

# theslowdown\_20191219\_20191219\_128

Wed, 9/30 7:56PM 5:00

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

poem, stars, stardust, slow, universe, sentimentality, pico, cosmic, woodstock, fact, metaphor, heavenly bodies, hear, dust bunnies, sky, novelists, dampening, stellar, fundamental building blocks, song

00:06

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

00:23

Do you know the Joni Mitchell song, Woodstock? Every time I hear it, I get nostalgic for something I've never quite known. Maybe it's the caravan of young souls, making their way up to a rock festival during what seems from this moment in history, like a more innocent hopeful time. Maybe it's the bittersweet way, her pristine voice reminds us of our cosmic place.

01:30

We are Stardust, we are golden. And we've got to get ourselves back to the garden. The implication being that we fallen from our original place in creation. The first time I heard the song, I was a freshman at Harvard. And so maybe you'll forgive me if I admit to you now that I had no idea at the time that she was speaking in scientific fact, rather than metaphor, Stardust, billion year old carbon. It wasn't until my senior year, when I barely passed a class called matter in the universe that I learned we actually are made of the same cosmic stuff as stars, planets, everything in the universe, dust bunnies, Nebula, novelists, gas giants, all made of the same fundamental building blocks. As it turns out, some facts send you right back to the realm of metaphor. I like the way today's poem from the book length sequence nature poem by Tommy Pico moves comfortably between different notions of earthly and heavenly bodies from nature poem by Tommy Pico. When a star dies, it becomes any number of things like a black hole, or a documentary. The early universe of our skin was remarkably smooth. Now I stand in a rapidly dampening Christina agya Lera T. The first stars were born of a gravity, my ancestors, our sky is

really the only thing same for me as it was for them, which is a pretty stellar inheritance. I don't know how they made sense of that swell, how they survived long enough to make me and am sort of at war with sentimentality generally, but that absence of an answer yet, suggestion of meaning isn't ultimately that different from a poem. So I've started reading the stars, nothing is possible, until it happens like digesting sulfur instead of sunlight, or friends with benefits. poems were my scripture and the poet's my gods, but even Gods I mean, especially gods are subject to the artifice of humanity. I look up at the poem, all of them up there in the hot sky, and fall into the water, a stone. 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](http://slowdownshow.org) and sign up for our newsletter. Follow the slow down on Instagram and Twitter at [slowdownshow](https://www.instagram.com/slowdownshow)