

Three Poems by Braden Bell

Contributed by Braden Bell

Braden Bell ^ THREE POEMS

1. JULY ^ There is time today To draw the last black ounce of news From the paper. ^ They've got names in those pages ^ That just won't quit, won't last, either. ^
 Keep talking, keep talking. ^ There is a price, I remember, for having
 Been there, for having known what they'd said And saying it back to the paper in whispers, Like they'd have mattered. ^
 ^ There is time today to pay hard money To know that fires breed and bare feet clamber, to Talk to the turning page
 about the How, and The What After . . . Keep talking . . . ^ Bright nights and loud mortars deafen and alight ^ That
 place in the brain that cries yes and cautions no, Marking the shrinking feeling that, to go . . . ^ One must start walking
 But won't, just can't, not When you're talking. Be quiet. ^ There is death to dodge, there are Places to go ^ Alone To
 kill the whys and the hows. ^ They're called bars. ^ They sell the papers, but I won't read them. ^ I'm not from here. I don't
 know you. I can't Hear you, but please Keep talking. ^

2. FOR SOMEONE SOMEWHERE ^ Took a number at the station And the floors weren't dirty They weren't but they
 were full Don't panic is all I can say This is what floors in city stations Are for: Waiting then paying and going As the
 fast-track monolith gets moving And reading in a red seat beside a Frenchwoman Nothing in her Der Spiegel splayed
 saying Stay or don't ... The ferry rises up De-train and taste hot coffee on deck Taste the channel up there And if I
 saw the wind I felt it'd be a wet blanket Smelling like age But mostly like today This Is how to get a start At the very
 end of things This Is how to warm the sardonic arm As it shakes another sardonic bird away Inviting mad motion back
 to the shoes ... Here comes landfall In the space between the landfill and the mouthful Of words I'd tell her If I knew
 her. ^ ^ 3. WHAT MAKES MOST SENSE... ^ Is the Ghost Crab ^ Of the Namibian Skeleton Coast as it finds Today's
 newest sand-spit and burrows ten inches below The beaten surface, blindly Eating tiny living things ^ Just in time for the
 wind to blow its cover from the haze ^ And take the crab away.

But the little bastard is built like a mid-century Ford And it has fun, true fun, as it lands lost at the edge Of the inland
 desert and crawls back across it, Too strange to suck death from the slow trail to shore And when it gets there nothing
 looks the same, the weather's Changed, so it digs its place in the intertidal zone, bracing Its slight, pale person for
 another blast. ^ ^ A gull touches down, mistaking a plastic jug in the sandbar For a white shell but it's hungry so it keeps
 the litter In its craw while the wind picks up, ^ throwing it high and it won't let go, goes higher . . . ^ It can see the dread
 desert from up here, so it drops the jug And flies the fuck away, ^ Ghost Crab smiling as it crawls, having laughed as it
 flew. ^ ^