

theslowdown_20191217_20191217_128

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

dictionary, poem, words, speaks, sterling, claims, endangered animals, dora, pleads, atticus, frederick douglass, abolitionist, line, cures, sale, subtraction, collects, slow, torn, malik

00:06

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

00:22

My youngest child collects words. He gets them from conversation, movies, but mostly from books, storybooks, as well as dictionaries and children's encyclopedias. I'm not sure they make encyclopedias for anyone other than children these days, but we have a number of such books, the Encyclopedia of endangered animals, timelines of everything, the children's illustrated dictionary. My son Sterling is like those kids you hear about who pour over the dictionary on the regular just for fun. I'm struck by the vocabulary that comes out of him sometimes. Last year in kindergarten. When they changed up his classroom bulletin board, he declared, I'm dumbfounded. at bedtime. He goes through some of the words and concepts he has collected during the day. You have to be scared to be brave. Atticus, I just found out about houseboats. What is a duo a. That last one was confusing, because he pronounced the word duet, as if he were speaking French. Do a dad Sterling asked one Sunday afternoon out of the blue. What's a Shiv? How is it used? I love watching Sterling as he comes into contact with the world through words. It pleases me to see him puzzling over and parsing his thoughts and experiences in this way. I think of the abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass, who showed us in his autobiography, narrative of the life that language is a source not only of immense insight and pleasure, but also a key to freedom. Today's poem is a sale as sale. ales as by Dora Malik, in each line of the poem, a statement is made and then the very same letters are reconfigured. So that something else can be said. Post becomes stop. Claims curse becomes claims cures, reading the poem aloud. I feel a little like one of the witches in Macbeth who speaks nonsense and ends up making sense. Yes, words allow us to say what we mean. But there's a startling magic to the way words also guide us toward a better understanding of what it is we mean to say. A sale as sale. ales as by Dora Malik, I

task ask it as sign sings post, stop bleeds past pleads best are nil fetters in four letters, claims
curse claims, cures, tries writes tires, I rest so after hopes test step so to the fears in a red address,
redress and aid after my fashions say offers in math in simple subtraction and traction sub symbol
for like minds, skid line from my you're all mines. No. Yes, more may I? Alas, no. Also and oh bit
and and better torn at bite and be the never, and so on, non on hand, averts real day an end
wrote into it or thank your God or do one in and take your tight turn already. The slow down is a
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