternoons). So, if one enjoys the tourist destination very much, one could, in theory, swallow a lemon seed in the bottom of a water-glass in California, and head east. By the time one arrived in West Virginia, one would have prepared to remain at Monticello, permanently—with their butt in the air, a lemon tree growing strongly and firmly from within.

During summer, lemon trees produce fruit which has overtone of sour citrus which found great popularity in carbonated beverages. A wedge of lemon drizzled with Worcestershire sauce makes a great cure-all for upset stomach or mania.

# Raisin Rampage

by Dustin Wilmes

When I look back on my childhood, it's easy to see how easily influenced I was by the relentless onslaught of cartoons and commercials I saw everyday. My impressionable mind was sold on all sorts of wonderful, must-have items. *Thundercats* action figures, monster truck VHS tapes featuring Sgt. Slaughter battling Bigfoot in a tug-o-war, Mr. T bathrobes, *Ghostbusters* cereal, Hulk Hogan trading cards, Bubble Tape (six feet of bubble gum for you, not them) and the list goes on and on.

All of these things had a hand in shaping my personality and the kind of person I am today. Kudos to the brave men and women behind those corporations who had the foresight and intestinal fortitude to go against the grain of good taste and market products to children. If you're reading this and grew up in the '80s, you have to agree that the biggest "kudo" must go to the California Raisin Advisory Board. How could a group of anthropomorphized raisins, led by the soulful voice of Jimi Hendrix's drummer, convince a generation of kids that raisins were fun to eat? By singing Motown songs that's how!

And not only that. these frickin' dried up grapes had their own TV specials, Saturday morning cartoon show, singing alarm clocks, dolls, a Christmas special, and a bunch of albums, including one with a toe-tappin' rendition of *I Heard it Through the Grapevine* that actually charted on the Billboard Hot 100. Of course, I was not immune to this healthy-snack juggernaut either, and I didn't even eat raisins.

I had a drawer full of raisin pajamas, raisin notebooks and folders, a raisin lunchbox, and the complete set of raisin figures compliments of Hardee's restaurants. In fact, I found them all under my pillow in place of money during my tooth fairy years. I come from a strange family.

What's my point? I'm not sure I have one. All I know is that raisins are pretty tasty and if companies like Disney had their Hannah Montanas and Hillary Duffs singing Marvin Gaye songs instead of whatever you call the stuff they sing now, kids might be healthier. That's a stretch maybe, but raisin lightning could strike twice. Claymation is pretty cool, too.





“Untitled” by Morgan Lust

# Never Say Never

by Sarah Turbes

Yesterday, Hettie's stockings were draped over the shower rod, smelling heavily of rose water. She only wore stockings for her job at the bank, funerals, or when she was sleeping with someone other than me. Hettie was let go from her job two months ago and no one we knew had died, at least not since Gramma D. I followed the drops of water as they submerged from the toes of each stocking and collected in a small puddle on the uneven tile at the base of the tub. Opening the medicine cabinet, I searched for the Revlon Red lipstick tube. Careful not to damage the perfect angle at the tip, I mentally measured how much had been used. It seemed as if the stick was becoming worn more quickly in the past couple of weeks. I shuffled down the hall, staring at my mud caked boots with the worn steel toes and wondering what I'd say to her, if anything, this time. The washing machine's lid slammed down and Hettie emerged from the laundry room in her blue chenille bathrobe with the frayed belt. She gave a quick smile and flashed her hazel eyes in my direction. Smelling of beer, cigarettes, and hamburgers, she slid slowly into her chair at the table, opened a Rolling Rock, and stared out the window. She had probably been down at Sully's for a lunch date that lasted the whole afternoon; she always smelled that way when she returned. I sat across from her at the table, saying nothing. Staring at her profile, I'd forgotten how the color in her eyes seemed to change with the sunset. I could tell by the way she stared out the window and the way she tapped the green glass against her teeth, that she felt nervous yet satisfied. I asked her if she was waiting for someone. She said she was waiting for the mail. I told her the mail was in the basket with the keys. She said she was watching the birds. We hadn't had birds at our empty feeder in over a week. "Okay," was all I could say. She really thought she had me fooled. I'd put all the little things together and I wasn't a fool. A passive guy, but not a fool. I walked out to the yard to finish mowing.

I ran out of gasoline, so I stood in the driveway looking for Orion's belt and listening to a televised baseball game from a couple of houses down. I was killing time, wishing it would skip ahead to an hour or more so I wouldn't need to walk through the kitchen and see Hettie sitting there, staring at nothing but her reflection in the glass. The faint smell of bacon wafted from the screen on the kitchen window. Last time she cooked bacon, she opened another beer, dozed off and set off the smoke detector. I stomped through the kitchen quickly, assuming I'd need to grab a towel to wave in front of the detector, but the pan was in the sink. Sandwiches had been made and consumed with only scraps of bacon fat, tomato stems and toast crumbs left on the counter top. The washing machine switched to the spin cycle and I felt the floor move slightly. Bottle caps bounced softly on the kitchen table and the loose floor board near the basement steps creaked louder as the machine started to spin faster. I couldn't help but think about Hettie with her lunch date, Davis, Wesley or even Sully himself, if there was one. The cycle had stopped, the bathtub was filling with water, and Sylvia, our orange tabby, was lazily pushing a bottle cap across the floor. I walked to the bedroom, cleaned the dirt from under my finger nails with Hettie's emery board, threw my grass stained jeans into the hamper and heard the pipes shake when the

bath tub stopped running. The whole house was falling apart; everything seemed to be falling to pieces. Sitting on the edge of the bed, I opened the drawer of her bedside table, stared at her journal and was tempted to page through the dog-eared pages to get answers, but I wasn't that kind of guy. By the shuffle of her feet, I knew she was wearing my slippers, the pair she gave me two Christmases ago. The shuffling grew more faint as she walked into the living room, turned on the tv to some late show laugh track. The flickering light from the living room illuminated my path to the steamy bathroom that smelled of rose water and nail polish. As I flossed my teeth, I stared at the mirror, clouded over with steam and the words, "Dear D,". This was all I ever saw on the mirror. I kept waiting for the rest of the note to appear, but there has never been anything more.

Everyone calls me "D". My given name is Dewey, but no one has called me that since school. I never minded being called "Dewey", but when I met Hettie she called me "D" and I guess it stuck. We were good friends, hung around with the same crowd, sort of fell in love and ended up getting married. It's hard to remember how long it's been. Five, six, 10 years, maybe. Our wedding was never really a big ordeal and most of my family thinks we're still dating. We first saw the house we live in when we were driving down a side street, lost and late to a friend's party. The house was condemned then, broken windows boarded up, overgrown lawn, wrought iron fence and we wanted to live here. We never did find the party, but we went to the bank the next morning to find out more about the house. It was part of some estate battle, legal junk, but our visit to the bank ended up with a job for Hettie and eventually a "project" for us. We were happy then, picking out paint samples and reading "DIY" books. I had always imagined that the rooms on the upper level would be great for children, but Hettie said we'd never have kids. "Never say never," I'd say, but I guess she's right. Five, six, 10, years later and we never have. We stopped trying long ago, right about the same time I stopped stripping old wallpaper and lead paint from the room at the top of the stairs, the room that gets the best sun. I started working more when Hettie lost her job at the bank due to "funds missing". Hettie said she never pocketed any cash, but she also never explained how she was able to afford the collection of vintage prints she bought for the living room. She sat around the house a lot, right after she lost her job, smoking, drinking Rolling Rock, and wearing that damn robe, always fumbling with the belt. Good days and bad days would come and go, but it was a month or so ago that I first noticed the "Dear D," in the fogged up mirror. Shortly after, I found a fresh tube of Revlon Red in the medicine cabinet, a shade that was once deemed too "racy" for the loan department at the bank. I didn't really ask Hettie anything about the mirror or the lipstick. Remember, I'm passive, but honestly, I've never liked to be called "D".

This morning, I woke up after hard sleep filled with messed up dreams. I dreamt that the washing machine's spin cycle wouldn't stop and our living room was engulfed into a huge sinkhole. I walked into the kitchen, made extra strong coffee and watched Sylvia lap up the saucer of milk with the use of her paw. Hettie had wiped up the counter tops and rinsed out her coffee cup in the sink. All was tidy and almost forgotten, except for the lipstick mark on the thin edge of the cup. Wearily, I entered the bathroom, steamy again, and the message on the mirror just the same as last night. "She'll never leave me," I thought, but again I always say, "Never say never."

# DANDELIONS:

## ANOTHER RANDOM MEMORY

BY HARRIS BURKHALTER

One spring, back in sixth or seventh grade, I decided to prepare a meal for my English class for the last week of school. A great lover of edible wild plants, I wanted to cook something that grew as a weed on school grounds. Of course, it would be my mother who would be doing the cooking, as the idea I chose called for hot oil and a skillet, things which an easily distracted eleven year old should probably stay away from. I used my *Petersen's Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants* and my Mom made the "dandelion fitters," a recipe she created on the spot. Unopened buds of dandelions plucked from the backyard, sans stems, were coated in a lardy batter and fried to a greasy, yellowish crisp, a few green leaves and yellow petals still visible under the shell of batter. The lumps were then sprinkled liberally with powdered sugar. I was excited about how impressed my friends would be at the treat, as they smelled delicious. I was not as taken with the taste, but optimistically I told myself, "Hey, everyone likes sugary fried lumps, right? Um, maybe that was just a bad one."

The day was a beautiful sunny one, hinting of the coming summer vacation, and the windows of the second story classroom at Grandview Middle School open to the balmy weather, over looking the backyards of nearby houses and the fence on which students chained their bikes. Proudly I brought the fritters to class on a tray. The other students sampled them and were less than impressed, which didn't surprise me after I tried to demonstrate that I "enjoyed" them, and ended up spitting a particularly bad one out the window. Yes, I admitted, they were awful. The sickly sweet yet bitter

buds, shellacked in cold greasy batter were not edible. Not being “fresh off the griddle” certainly didn’t help, but the dandelion buds themselves were just not tasty. The worst part was unpleasant texture of half formed dandelion seeds inside, the soaked cottony tops getting stuck in the teeth. Only two people did manage to enjoy the dandelion fritters. David and Aaron, my two longstanding buddies, devoured the rest at lunch. David liked anything fried. Aaron was just always hungry, he didn’t care about taste and as long as it was edible (or somewhat edible) it would do; this is the kid who resorted to grass or notebook paper to hold him over until lunchtime.

Oddly enough, I never really became interested in cookery until decades later, when, as an impressionable young college student, I became involved in the wild world of veganism and the cute girls who would distribute free vegan treats on the Washington Avenue Bridge. Cooking would be a good topic of conversation in many situations, surely. As it turns out, being able to put together a meal that is both satisfying and tasty has proven to be a very useful life skill, even if my ingredients don’t come out of the backyard as much these days. Who’d have thunk it?





# **The World Hurts**

**by Natasha Theissen**

If only the light didn't feel so close to me now  
If only I could live without putting on a fake smile  
If only I could answer all the questions in the world that  
end in why?

And stop having to make up all these alibis  
For I just want to live the way I want  
And stop making up excuses and lies  
For the time I spend thinking myself insane  
I wish someone could just take away all this pressure  
All this pain

It hurts to believe I will live another day  
But it also hurts to think I could die this way  
So for you and me or anyone who cares  
I keep myself alive to try to answer people's prayers  
No, I'm no god or even a saint  
But if I can understand what you're feeling  
What I can do is paint

Paint a picture of what your mind is like  
Help you reprogram and teach you a little about life  
For I may not be focused on mine  
But to see another's soul smile  
Helps me to shine

If you can whisper my name  
I will scream yours back  
If you can call upon me  
I will react

I am tortured and ridiculed by world humor everyday  
But if we the people hold hands together  
All of us, all the colors we can make in another way

# Pears

by Nick Swede

Sweet, succulent, and sensual: every food-lover has a soft spot for fruits. The accomplishments and advantages of pears, however, hang above the rest on the fruit tree.

The first thing one notices about pears is their healthy shape. A pear's shape just makes for the perfect grip. The perfect grip, of course, makes for the perfect eating. Everyone

has encountered a situation where there have been difficulties obtaining the nourishment of a desired food. Oranges, for example, may be easily-gripped, but cannot be eaten through their thick skin.

After biting into a pear, one discovers the most important part of the green, gourd-shaped fruit: the manifested taste of heaven. A pear's flavor isn't something that can simply be related to anything else, much less another fruit. As great as pears look, it's amazing that they taste even better.

"There's no doubt that pears are great," said Scott Taylor, a junior from Mankato West High School. "I haven't even thought about eating an apple since my first pear."

That being said, pears have been proven to have helpful usages beyond that of a consumable. Because of the aforementioned majestic appearance of pears, they make for the perfect house decoration, like a centerpiece at your next family dinner or a knickknack on the fireplace mantle.

Among the hierarchy of fruit, pears don't see themselves as the best; they're too modest for that. Rather, those who recognize the accomplishments and achievements of pears know their worthiness, and the pears secretly know that's the truth.



## Longing for before

John Majers

We are deep into spring and a sultry heat is settling upon south central Minnesota. My basement is dank, the grass needs mowing and there are bunches of green things I can't identify - not sure what to call some of this foliage since this is my first spring in many years with a yard - sprouting between the dead leaves and broken stalks that litter the patches of dirt that surround my house. I recognize hostas and there are ferns growing like weeds on the west side of the house. And there are a lot of weeds everywhere, growing like weeds. Dandelions dot yellow the back yard. I like them. And I'm grateful for the chives emerging from the cracks in the sidewalk. Easy pickins to add to a salad or fried potatoes. Tasty.

We filter May learning again that we can slide blades of grass between our toes and stain the bottoms of our feet green. We allow our skin to burn a bit pink. Vitamin D seeps through our pores. Some of us bloom with freckles. And lilacs toss a sweet scent into the mix of newness that bursts from buds into colorful flowers and rich green leaves.

Nature manifests in infinite ways, sometimes a smack to the face, like a thunderstorm that breaks trees, or sometimes a light touch, like a lilac branch that bends beneath the weight of its flowers. While thunderstorms can develop at almost any time of the year, lilacs' flowers time is short, maybe a month.

I think one of the great pleasures found in each spring is those couple of weeks when the fragrance of lilacs permeates the air. I think of those precious few days as the lilac time. It is a time when *syringa vulgaris* can seemingly exhale its scent for great distances, as if its blossoms breathe. Maybe you know what I mean.

You're walking or jogging or biking and suddenly you get a whiff, a nose full of lilac's fragrance. You scan the nearby yards and fields, searching for the source and finally you see it, maybe as much as a block away. And you wonder at lilac's ability to assign its nature to that moment, emitting a saccharine aroma from far away, as if the tight cluster of small petals say look at me, inhale me. And we do. And we realize nothing matches nature's finest.

We wrap our arms around the wild flowers and the new leaves, the tulips and morels, the warm rain and first radishes and the smell of cut grass, and we embrace spring. We love up the sunshine and anticipate the intense heat that will displace the wisps of high white and will breed clouds that build billows as big as Himalayas and flash lightning from a deep and unseen turbulence. We rock to thunder wondering if John Bonham's soul rides the storm.

We suck up spring because we have finally thawed. We step out. We are pleased to be alive. But for me, the air is a bit thick; as pleasurable as the new season may be, a void exists.

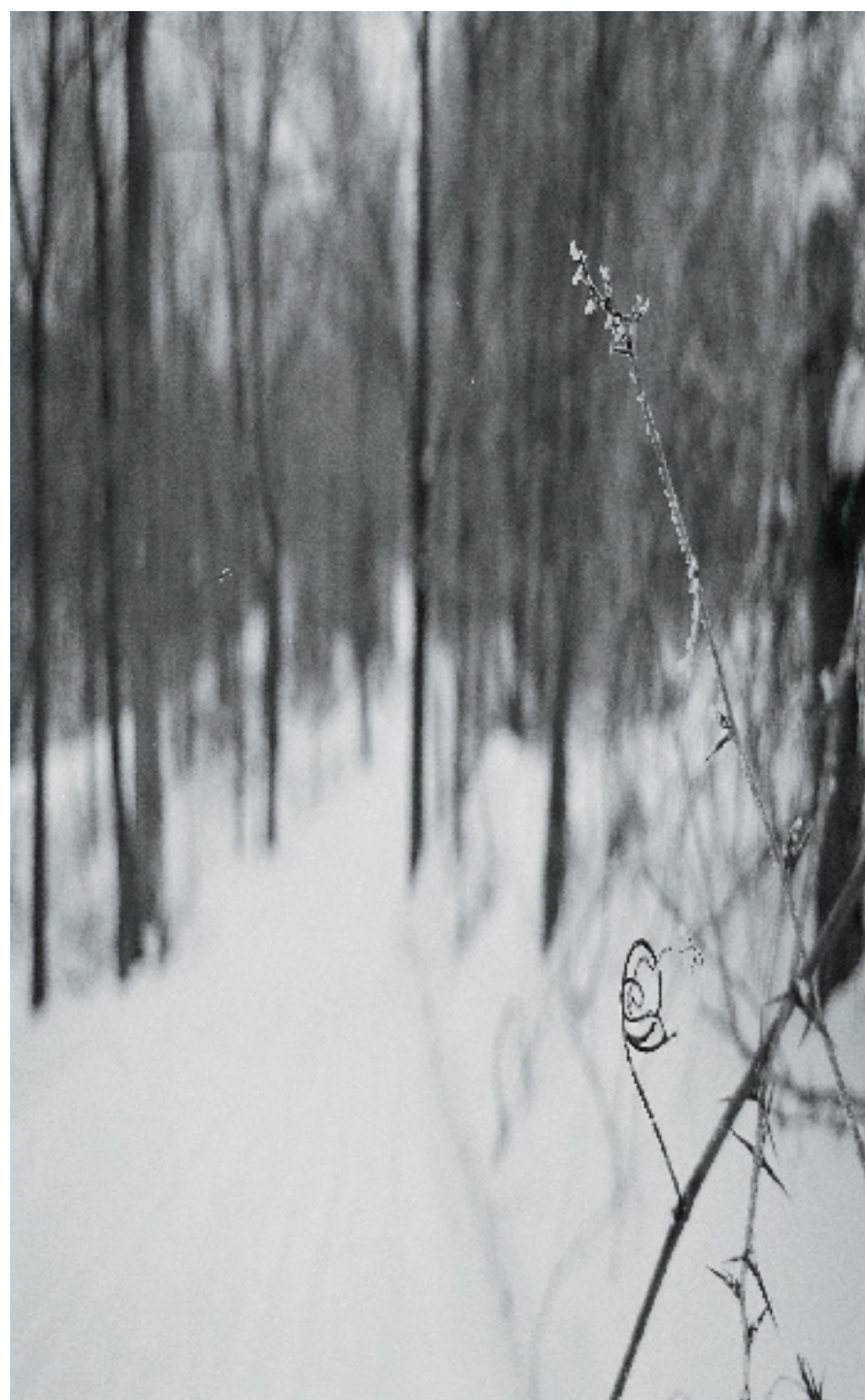
Winter faded in the flash of the few days it took to melt the snow that had taken months to accumulate. The almost four feet of snow in my front yard - layers from the cold grayness above and shovelfuls from the sidewalks below - disappeared, it seemed, in a week.

After years of little or no snow to play in, this winter provided not just a few precious inches but several glorious feet. I found great leisure in several cross-country ski outings, snowshoeing at Seven Mile Creek and even a couple of trips to downhill ski. I liked riding my bike against a biting northwest wind. I realized a perverse pleasure in the thin, frigid air and the solitude of January.

I miss bare trees sketched against gray skies. I miss dirty snow stitched to the boulevard, and I miss the mostly empty streets. I miss outdoor places, uncrowded.

I miss the melancholy.

I miss the cold.







**Photos:**

**Above:** “Left Behind” by Jenna Hiniker

**Below:** “Busted Monitor” by Joe Eggen







**Photos:**

**Above:** "They All Float" by Ashley Birk

**Below:** "Hey Kool-Aid?" by Dustin Wilmes



# Hey Readers!

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