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00:06

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

00:23

What's that old saying? history is told by the victors. The first time I heard it, it struck me as pure revelation. I'd never before thought that history, which I'd always considered fact, was actually subjective. And moreover, that it was subject to retelling and reinterpretation. Now, such a perspective feels like common sense. But I'm inclined to believe there might be a problem and seeking to place the many human lives that have shaped this planet's history into just two categories, winners and losers. I know what personal havoc it can wreak, for example, to try and apply these categories to oneself. I know how hurtful it can feel when it is clear that others to seek to apply these categories to you. That havoc and that hurt, are what I hear throwing away in the rhythmic lines of today's poem, losers by London based poet Jay Bernard. Losers by Jay Bernard. We losers are winning. Now that the losers have lost. The moaning is getting annoying. Let's get back to the winning the thing that we won when the losers were kneeling and begging before they came with their losing and coming to us with the cost. The loser it is the riper it is for the losing my sorrow lets loose on the nation opens its arms to the weeping a basket of beans for the wounded nappies and sugar and fishcakes and coupons are paving the road for the moving we winners, with winners and losers out there with their losing, to lose and to lose, to be last in the lotto of loss. I send my sorrow to mingle with yours, to meet at the pub and lessen the pain of your losing. It's the only question we ask, Will anyone lessen the losing? Will anyone lessen the loss? You can't make the boss listen to us. The boss never spends lunchtime with us. Only when profit and cost and money or money or us comes into the balance and toss of a coin is enough. I have school, but I don't have a house. My mother's confused as to how I can shout the answers to mastermind. But nothing is working out. The English have won in the lotto of life. Aren't we all

English now? This coast is great because our costs were in it. Our passport as good as it got. Now someone else wins the lot. You're either or neither or not. There's no middle ground. There's no way around and some of us gave all we got get lost with your truth and your news, which never speaks for our lot. We lessen the loss with a curry of pint and a curry for mommy who can't understand all the fuss. She can't understand why we must. Back in her day, it wouldn't have stood back when the great and the good could chill a nation to frost could ration and batter and murder the young and never be seen to have lost. I try to ensure I can always recall the particular moment we lost. It slips through my fingers at most. Another another the memory conjured and lost, losing and losing and loss never recouping the cost. The slow down is a production of American public media in partnership with the Poetry Foundation. To get a poem delivered to you daily, go to slowdownshow.org and sign up for our newsletter. Follow the slow down on Instagram and Twitter at [slowdownshow](https://www.instagram.com/slowdownshow)