

The Slowdown - 437 - June Jordan

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

roses, wife, unidentified, public spirited, lamentable, perceptible, direct correspondence, saratoga springs, situation, assiduously, local police, son, momentary, hand, aforementioned, honeysuckle, trappist, point, dialed, lurch



00:05

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



00:20

one weekend morning when my son was five, he dialed 911 several times from my cell phone. I learned what had happened only when the dispatcher dialed me back. At which point my son walked over, and with fright in his eyes, handed me the phone. A few minutes later, the police pulled up outside our house, and an officer knocked on the front door. The son who had made the call burst into terrified guilty tears. I can only imagine what he was thinking, my own heart kicked in my chest, instinctively fearing the situation might lurch into a tragic turn of events. But nothing escalated. None of us was touched. Still, the knowledge of how often situations as simple as this go terribly wrong, was a presence in the room. How extraordinarily lucky and for some of us how rare to receive a momentary reprieve from the things you fear. Today's poem is letter to the local police. By June Jordan. I've been enjoying the law and order of our community throughout the past three months since my wife and I are two cats and miscellaneous photographs of the six grandchildren belonging to our previous neighbors, with whom we were very close, arrived in Saratoga Springs, which is clearly prospering under your custody. Indeed, until yesterday afternoon and despite my vigilant casting about, I've been unable to discover a single instance of reasons for public spirited concern, much less complaint, you may easily appreciate, then how it is that I write to your office at this date, with utmost regret for the lamentable circumstances that forced my hand. speaking directly to the issue of the moment, I have encountered a regular profusion of certain unidentified roses, growing to

no discernible purpose and according to no perceptible control, approximately one quarter mile west of the North way, on the southern side. To be specific, there are practically thousands of the aforementioned abiding and perpetual near Riot of wild behavior, indiscriminate coloring, and only the good Lord Himself can say what diverse soliciting of promiscuous cross fertilization as I say, these roses, no matter what the apparent background training, Trappist ik tendencies, age or color, do not demonstrate the least inclination toward categorization, specified allegiance, resolute preference, consideration of the needs of others, or any other minimal traits of decency. May I point out that I did not assiduously seek out this colony as it or and that these certain unidentified roses remain open to viewing even by children with or without suitable supervision. My wife asks me to append a note as regards the seasonal but nevertheless seriously licentious phenomenon of honeysuckle under the moon that one may apprehend at the corner of Nelson and Maine. However, I have recommended that she undertake direct correspondence with you as regards this yet another civic disturbance in our midst. I am confident that you will devise and pursue Appropriate Legal response to the roses in question. If I may aid your efforts in this respect, please do not hesitate to call me into consultation. Respectfully, yours. The slowdown is a production of American public media in partnership with the Poetry Foundation. This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts on the web@arts.gov