



# 20190906\_theslowdown\_20190906\_128

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

poem, slowdown, poetry, window, hear, awareness, hums, talking, childhood, yao, person, older siblings, favorite poems, brushed, pagoda, reassured, warm glow, shaughnessy, life, rocket ship

00:00

Before we begin, I'm excited to share that you'll be hearing to new voices on the slowdown starting next week. Poets Tina Chang, and Brenda Shaughnessy will be stepping in for me for a few weeks sharing their favorite poems, and unique perspectives. I'm excited to hear what they choose. And I'll be back with you soon.

00:31

I'm Tracy K. Smith. And this is the slow down.

00:49

One of my beliefs is that life is not logical, or, rather than a large portion of the logic of existence operates in dimensions we neither perceive nor understand that strange predicament is one of the reasons why poetry satisfies me. poems affirm our proximity to modes of reality that are beyond comprehension. Poetry brings us into an awareness of layers of experience, we trust to be real, but can't actually explain. That sense of awareness without understanding reminds me of what it used to feel like as a child, lying in bed at night, and listening to the muffled voices of my parents and older siblings, talking, laughing, going about the portion of their lives that remained a mystery to me. I knew that in some way. I was connected to whatever it was they were doing, and saying downstairs without me, but I was locked out of participating by my age. What were they talking about? What was so very funny, and why did it always have to wait until after I had brushed my teeth and kissed everyone? Good night. I still can't precisely say, but I drifted gradually to sleep in the warm glow of a nightlight loled and reassured by the familiar tambor of family voices. I imagine that might be what my own children now feel, after their father and I have

talked to them in today's poem is music from childhood by john Yao. I love how large and spacious it feels. It seems to gather up many disparate pieces from one person's childhood and fashion them into something musical, visceral and vibrantly visual. Of course, the whole of another person's formative years is too large to take in all at once. But the poem captures vivid fragments and highlights and lets them cycle past readers and patterns. We begin to recognize music from childhood by john Yao. You grow up hearing two languages, neither fits your fits. Your mother informs you. Moon means window to another world. You begin to hear words more in the sounds buried inside their mouths, a row of yellow windows and a painting of them. Your mother informs you moon means window to another world. You decide it is better to step back and sit in the shadows, a row of yellow windows and a painting of them. Someone said you can see a blue pagoda or a red rocket ship. You decide it is better to step back and sit in the shadows. Is it because you saw a black asteroid fly past your window? Someone said you can see a blue pagoda or a red rocket ship. I tried to follow in your footsteps. But they turned to water. Is it because I saw a black asteroid fly past my window. The air hums a circus performer riding a bicycle towards the ceiling. I tried to follow in your footsteps, but they turned to water. The town has started sinking back into its commercial. The air hums a circus performer riding a bicycle towards the ceiling. You grow up hearing two languages. Neither fits your fits the town has started sinking back into its commercial. You begin to hear words more in the sounds buried inside their mouths.

05:17

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