

The reward for patience?

In a word, results. Nobody appreciates the patience of Ramona Doebler more than us here at RM, because many of our own photos, as drive-by shootings. We are on the road to a meeting when a good photograph flits past the windshield. Apply the brakes, take the shot and continue dashing onward to the next destination.

To get the two Eagles shots, Mona had to spend nearly an hour approaching step-by-step, shooting as she went.

You get that from the intimacy of both shots. The one where the great bird looks into the camera and says, "What the heck?" And in the other one, "I'm out of here. You people."

Here's how Mona describes getting the tight shot of the sharptail grouse: *"Okay, so here I was yesterday (April 13), laying on my stomach on a steep incline of a ditch bank (north of town), facing a fierce west wind at about 40 degrees, my head stuck over the top, nearly freezing to death to get this photo. They were dancing so close to me that my lens was almost too big for the occasion. Anyway, I spent about 20 minutes laying there snapping a couple hundred photos, til I got too cold to work the camera."*

We asked her if she had something just as striking in a vertical format that we could consider for a cover photo. She couldn't come up with one. The bird was in her face. She had to work at it to keep him in her viewfinder.

You're going to see this photo again. In the June issue, where we share it with the rest of Montana, especially those who don't have either a computer or access to the Internet. And probably again as a winner in some national wildlife photo contest. That's what we call results.

