

Emptiness

By Silas Smith

It's 1:00 PM and the sun is slowly setting over the decayed and decapitated "M" letter monument on mount sentinel. It's extra cold today, the kind of cold where it hurts to breathe in, the kind of cold that no one has experienced before. The blistering wind makes a sharp piercing howl as it travels through the empty streets of downtown. Other than the drowning white noise of the wind it's quiet. It's been quiet for a long time now, and it seems everyday the colder it gets the more lonely it seems to be. The emptiness screams out through the lost boarded up abandoned buildings crying out for help waiting for something to inhabit the inside again. The river going through the middle of the town that used to flow every summer has been stuck in a void of frozen solid sheets of ice for as long as it can remember. What once was a town full of life turned into an empty frozen wasteland in such a short amount of time and the hopes of this empty place returning to how it once had been long forgotten. The sun has finally gone and the deserted valley of Missoula is met with an eerie sweep of darkness engulfing the town. Unlike the days, the nights here bring comfort. The way the wind blows, the way the snow falls ever so gently almost as if it is trying to forgive for what it has done to this place over the past 50 years. The darkness consumes this town in a way where it seems like when the sun rises the next day everything could go back to normal. As the months go by the colder it gets and by this time Missoula Montana has fully accepted emptiness.