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# StarTribune Editorial

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Our perspective

## Star flowers

*Noticing when something goes right*

A magnolia in Minnesota seems an improbability. All other things being equal, it shouldn't be able to brook the northern clime. But there it is, just outside the kitchen door, declaring its survival — and spring's certain presence — with another year's blast of miraculous whiteness. Not green at all: just an offering of heavenly scent and stars. Nine feet tall, a contradiction of the ordinary course of things, of the conventional wisdom: that Southern trees can't make it in the North; that winter lasts forever; that love lasts only a while.

A city is home to all sorts of skeletons. Drive down 50th Street and you'll see them, standing in solemn reminder of what couldn't be. There is the great cold shadow of the magnolia that died a few years back — lost in some bitter wind it couldn't

bear. The stump of an elm that couldn't fight off the invaders. And beyond some front lawns, past some kitchen doors, lie the signs of other passings: dashed hopes, broken promises, unraveled loves.

But every once in a while, something sweet happens. Things work out. A tree lives. A medicine works. A child thrives. A love lasts.

The magnolia, for instance. Planted 12 years back in June, it was a tiny slip of a bush, barely worth a fond glance. It's amazing what time will do, when sauced with a little daring and patience. Bushes turn into trees. Hope gives way to fulfillment. The small becomes glorious. The improbable takes solid root — marries stars to flowers, and tosses them before our eyes.