

# theslowdown\_20200402\_20200402\_128

📅 Wed, 9/30 8:13PM ⌚ 5:00

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

kahless, life, voice, rumors, maria, couture gowns, opera, suffered, deflects, singer, slanting, tune, plums, hear, larger, interview, moments, breathless, deftly, slowdown

00:06

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

00:17

As someone who can't carry a tune, I often think about the joy I feel if only I could express myself in song. If only I could unlock the sensation of time and space by filling the air with poignant and irrepressible music. Sometimes, I wonder why so many of the world's legendary singers, from rock to blues to opera, have suffered so profoundly in their private lives. from Amy Winehouse, to Whitney Houston to Nina Simone. What is it about the voice as a vehicle for expression? What is the gift of song exact of the singer? I've spent part of this evening listening to interviews with opera legend Maria kahless. how skilled GE was at deflecting questions about her famous temper about the drama she was reported to have stirred up in her private and professional lives. deftly, she deflects the intrusion of questions about her love life, her divorce, her famous firing from the mat. She laughs softly at the thought of the rumors. She employs the pronoun one, pushing each speculation farther from her actual person. There is nothing humble about her couture gowns, her eyes rimmed and dark shadow, her hair piled high atop her head. And yet, in these moments, she projects the image of herself as an ordinary woman like any other if ordinary women were besieged by rumors and intrigue, and a ruthless greedy press kahless was a remarkable interview subject, but here she is doing what she did best.

02:33

Today's poem celebrates the larger than life myth of Maria kahless a myth kahless herself wielded and at times struggle to escape. reading it, I'm reminded how helpful it is for the rest of us to have recourse to someone mythic and larger than life, someone upon whom we can project our own

huge and hard to handle feelings and desires. In the house of the voice of Maria kahless, by Stephen orlin. In the house of the voice of Maria kahless, we hear the baby's cries, and the after supper rattle of silverware, and three clock's ticking to different tunes and right plums sleeping in their chipped bowl, and traffic sounds dissecting the avenues outside. We hear like water pouring over time itself, the pure distillate arias of the numerous pampered queens who have rained, and the working girls who have suffered the envious knives and the breathless brides with their horned helmets, who have fallen in love and gone crazy or fallen in love, and died on the grand stage at their appointed moments.

04:06

Who will sing of them now?

04:10

Maria kahless is dead. Although the full lips and the slanting eyes and flared nostrils of her voice resurrect dramas we are able to imagine in this parlor on evenings like this one, adding some color, adding some order of whom it was sad. She could imagine almost anything and give voice to it.

04:44

The slowdown is a production of American public media in partnership with the Poetry Foundation.