

FLASH NONFICTION

The Bassman

by Frederick Reinprecht



"Lone Home" by Aaditya Padmaraj

It's been 9 months since the last time we all gathered on our grandparents' porch, eagerly waiting for Grandpa to make his big entrance, transforming the porch of his house into the stage of the Ryman Auditorium when he would finally appear.

Carrying his Telecaster in one hand, the four-speaker loaded, fifty-pound '59 Bassman with ease in the other, and wearing his road-worn denim jacket and a smirk on his face, he would be greeting us with his usual, "I thought you'd be sick of me by now." He would sit down on the bench next to Grandma, always asking, "Is this seat or you taken, or may I sit next to you, love?", making her blush every time. We would spend every Sunday evening of summer like this, meeting and chatting amongst ourselves, while listening to Grandpa play gospel and classic country songs for hours, only taking breaks to smoke one or two Winston Lights.

Today is the first Sunday of June after his passing. The first of many summer evenings spent without him since he was welcomed into the everlasting arms. The first on which the street leading up to his house won't be filled with the sound of those trusty, almost ancient cowboy chords, which had been known to travel through the night's air for such a long time. The first on which I won't get the chance to spend hours marveling at the swift fingers of his left hand, dancing from one fret to the other, muting, hitting and striking, while the ones on his right can't seem to help themselves, jumping back and forth between the six strings of his guitar. It's the first of an almost painful amount of Sundays on which songs won't be sung with his voice. That old, soft, at times rough, at times trying, but always warm baritone, which will forever serve as the accompaniment to so many of my most treasured memories, and which should have filled the airwaves of country radio stations across all states, and which should have been captured and recorded on vinyl to let future generations know of its greatness. He would only joke about it: "It's just the magic of Winston Lights."