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00:06

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

00:23

I wish I could say to everyone who lives with the fear of poetry, hey, relax, you don't always have to understand it. You can let it nudge you. Let it cause something to stir the sounds of words gliding along next to one another, the glimpse of an image, a face, an animal, something taking flight, describing poems in those terms, I'm seized suddenly, by the memory of music videos from the early 1980s, three minute visual vignettes, which sometimes attempted to tell stories, but were often just strings of images. I'm telling you, anyone who sat through hours of early MTV, should fear nothing, and YouTube. Are you kidding me? let's just be clear. The 21st century has let go of its attachment to sense we are officially post logic. What I mean is, I don't always understand the poems I admire. Sometimes, poems operate by a logic that eludes me the way dreams often do, with images that pierced me in some way, or voices that feel almost familiar. Sometimes, like a conversation with a curious stranger. A poem speaks to me in words, I know. But it leads me down paths that are startling and unfamiliar. Some poems seem to carry me away from my usual self. like today's poem, if you're going to look like a wolf, they have to love you more than they fear you by Abigail cebit, noi, which feels like a journey to the time of early mankind, a journey to the days when the rules that governed life were just being created. How would you tell the story of what it was like when the world was new? And more importantly, why does a story like that feel relevant now, as we enter a new decade? For me, the allure of imagining the deep past helps to soothe the sense that we are lost in the present, that we've made a mess of what was once the future, that we should really be trying to get back to a place where we can set things right, start a new if you could do that. If you could reestablish the terms we live by, what would they be? Would there be a division between humans and animals? Would there be predation? What about

money? Sometimes I think I'd like to go back and find a way to circumvent the creation of the internet. But we were talking about the very beginning. Who is there? Is it a dark time, the way we were taught to imagine the Middle Ages? Or is it something else? If you're going to look like a wolf, they have to love you more than they fear you. By Abigail cebit noi, the first deer had large teeth, and no horns, and we're not afraid. The first deer did not have enough fear for the men who needed them to survive. A woman decided to let the men eat. A grandmother decided her dear, she'll have horns and be afraid. Someone's mother decided the men shall eat and shall be feared. A man thought wolves should be used to call the herd and we who had been catching water dripping through stone in the homes we dug out of the earth. We licked our long teeth clean and set to work.

04:38

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