

Winter



People seem to be drawn to the restroom at the End of the Road, even if it is not available.



Restroom buried,
snow to the roof;
one yellow hole



I walk the back loop of the closed campground, leaving tracks through an inch of new snow, searching the chokecherry bushes for the few remaining berries. I love their sweet taste after the recent hard frosts.



caps made of snow,
jackets of ice;
shriveled chokecherries



Oregon grape grows thick along the creek near the Lion's Camp. Spring's white flowers have become berries that hang like grapes. The shiny, holly-like leaves turn red but remain over winter.



Oregon grape:
thick frost on
red leaves,
purple berries

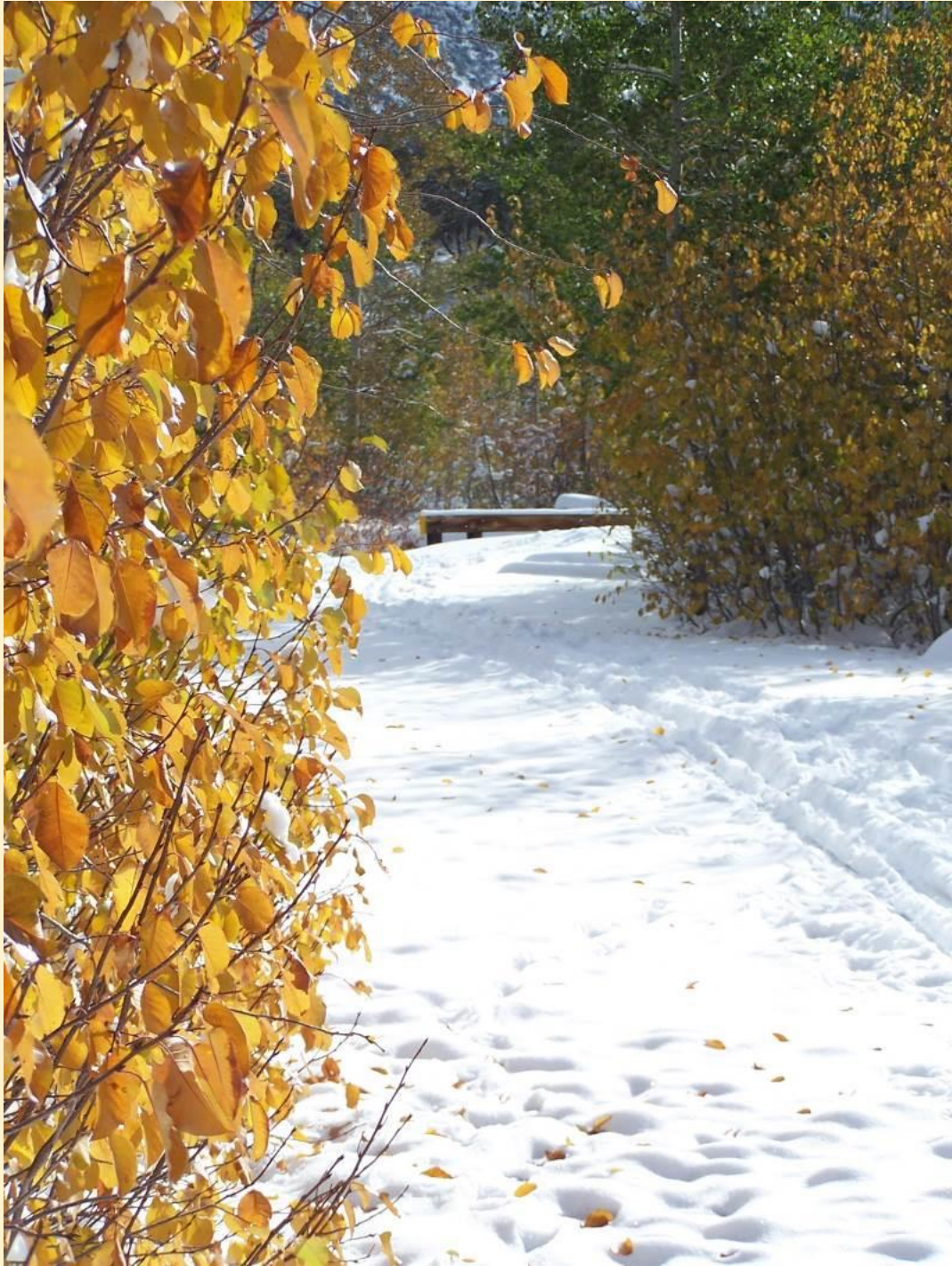


Skiing up the canyon road allows me to search the northern slopes with binoculars. In late winter, I often see mountain goats along the bottoms of the high cliffs.



canyon slope:
ice, snow, frost and black
mountain goat eye





The American dipper is our only aquatic songbird, named for its habit of performing rapid knee bends. This dark gray bird dives into fast water and flies underwater to pick aquatic insects off bottom rocks. Its only concession to winter is moving down canyon far enough to find open water.



black swirling water
beneath icy, snowy banks;
dipper dives in



In Elko, being able to look up and see the Ruby Mountains can be a blessing or a curse.



storm clouds swirl,
wind whips snow off peaks;
seen from a red light

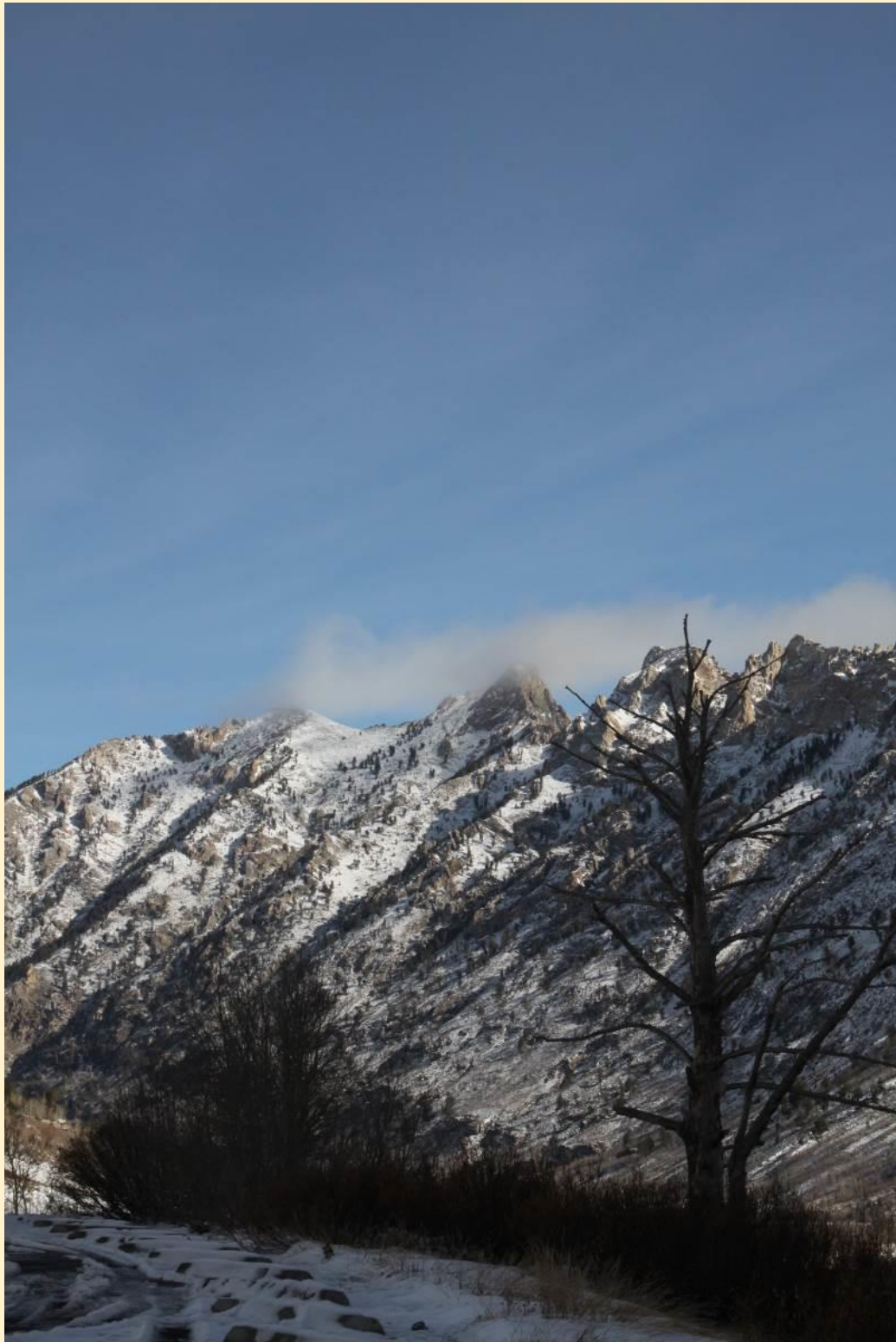


My view through the windshield is obscured by falling snow. The steam off my coffee mists the side window. It is almost time to leave the canyon.



through falling snow,
two ravens perch on snowy pines;
winter colors





My family skies up the canyon road, staying to the side as snowmobiles pass us. Snow begins to fall as we ski into the campground. I set up a stove to heat water for hot cocoa as bundled up kids chase the dog through deep snow.



hissing stove,
boiling water;
rising steam,
falling snow



In March, the canyon road is sometimes open as far as the campground. It is an opportunity for people to scan the snowy cliffs for mountain goats. The goats are easy to spot since they often stand on rocky prominences.



mountain goat
on a high icy ledge;
watching the watchers



Walking up the canyon road on packed snow, snowmobiles occasionally hurry past me but their interruptions are brief.



snowmobile whine
echoes off canyon walls;
then chickadees





The snow is not yet deep in Right Fork Canyon, allowing for a winter hike above the Lion's Camp. The best part of any winter hike is the stillness.



winter setting;
raven croak,
silence,
nuthatch calls,
silence

