

# 20201015 Episode SD

Thu, 10/8 5:08PM 5:01

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

meadow, place, respite, poem, permitted, omen, passes, augur, duncan, flee, junkyard, mind, imagined, tincture, thunderous, junkie, double dutch, cauterized, dream, cul de sacs



00:05

I'm Tracy k Smith, and this is the slow down.



00:19

Robert Duncan's 1960 poem, often I am permitted to return to a meadow, the speaker describes a remembered or imagined space of peace and belonging, a space in the mind, to which he turns for consolation. writing this episode outside in the calming radiant afternoon light, sitting under the trees in my own yard, listening to the Blue Jays, Cardinals and the stirring electric ringing of cicadas, I believe I understand where Duncan's Meadow comes from.



00:58

This is the place I go to flee the world. I know, the children's cries, my phone buzzing with reminders of political conflict, obligation, tasks still undone. Nature is such a strong form of respite, that it sometimes becomes a kind of fantasy, a dream. I do not know what it feels like to be a hungry Fox out run by a rabbit, or to be a rabbit racing for its life away from its predator. Those conditions are excluded from my preferred view of the garden as one of peace, sanctity. Aside of recovery.



01:42

Duncan's poem ends with these lines. Often I am permitted to return to a meadow, as if it

were a given property of the mind that certain bounds hold against chaos.



01:59

That is a place of first permission, everlasting omen of what is a garden is one place of respite endowed with mythical history and symbolism. But it is not the only place to which a person might seek to flee. What if your anxiety comes from feeling alone? isolated and stranded far from community? What if your claim to move through certain public spaces is contested? What if you're a black man passing through the ramble in Central Park say, profiled as a threat because of the color of your skin? In which spaces real or imagined? Are you welcome?



02:49

Today's poem is Philip B. Williams



02:52

as often I am permitted to return to the city as if it were a scene made up by my need for a city via ducks July sweating sweat not mine, as the city is no longer mine was never but it holds me near to its metallic junkyard pastor and junkie song so hollow it's a hall. I dare not walk through this tragic place. Where from the people with my face, fall, where from fall all the architectures I am, I say are my peoples people and my people whose houses tremble as thunderous bass passes the blacktop roads sop up heat for double dutch feet to greet rope slapped down by a child's hand. I used to know her name. It is only a dream of trees. There propeller seeds blown West through batches of weeds crocheted yellow green with dandelions and cigarette butts. Once a racked from a mouth stressed over rent due, dried spit the tincture of weight and liquor stores. Often I am permitted to return to this city as if it were a gift for which I forgot the means to augur into clarity, always wrapped in cool violence. Neighbors frowns, cauterized into cul de sacs. Omen out casting what lives to give relief.



04:39

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