

The newspaper guy

by [Brian Doyle](#) in the [March 29, 2017](#) issue

Four days a week the newspaper guy drives by at dawn or dawnish
And flips the paper toward our house from the window of his Olds.
It lands in a different spot every single time. This fascinates me no
End. I mean, he's flipped it hundreds of times and not once that we
Remember did it ever land in the same place twice. My lovely wife
Is fascinated by how wide the range of landing sites is—the garden,
The path, the rosemary bushes, the annual booming dandelion farm,
Once the welcome mat by the door, once amazingly *on the chair by
The door*—a spectacular shot, when you think about it. Twice I have
Been unaccountably up early enough to see the thing done. He slows
Infinitesimally from about twenty miles per hour to nineteen and out
Flies the paper. He's an older guy, from what I can see. Probably this
Is his second job, or he's retired and picking up a little cash. The day
When the paper was delivered by a boy is gone. I was that boy, once.
Now it's the guy in the Olds. We take the little astonishing things for
Granted. People make the paper, and manufacture it, and distribute it,
And four mornings a week a man calculates lift and arc and parabola
With a fine and experienced eye and whip of the wrist. It's just a tiny
Thing, but it isn't small at all, is it? All the attention is on economics,
The decline of papers, the man forced to take on a second job, the old
Battered car held together by spit and tape. But he's great at the thing
He does every morning, even if sometimes his throw causes a ruckus
Among the tomato plants. The whole essential point of every religion
And all forms of genuine love is to see the miracle of what is right in
Front of you, isn't that so? Attentiveness is the first food, the overture
In the unimaginably intricate gracious symphony: something like that.