

- 8pt Georgia - captions
- 11pt Georgia - body text
- 25pt Georgia - headlines
- **Bold** and *Italic* possible
- Justified text
- Paragraphs indented .25in
- Footer and page #s (*add later*)
- Poetry centered but run in exact format provided
- .125" bleed
- .5" margin
- 2 column grid
- Uncheck Hyphenate

5.5" X 8" single page
(but build on 2 page spread that will equal 11" x 8.5")

DVR Style

It's Almost Sunday Morning

In the summer of 1956, any Saturday at midnight, exactly when the moon was out, I'd swing my front porch swing, waiting for him. Clarence, a bachelorette at 33 to make of home from the Blind Man's Pub. He would have spent another evening puffing stems of Heineken's. Many times that summer before I went away to college, I'd be strolling home at midnight from another pub, just steps behind, staggering Clarence. But unlike Clarence, I'd be sober so I'd always let him walk ahead of me and I'd listen to him talk. "The Yellow Rose of Texas" was a favorite. I'd join in, though I didn't know the words.

However, on the last Saturday night that Clarence and I came down the street in our odd tandem, I didn't see Grandma on her swing even though the stars were out and the moon was full. For some odd reason, on this particular night, she wasn't waiting to berate him.

So far so good, I thought, for Clarence. He won't have to listen to Grandma give him hell then, not far from his home and without warning, he toppled into Mrs. Murphy's hedge. It was like watching a side of flour fall in slow motion off a truck.

When I finally got him up, I managed to maneuver Clarence slowly down the sidewalk toward his house. He didn't make a sound but it wasn't easy moving a man that big who was essentially asleep on his feet.

Somehow I got him through his back door only to encounter Grandma, a writh in a haze rightgones, standing in the doorway, her mouth open. She began thrashing Clarence with her broom, passing only for a moment to tell me,

"Go home to your mother now, you won't be late for Mass. It's almost Sunday morning."

After that, she resumed beating Clarence. He never made a sound, just took the blows across his back, head bowed, without moving. But Clarence was a man who said very little even when he was sober.

After that sad night in 1956, I never saw Clarence again, either marching to work in the morning, his lunch pail gallantly swinging, or staggering home at midnight from the Blind Man's Pub.

It maya's a night later, I'd be coming home from the other pub and I'd see Grandma reining on her front porch swing, broom in hand, waiting. Maybe Clarence was coming, I thought. But if he was, I never saw him.

I remember coming home from college every summer and asking the neighbors if they had seen Clarence. No signs of him, they said. But on a Saturday night when the moon was out, they'd still see Grandma, on her swing, waiting.

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Now so many decades later, as I still home at midnight, after an evening at the Blind Man's Pub, I can see the moon is as big as it was the last night I saw Clarence. Suddenly I realize I'm older now than Clarence was the night he disappeared. And even though Grandma's been dead for many years, I can see her in the starlight. She's sitting regally on that swing, broom in hand, waiting. So for old times sake, I give her a big wave, hoping to hear her say, just one more time,

"Go home to your mother now so you won't be late for Mass. It's almost Sunday morning!"

Donal Mahoney

Nominated for Best of the Net and Publshing prizes, Donal Mahoney has had poetry and fiction published in a variety of print and electronic publications in North America, Europe, Asia and Africa.

