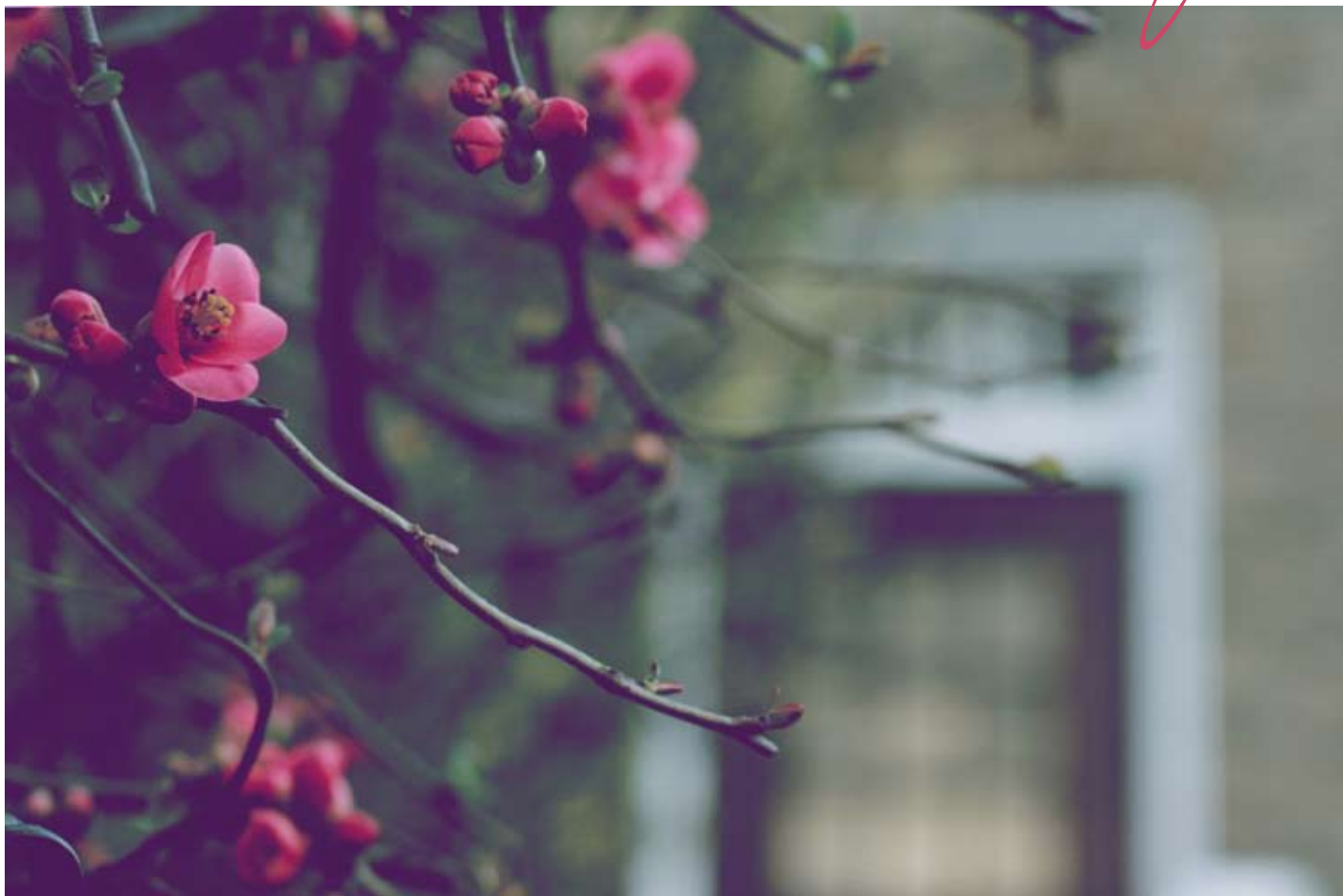


# Wonderings and Wanderings

by Jeanine Caron

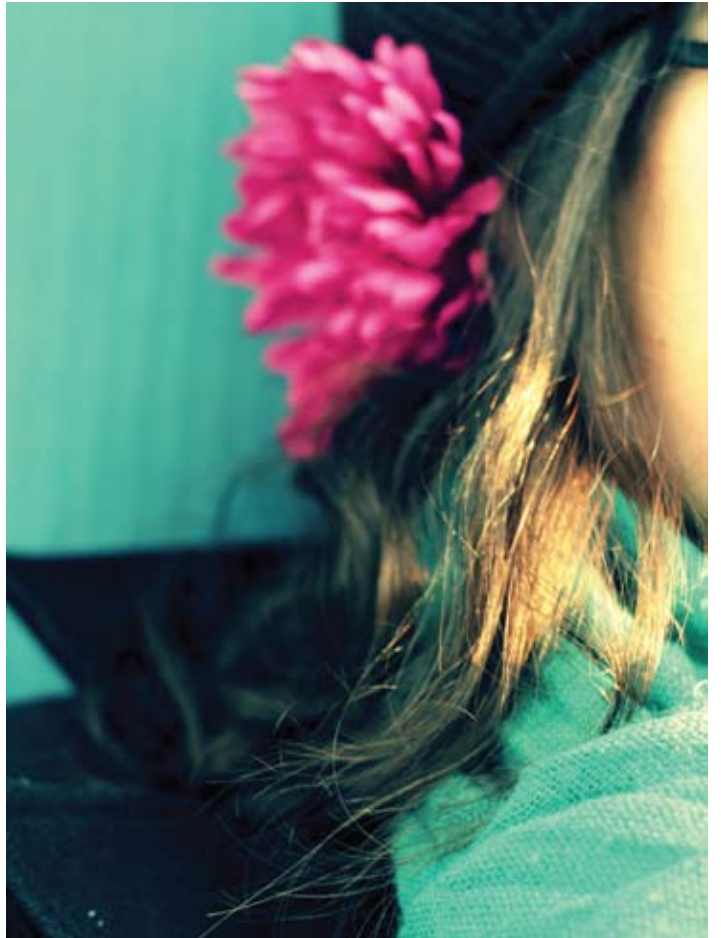
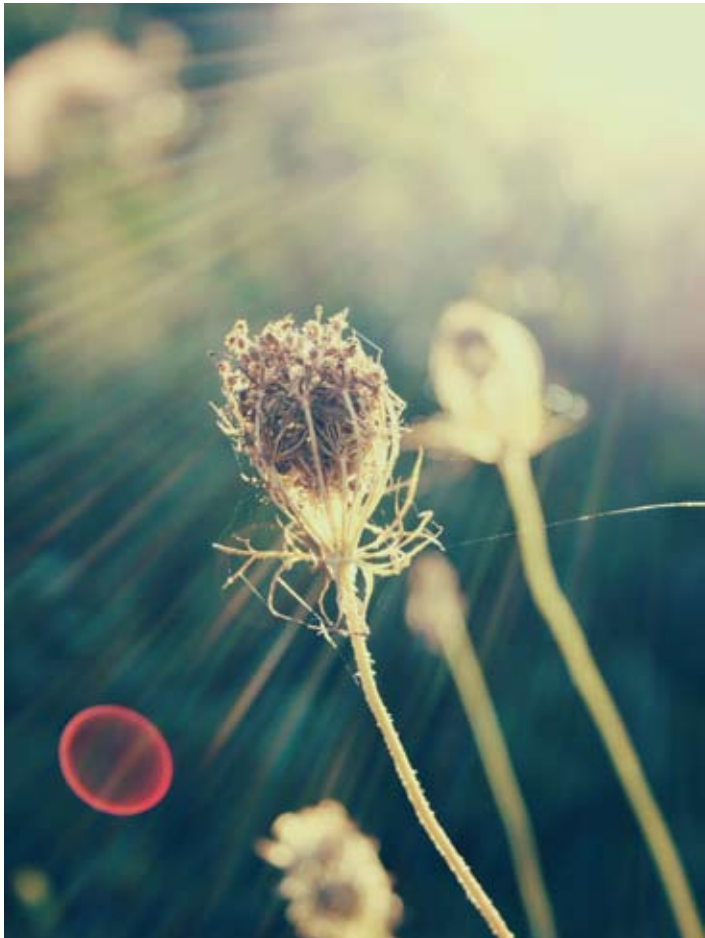


*It is 3:00 in the afternoon,* a Wednesday afternoon in June, a patriotic holiday in Montreal, a day for family get-togethers and neighborhood gatherings, barbecues and picnics, sprinklers and sparklers, flip flops and tank tops. The sun is set to broil. The clouds are out of town at a storm convention. On a friend's rooftop, under an improvised sun shelter made of old burgundy curtains, we sit side by side with our laptops. Her fingers tap dance across the keyboard, mine hover. I want to write about what blogging means to me but I don't know where to start.

My friend senses this and suggests an adventure to help ward off writer's block. So, hi ho, hi ho, it's off the roof we go and within minutes, we find ourselves in an absolute dive of a bar. This place practically boasts a "not welcome" sign. It is dark

and cold and a faint scent of the forbidden cigarette smoked in the back room still lingers. I wonder why she brought me here. I specifically recall asking for inspiration in the form of rainbows and unicorns.

The bar is small, accommodating a handful of regulars. We are not regulars. The plump bartender with pigtails knows this. When we say hello, she kind of huffs, an invitation to place our order and quickly before she changes her mind. We skip the pleasantries and order beer. "That will be \$3.95 each," she says (no "Please," no "Thank you"). The beer is as cold as its surroundings. Journey's "Any Way You Want It" blasts on the radio. A man pulls a harmonica from his shirt pocket and jams along. The result is the taste equivalent of ketchup and chocolate. Never has there been such a clash.





### *Cultivating Curiosity*

It's not my habit to drink in seedy bars on weekday afternoons, but this is where the wall crumbles and inspiration suddenly seeps in. I realize in that moment that the reason I love writing so much is because it encourages me to cultivate curiosity. It makes me say "Yes" more often than "No." It pushes me to pay attention to the small details and revel in the complicated beauty. It makes me want to see my world without labeling it, for the sheer enjoyment of the experience and the subsequent tale to tell. Sometimes we just have to take life as it comes, without resistance, without planning, without judgment. Because when we constantly try to control the outcome, we leave very little room for serendipity and growth (and Journey accompanied by a harmonica).

### *The Extra An Extra Ordinary*

I suppose that, on some level, I was always thirsty for words. Journals line my bookshelves and blogging felt like a natural transition for a girl in love with the Internet. My blog has become a sacred space for those aspects of my being attuned to play and magic and wonder. The pen and the camera are the tools I use to behold the raw beauty of being human. I am not looking for extraordinary but the extra in the ordinary.

I blog for the simple love of words, the messy parts, the wrinkled sheets, the scent of old books, the lazy morning light, the gurgle of the coffee pot, the puppy paws imprinted in cement, the music in laughter, the ruby of beets. My blog is occasionally a gratin of pure fromage, peppered with puns and





quirky quips. But I also save airtime for the dark bits that need a little light.

I blog for the story that may go nowhere but took the scenic way there, “the rapture of being alive”, the lovers in the park, the turquoise door, the purple stairs, the heart-shaped water stain on the sink, the creatures of the night.

I blog for the red hair of the girl on the green bike with two purple eggplants in her basket, the shoes on the electrical wire in the alley that change from one month to the next, the nerdy guy with the laptop at the café; I suspect there is a love letter in his inbox and that his heart beats for that love.

I blog for that glorious moment, when I’ve been walking in the shade of morning and suddenly I turn a corner and I am temporarily blinded by a veil of light and I have to softly squint to make out the details of everything bathed in a citrus glow.

The world is brimming with beauty if you are willing to look for it. Sometimes it is on the periphery, in the most unexpected places and you may need to squint your eyes a little but it is there. Through my wonderings and wanderings, I seek that beauty. The door to my blog is always open if you want to pop in and say hello. I may be out for a walk with my camera, collecting stories, but take a seat, pour yourself a drink (espresso in the morning, red wine in the evening); I’ll be back to share my findings and I hope to meet you there. ☺

*Jeanine Caron lives in Montreal, Canada. To view more of her images visit her blog, [www.wonderingsandwanderings.wordpress.com](http://www.wonderingsandwanderings.wordpress.com).*

