

# 20201023 Episode SD

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

poem, goodbye, life, standing, feel, circus troupe, donna, leaning, shoulders, slow, gas stove, bend, jason, part, hooting, metaphor, carefree, nick, victoria, pull



00:06

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



00:20

what metaphor would you say best describes life? A race, a journey. Sometimes I feel like part of a circus troupe. My specialty is the tightrope, a perilous balancing act across and back, across and back. My companions ride elephants swing from the trapeze. Together, we traveled town by town through life. Just want to play starts to feel predictable. We pack up the tent and move on. By which I mean, I'm terrified sometimes that I'll fall. My children are willful performers.



01:02

My husband and I were young once and carefree. Now we're saddled with selling tickets and keeping the show afloat. But other times, I'd say my life feels like a locomotive barreling wildly down its track. hooting out great clouds of steam, sometimes, rounding a bend, the pace of things slows. I noticed birds, new trees, Avista that fills me with peace. But it never lasts. I've got to charge on fuel the tank, pick up my passengers and freight, there's always some place to be racing off to. What if we could choose a metaphor that suited us and our lives would bend to match it? a museum full of objects all poignant and meaningful to you. A theater, a restaurant, a disco, a library, whatever it is that adds meaning and order, and hopefully joy to the ongoing and the every day.



02:13

Today's poem is the party by Jason Shinder. published posthumously in 2009. The poem looks backward at life and the rewards of deep friendship with delight and gratitude. And it frames the end of life as the drawing close of something festive and full of love and beautiful. And for the friends named in the poem, Marie and Donna and Nick, Victoria and Sophie and Lily. I imagine this poem must stand as a beautiful affirmation. A goodbye. That's not so much goodbye as See you soon.



02:54

The party by Jason Shinder. And that's how it is. Everyone's standing up from the big silence of the table with their glasses of certainty and plates of forgiveness. And walking into the purple kitchen. Everyone leaning away from the gas stove. Murray blows on at the very edge of the breaking Blue Orange lunging forward flames to warm another pot of coffee while the dishes pile up in the sink. Perfect as a pyramid. Ah, says Donna closing our eyes and leaning on Nick's shoulders as he drives the soft blade of the knife through the glittering dark of the leftover chocolate birthday cake. That's it. That's how it is. Everyone's standing around as if just out of the pool, drying off, standing around. That's it standing, talking, shuffling back and forth on the deck of the present before the boat slowly pulls away into the future. Because it hurts to say goodbye to pull your body out of the warm water to step out of the pocket of safety, clinging to what you knew or what you thought you knew about yourself and others. That's how it is. That's it. throwing your jacket over your shoulders like a towel and saying goodbye Victoria. Goodbye, Sophie. Goodbye, Lily. Goodbye, sweetie. Take care be well. Hang in there. See you soon.



04:36

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