

frost on the windshield, it's him disappearing into his car, his car moving slowly down Brookside Drive. She pinches herself —very, very hard— and again— on the fleshy underside of her arm. She hasn't done this since she was, what? Sixteen? Seventeen? The secret bloom of that bruise under her sleeve is satisfying.

She's still at the window. Yesterday's snow crusts their sidewalk, criss-crossed with footprints of neighborhood kids walking to Mark Twain Elementary. The boys must be at school right now. Where Donna should be. Many things *should*.

Like Hy-Vee. It can be Shake 'n Bake pork chops for dinner and Rice-A-Roni. Del Monte fruit cocktail with Cool Whip. That's enough. She hasn't eaten in days, except coffee and cigarettes. Which she'll buy more of at Hy-Vee. There's the list she needs that maybe springs her into action, away from this window.



*How to clean: Windex and a stack of old newspapers your husband already read. Spray, crumple, wipe for streak-free windows, until your fingertips darken ink-black. At the sink, soap your hands, over and again, building soothing suds of Lava-Irish Spring-Zest-Life-buoy-Dial-Camay-Dove with one quarter cleansing cream. Over and again. Strip clean the lines of your very own fingerprints.*



Her car's the newer one, parked in the garage and frost-free. She backs out and drives the speed limit up First Avenue to the Hy-Vee, angles the car into a space away from other cars. The electric door whooshes open, plunging her into the glaring cheer of grocery store lighting. The first cart's got a horrible screech, but the next has a frozen wheel that won't spin. Rather than drag out a third cart, she chooses the squeak.

First aisle: easy. Produce. With bananas on sale, she grabs two bunches for her cart, and one mesh bag of oranges. At the left turn to the second aisle, there's Mary-Margaret from across the street and Mary-Margaret says, "Where's your coat? It's ten degrees outside!" and Donna's mother glances