

# 20190312\_theslowdown\_20190312\_128

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

light, poem, poet laureate, quicken, head, fleeting, south dakota state, days, shuttering, lee, lain, transpire, rora, american public, harried, cats, time lapse video, feel, flux, leaving

00:05

I'm us Poet Laureate, Tracy k Smith. And this is the slow down.

00:23

If you could sit perfectly still, and watch all the many things of the world moving around before you, you'd feel a constant all the way a time lapse video captures in just a few moments, the kind of change that takes weeks or months to transpire. And wow, look at all that's happening. And it seems strange, impossible even that you should be blind most all of the time to so much flux. So much unceasing transformation. Sometimes, you get lucky, and you notice things, you find that your eyes have become receptive to what is otherwise invisible. A trick of morning light reveals an elaborate spider's web, or you glance up at just the right moment and lock eyes with a tiny Hummingbird or walking the dog in the morning, son. You feel not separate from the trees and the grass and the wind, but somehow perceived by them. It's an instance inkling, a certainty that's gone before you've had time to describe it to yourself. But it plants something in you or causes something that has lain quiet within you for a long time to stir as if waking. That's what I feel sometimes when I read a poem that I'm being reminded of something I once knew something that has been waiting for me to remember and attend to it. It's certainly how I feel at reading today's poem. Ooh, Tsuboi by South Dakota State Poet Laureate, Lee and rora Pa. The title is a Japanese word meaning change or transience. And it's the fleeting transient things. The poem seems to quietly celebrate things that live in the changing of seasons, the waning of daylight, the onset of fleeting days, and long, cold nights. The poem builds a strong sense of the attentiveness and the immense desire you can feel for light and warmth, when the season for those things has just about run its course. And it reminds me of other things that don't last forever and that are precious for that very reason. Ooh, Tsuboi by Lee and rora Pa. morning light sift through the window later. More tentatively. It takes its time pooling and accumulating in hot buttery squares on the floor. Or

the cats love to dip and roll themselves as if they were succulent pieces of lobster. Night come shuttering down more quickly. The band of light that wraps around each day, like a wide bright ribbon is shrinking. The way a favorite shirt shrinks in the dryer, leaving the days wrists and hips uncovered. A red headed woodpecker runs up then down a wooden column on my front porch with splayed agile feet. Periodically, it stops to tap head thrumming shiny blur like a sewing machine bobbin the cats nudge the curtains aside with their heads and stare in the evening. Lacy insects with bodies the color of green apples quiver around the windows, a shiver of filigree drawn to the light inside things Quicken. The geraniums and dahlias burn their colors into the air. more brightly birds hurry in harried twittering conferences, and I think reckless thoughts things Quicken. Why do I always love the light the most only at the moment of its leaving.

04:42

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