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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

moving, sister, blood, taught, family, visible, unaided eye, dark haired, thick, tanker truck, electric fence, mix, beatty, shape, arsonist, sea, road, water, today, stabbed

00:06

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

00:23

Family shapes us in such an indelible ways and family is many things. Blood is one, a kinship, embedded in the very code of our genes and visible to the unaided eye. But family is more than that. There are relationships that transcend blood and their ability to shape or define who we are. Occasionally, I noticed the way my hands move as I speak, how my chin lifts and laughter, and it's unmistakable. I'm being inhabited by the lingering spirit of my college roommate. Something of her has been wired into my very self, after all those years living together and confiding in one another. Today's poem chronicles the powerful connection between sisters whose bond is not built of blood, but emphatic experience. Sister as moving object by Jan Beatty, my sister is moving in me again, with her long arms and legs. Moving to tell me she's still here inside my body, along with fireballs, free roaming breath. Some days, she's a tanker truck, magnetic gleaming down my highways, some days an ocean liner splitting the dark waters. Today, my sister's particular beauty rocks the house to 1965 wearing pink pink caked on lipstick, tight pants, teased up and Margaret hair could have been anyone's sister and was adopted from another place she raised me up, taught me the necessary things how to mix water with bourbon in the picture frame bar. How to mix the real and the Unreal and make it glisten. Sea of submerged heartache. Great blanket of sea sea mount swept back from the GI Oh to the springboard sluice. Rail bed heart of Copperfield night shade when she hid her arsonist boyfriend in the basement closet when the cops came looking for him. She taught me the power of a lie. No, I haven't seen him No Not since yesterday. She taught me to be visible. Then follow the circle down. ball bearings. Axe handles, fields of snakes. Hotspur of escape when she ran downstairs to tip him off. Now, through the backyards they won't look there. She gave and gave early lessons in desire. Her and her dark

haired muscle boy on the rock behind the shopping center. Me the lookout air thick with everything coming his thin t shirt. I watched their mouths torrential everything I wanted moving through them. Today, I named the lasting roads artery toll road road of disguise. She taught me imprisonment. Not being a rat. I took to the heat, like a dog to an electric fence. Don't go past the edge of the yard. Two girls blank from no beginnings and combat so tall. The only way to beat her was to scissor her between my thick legs and squeeze. Tonight, the house humming her particular beauty, lack of compromise. She grabbed the nail scissors stabbed me. See of the head thrown back. She later dancing to loud music said do it like this. Don't listen to what they tell you. See, we never shared blood. See.

04:48

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