

My father and the dark

by [Daniel Donaghy](#) in the [July 1, 2008](#) issue

Ten inches of snow this week,
gradual, over four days,
so that we didn't realize

until we tried to walk
the tow path along the canal
how deep it was,

and I think again how quickly
this first trimester's gone
a season already, reaching

around to rub her round belly,
its waters stirred this month
by tiny fingers and toes,

knowing our baby
has earlobes now, and genitals,
hearing again the racing

heart in the doctor's office,
wishing my father, who sat up
at night like this to smoke,

could be here,
so that I could show him
how I sing into the belly

when she lies back down,
and could ask him
about the dark and its lack of answers,

dark he slumped in for years
with his beer and news radio,
dark he drove to work in

and came home in,
lived on those last few months
through tubes and drugs,

dark he lives in now,
or does not,
dark our baby swims from tonight,

in the waters where time begins,
adding cells and muscle and bone
all the hard way to our lives.