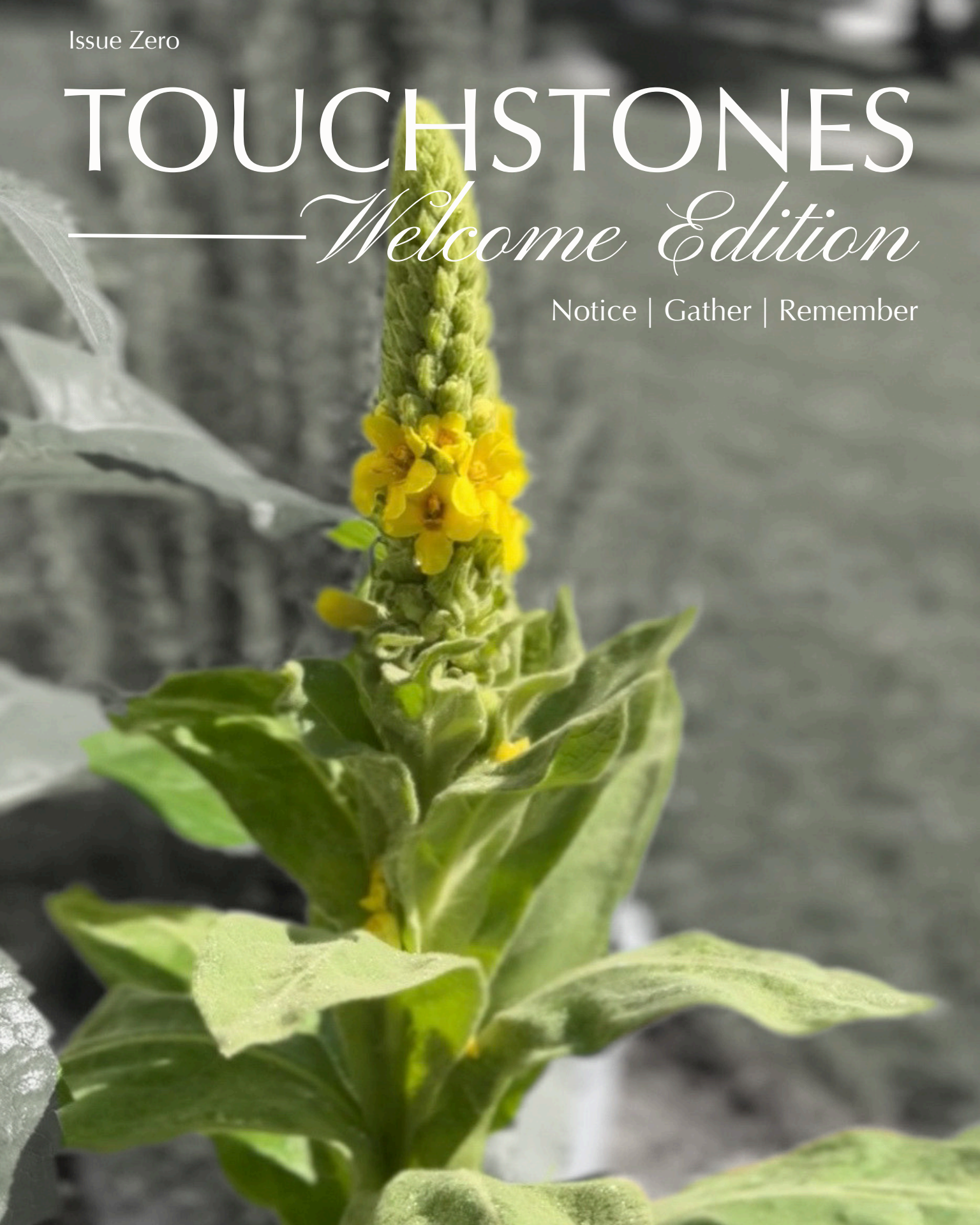


Issue Zero

TOUCHSTONES

Welcome Edition

Notice | Gather | Remember



What if
the
small things
are
the
big things?

Hello lovely.

Every June, we wait for summer to arrive.

Then somehow, before we know it, it's over.

A few years from now, we probably won't remember what happened on a random Tuesday in June. But we'll remember the smell of tomato vines warming in the sun. The click of barbecue tongs before dinner. The sound of a screen door closing behind us.

This summer, I decided to spend 30 days paying closer attention to those kinds of moments.

What began as a simple creative social media project called 30 Days of Summer Magic quickly became something else entirely.

The more I noticed, the more there was to notice.

A volunteer mullein standing quietly in the garden.
Wrens building a nest beneath a porch cushion.
A dog carrying off a cherry tomato as if he'd won the lottery.

Tiny moments that would have disappeared if I hadn't stopped long enough to see them.

By the end of the month, I realized I hadn't simply created a series of posts.

I'd collected a season.

That's how ***Touchstones*** began.

Not as a magazine about gardening or nostalgia, but as a place to gather the ordinary moments that quietly become part of who we are.

I'm so glad you're here.

Welcome.

With love,



TOUCHSTONES

Notice. Gather. Remember.

Some moments ask to be ***noticed***.

The scent of tomato vines on warm hands.
A hummingbird that pauses just long enough to catch your eye.
The first firefly.
The last blossom.

Not because they're extraordinary. But because they're easy to miss.

Some moments ask to be ***gathered***.

A photograph or a story.
A pressed flower tucked between the pages of a book.
A recipe written in someone's handwriting.

The small things we choose to keep become part of the seasons we remember.

Some moments ask to be ***remembered***.

Years from now, you may not remember what happened on an ordinary Tuesday in July.

But you'll remember the click of barbecue tongs.

The sound of a screen door.

The smell of sunscreen.

The way the garden looked just before dusk.

Those are your touchstones.

Notice.

Gather.

Remember.



Seasonal Messengers

This year's first messenger wasn't a bird or a butterfly.

It was a grasshopper.

He quietly wandered into the 30 Days of Summer Magic project and, before long, became an unexpected companion.

He reminded us to notice thunderstorms, screen doors, tomato bandits, and all the wonderfully ordinary things that make a season feel like a season.

This summer, the snails seem to have taken over.

After every rain, they appear on flowerpots, stepping stones, and garden leaves as if they have nowhere particular to be. Never in a hurry. Never apologizing for the slow way they move through the world.

Next season, it may be chickadees.

Or woolly bears.

Or the first flock of geese heading south.

The messenger changes.

The invitation stays the same.

Notice who's arrived for *you*.



FIELD NOTES

Found This Season

Mullein growing exactly where it pleased.

Wrens raising a family beneath a porch cushion.

Tomato vines that smell better than they have any right to.

A dog convinced that one cherry tomato belonged to him.

Lemon balm quietly taking over another corner of the garden.

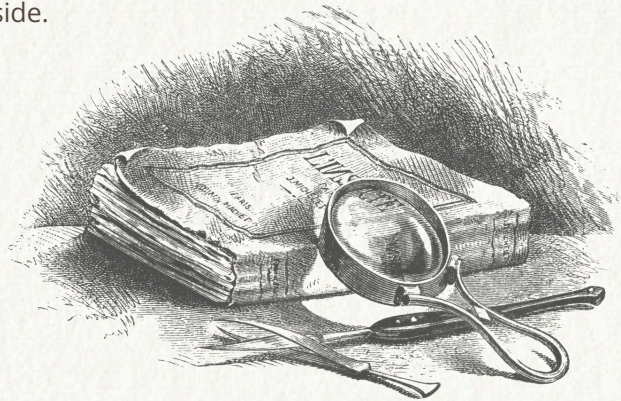
Sparklers that still make grown-ups smile.

Thunderstorms that send everyone to the porch.

A screen door that announces every arrival.

The first firefly.

One more reason to linger outside.



THE VOLUNTEER THAT STARTED IT ALL

Last spring, a plant appeared outside my studio door. I didn't remember planting it. And for a while, I wasn't even sure what it was.

Years ago, I probably would have pulled it out without giving it another thought. Instead, I left it alone.

Not because I had a plan. Simply because I was curious.

It wasn't in the way.

It wasn't poison ivy.

And something about it asked to stay.

For most of that first year, it wasn't particularly impressive. Just a quiet cluster of leaves while louder flowers stole the show.

Then, almost overnight, everything changed.

The stems stretched higher and the flowers appeared.

And the little volunteer I'd nearly overlooked became one of the most beautiful plants in the garden.

Looking back, I think **TOUCHSTONES** began the day I decided not to pull it out.

Because that small decision taught me something I hadn't expected.

Sometimes the most meaningful things aren't the ones we plant.

They're the ones we *notice*.

Some of the best things volunteer themselves.



HOW TOUCHSTONES FIND US

A touchstone rarely announces itself.

You don't decide that a certain sound, scent, or ordinary moment will stay with you for years.

It simply *does*.

Long after the details of a season have faded, one small thing remains.

A smell.

A song.

A well-worn object.

The way late afternoon light fell across the kitchen table.

Most touchstones seem almost unremarkable while we're living them.

They're woven so naturally into our days that we hardly notice them at all.

Until one day, they bring an entire season rushing back.

Those are the moments we carry with us.

Not because we chose them.

Because they quietly chose us.



A BEAUTIFUL LIST

The smell inside an old tackle box.

Ice cubes tumbling into a pitcher on a hot afternoon.

A recipe card written in someone's familiar handwriting.

Damp towels drying over the porch railing.

The first cool sheets after a long summer day.

A dog's collar jingling down the hallway.

Opening the windows on the first crisp morning of autumn.

A favorite mug with a tiny chip on the rim.

Cedar shavings scattered across a workshop floor.

A pocket full of smooth beach stones.

Chalk dust on your fingertips.

A stack of library books waiting on the nightstand.

The sound of rain on a metal roof.

Fresh-cut grass drifting through an open window.

A quilt that's a little too warm until it isn't.

The last page of a well-loved book.



THE SEASONS AHEAD

The seasons are generous storytellers.

Late Summer.

Autumn.

Winter.

Spring.

Each arrives with its own scents, sounds, rituals, and quiet reminders to pay attention.

There will always be something new to notice.

Something worth gathering.

Something you'll want to remember.

This is only the beginning.

I hope you'll join me.



CONTINUE READING

Thank you for spending a little time here.

My hope is that these pages reminded you how many beautiful things quietly live inside an ordinary day.

The complete ***TOUCHSTONES: Midsummer*** continues that journey with seasonal essays, photographs, field notes, and the small moments that became this first issue.

If these pages felt like home, I think you'll feel right at home there.

With love,

deb

