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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

poem, lives, slow, cherish, siblings, family, empty nester, pain, feels, deeply, eyeglasses, measure, kruger, vivid, instructive, memoir, children, different personalities, thrust, instigator



00:05

I'm us Poet Laureate Tracy case.



00:09

And this is the slow down.



00:23

I'm thinking today about perspective, how we live so deeply inside our own lives that we can't always see what other people see. That fact might save us a little pain at times. But living deeply in our own lives also means that we can develop a kind of tunnel vision, the kind that makes it hard to consider things from other points of view. I remember feeling this very deeply. When I was writing a memoir several years ago, all I could do, was trying to get things as right as possible from within my own experience. It was difficult, and sometimes painful work. I had the most vivid and immediate access only to my own version of things. Thanks to the distance of time, I was finally able to see my own limitations, my own fears and flaws. When my siblings read the book, they recognized our family, but it was as if they were seeing themselves through someone else's eyeglasses. Yes, I had captured the general shape and tone of our family. But my four siblings, with their different personalities and unique experiences would have brought their own particular clarity to our family story. This is just one of the reasons why memoir can be so contentious, such an instigator of anger or pain. But I also know how instructive it can be to look at yourself with as much honesty as you can muster. I love the way today's poem by Southern Californian poet Lisa C. Kruger depicts a moment when one woman attempts

to look at herself from the outside to size up the person she's been day after day for years. On the surface, it's a poem about her becoming an empty nester thrust into the position of having to remember who she was before her children called upon her to become their mother. I don't yet know what it's like to watch your children grow up and move into their own lives, lives that happen in large part without you. The shift that feels most palpable to me right now is the one that took me from being myself without children, to being the mother of three. I can still see that other means so clearly, moving through her life with a freedom she doesn't even know to cherish when I try to turn and regard the self I am now I find myself filled with questions. When and how did so much change occur? How much more change must I be willing to accept? And where is that other me the self I once was, if I were to find her today, which you hold any promise for me now. But this poem also feels more widely useful, reminding me that sometimes it's the very simple choices that help ease the passage from one stage of life to another, like, what to keep and what to let go of. And who knows. Maybe taking stock of what you've cherished or clung to out of habit is one very good way of catching sight of yourself. Maybe it's a way of taking measure of who you are and who you've been



03:49

donating the cake dome.



03:52

She couldn't stop. She did it almost every afternoon. While they napped or later sat upstairs with homework. She listened to the scrape of desk chairs on the ceiling while she measured and blended hummed from oven to sink. redolence rising in a suite promise she thought was required. didn't know how to live without all her life afraid to be left empty handed.



04:30

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