

Cultural Daily

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Brad Rose: Three Poems

Brad Rose · Wednesday, May 30th, 2018

The Right Conditions

<https://www.culturalweekly.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2017-The-Right-Conditions-Cultural-Weekly-Brad-Rose-mp3-audio-reading.mp3>

Ricky's back and he looks just like he always did; a rusty hinge on a jail cell door. The first thing he did when he got out was to go to Duke's and order a Jack Daniels over ice. He said he'd missed the sound of ice cubes melting. When I asked him what he'd learned from his ten-year bit, he said, *First impressions are so important*. I watched him at the bar. As he smoked, he was still as a dressed knife. The threads of nicotine curled around his wrist like a handcuff. The newspapers had said that when confronted by the cops, Ricky's partner had mistakenly shot himself. I wanted to ask Ricky about that, but I knew what he'd say: *People don't commit suicide in the middle of a bank robbery by shooting themselves in the back*. So, I asked him what he liked best about his first day as a free man here, in Detroit? He said, *The conditions are always right for revenge*.

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Demographic

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The dead are busy dancing, although looks can be deceiving. To play it safe, I'm bankrolling the opposition. Thanks to my dialect coach, now even the plants understand me. Still, it never hurts to re-calibrate your survival instinct. I used to be a genius, but my chromosomes prematurely wore out in the lachrymose airwaves. Instead of repeating the mistakes of the past, I've surrendered my hopes of playing first violin in the orchestra of the absurd. My parole officer assured me that it's easy to spot an unlucky skyscraper, although, like sad-eyed clown art, you never want too much of a good thing. Research shows that the people most affected by the death penalty are raised in similar zip codes. At first, this seemed funny, but they're not laughing anymore.

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Nobody's Perfect

<https://www.culturalweekly.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/nobodysperfect.mp3>

Like my hat, my head is bigger on the inside than the outside. Damn cowboy music. After I re-

primer the dog house and hose down the AstroTurf, things are going to be a lot different around here. I'll stop internet shopping for suicide notes, and try my hand at Powerball. With that \$750 million prize money, Amber and I'll move out of this mobile home faster than a donut on training wheels. Amber says it's not really a *mobile home*, it's a *trailer*. Bless her heart. Her brother's funeral would've been a lot prettier, if the cops had used rubber bullets. I've always said you really shouldn't go looking for death, but nobody's perfect. As we bowed our sorry heads in prayer, the mosquitos laughed like hyenas in the blood-damp air.

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