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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

feel, wedding, poem, marriage, plates, heirloom, husband, dyeing, ongoing conversation, kitchen, floated, lauren, clark, tuxedos, tinge, dreamlike, sleigh, unbroken, ran, understudy

00:06

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

00:22

My husband and I went to a wedding last night. And this morning, we pulled out our own wedding album and reminisced happily about that day, we gathered with the people closest to us, including our daughter, who was not yet two years old, and who ran down the aisle to join us at the altar. Just as we were completing our vows. I still don't quite know how to describe the way my wedding day felt. I was elated, grateful to have found the love of my life, bolstered by family and dear friends. My parents, both deceased seemed to be there with us in spirit. their absence was poignant. But their presence felt large to and brought a layer of sorrow tinge joy, that was deep, sweet and complex. I sensed that my entire life and my husband's had been leading each of us all along to one another. We were only together because of the many gifts and losses, triumphs and mistakes we'd each lived through, and been changed by. And perhaps it couldn't have been any other way. I feel a similar mix of emotions running through today's poem, heirloom by Lauren Clark. At the center of the poem is a happy union, to people sharing a home and a life. It feels new and exciting the way the first days of a marriage feel dreamlike and unreal. The way I imagined an understudy must feel on the occasion of being thrust into the production's lead role. I hear many people describe marriage as difficult. I rather think it's occasional challenges reward you with a feeling of earned growth. Marriage feels like an ongoing conversation, a party in countless acts a secret in plain sight. I feel that being married to my husband has even somehow brought me closer to my own parents, Whose marriage makes a different and clearer kind of sense to me now than it did when they were alive. Maybe Love is the heirloom of the poems title. Something we build slowly and then pass down.

02:53

heirloom by Lauren Clark.

02:57

A trembling between the windows in the kitchen we called hours in which we placed the plates carefully. We said the plates could stay in our house. We spoke with our tongues which touched at night. The only matter was what had we had with own eyes seen seen peppers at market. Then scar usually hidden by clothing. downstairs neighbor moving in scene, loving another person so much that you also love every single other thing you touch. The dishes shook like leaves floated downriver, days to washing clothes in the kitchen, underwear in the laundry like a bell in the head. The bed, which creaked like a sleigh in snow, and the small piano and the quiet dyeing of blood, and the unbroken plates. Tomato after green tomato from the farm up the street, bloomed red and did beat in time. And every day was the first and also the last. And in my hometown. My friends were all wearing tuxedos to each other's weddings, licking icing from roses, a sweetness which sang the song of their remembered bodies aging under all that formal cloth. I don't mean to sound perverse. It was beautiful, if unnecessary. The slowdown is a production of American public media in partnership with the Poetry Foundation.