
Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Chad Grant: “Don’t Hide the Madness”

Chad Grant · Saturday, August 20th, 2022

Don’t Hide the Madness

I’ve been reflecting on reasons why I should continue writing poetry. Wondering what made me begin with the craft in the first place. I wrote in those dark days of the soul when my sanity took a backseat to the perversity of Dionysian tendencies.

I ran into a librarian/friend while at a store I frequent. He seemed enthusiastic to shoot the shit with me for a bit, telling me how he was glad to see me, and escapades he had at Grateful Dead shows. We always had the best conversations about books and philosophy. He recalled how I wrote poetry, and I gave him a copy of my manuscript and a few zines — relics of a youth gone sour.

I had abandoned my daydreams...

Yet, for reasons which seem evidently clearer everyday, I too had hurt my family for the sake of a craft which seemed to be going nowhere. Granted, my life was no dumpster fire, but if you were to ask such and such a person it would seem that way. But then I’m reminded of the words of Bukowski in his poem “[Roll the Dice](#)”:

if you’re going to try, go all the
way.
otherwise, don’t even start.

And the embers of youth find new life, and I say, “let it burn.”

Ah, youth. Where to begin? My many odd jobs, my time in jail, the death of a friend? I’ve held many jobs from bubble dancer to broadcast journalism. I first saw the inside of a jail at seventeen, and then at thirty-four for a drunken fist fight with an old roommate. To be honest I didn’t instigate the situation, though I did add the fuel which led to the eruption.

I have some tips for those who don’t want to work, but spend their time writing with their head in the clouds.

1. Get hospitalized for a mental illness, and be put on a 51/50 for saying that you’re the reincarnated William Blake.

2. Have said hospital put you on social security.
3. Move into a rooming house.
4. Let the real madness flow out of you through your written word.

Yes, I have been hospitalized for an undisclosed mental health issue. It's where I met the most colorful characters, and one of my best friends. I'm sure that if I hadn't met him I would have shot myself a long time ago. He has since passed away — the weight of the world being too much for him. He too was a writer, and the first person I heard use the term miasma to describe a waft of bullshit.

So here I am thirty-eight years of age contemplating the worth of my words, and realizing that duct tape is silver and bullshit stinks.

1()215-6330: Decibels

Solitude surrenders
When there's the
Two of us. . .

We lie alone to ourselves,
Saying things like,
"It's okay,
We're fine. . ."

Our promises
Are the things of
Glass once broke. . .

Beyond repair,
And the silence
Between us
Is written in numbers.

*

Dial a Poem: The Hymn of Mary

2, 2, 1,
0, 3, thirty-three,iii . . .
(little lamb, little lamb)
2,2, 1, 2,3,three, 3
12, two-one,3, 2, one.
(Done)

*

Another Country

Numbers joggle

Their way to the page
As if dancing through
A mixed crowd.

Coming and going,
The hand me downs
Of generations,
Like fairy tales told
In long-distance calls.

I took your number
Before you left
For good.

“We’ll find a way.”
You promised.
Those assurances
So foreign to me now

Like French said in kisses,
When speech wouldn’t do.

Like tattered flags
Hung to blot out certain
Notions of love

(Featured image of dice by Justin Matthews; used under CC BY 3.0)

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