

# Write Your Life

## *A micro memoir writing project*

**Talk about a neighbor, an acquaintance, or someone at the edge of your life who made an impression.**

### The Retired Dentist

“I think it’s the son,” Tizi says. The dentist’s house, we call it. Someone is moving in.

Summer days we would see him sitting on a lawn chair on the driveway, watching cars go by, trudging behind his lawn mower cutting the grass, until he couldn’t do it anymore. For the longest time, he didn’t wave back when I drove by. Then he did. I’d stop once in a while for a chat. He was mostly alone. Long divorced. Long retired. He told me his son was cutting the grass now. A neighbor across the street, a tall senior with red hair fading gray, with an old Irish setter also fading gray, would walk across the street holding an afternoon Manhattan. They would visit.

Then one spring, when the weather turned warm, when I looked for him in that lawn chair on the driveway, he wasn’t there. I asked the neighbor when I saw him. Gone, he said.

His two-story house was empty two years. No for sale sign. No moving van. The curtain on the front window had been left half open. I wanted to swing into the driveway, get out of the car, and look inside. Nobody lived there. Looking isn’t invasive if nobody lives there, is it?

I pictured a couch as he’d left it, a recliner as he’d left it, an old TV set, a kitchen table with four chairs, upstairs an unmade bed slept in by the retired dentist, on the floor at the side of the bed, a pair of slippers. What happened to him?

These days there are trucks in the driveway. A few weeks ago, the house got new windows. Ladders lean against the garage door, next to them, two five-gallon buckets of paint.

“I hope it’s the son,” Tizi says.

“Would he want it?”

“He might need it,” she says.

What would the son inherit?