

# 20201028 Episode SD

📅 Thu, 10/22 2:56PM ⌚ 5:00

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

bodies, live, logic, faces, expiation, guilt, duplicity, woman, manliness, owner, national endowment, pay, midwestern, dawes, question, bludgeoning, familiar, westerners, true, plantation



00:06

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



00:22

Once, not by choice, I stayed at a Georgia plantation. What have we done to deserve all this? said the owner One morning, spreading her arms to a glorious sunny day. She was a descendant of the estate's original owners. Looking up at all the centuries old trees, I sensed that the land could tell us more than anyone would like to hear.



00:56

Today's poem is before the riot by Kwame Dawes. But someone will have to pay for all the innocent blood. Bob Marley, we end on the dreary trudge, the frontier begins 100 years later, almost to a woman says in the way of appeasement. Perhaps it is true that for us to live so well, some of them had to die. The question suggested by the nervous lift in inflection at the end of phrase, and who is this us who have lived so well? who are living so well? And how well so that there is a peculiar justification, a terrible logic, and it is a haunting confession, buried deep inside the book, though, in truth, there's no question there. This is its own duplicity. This questioning this effortless way of speaking the tragic. There has been blood, so much blood and the rituals of bludgeoning of rust tanned white men, cliched Westerners, hunters, the stereotypes, the killers of vermin rabbits under wheel of trucks, the people she knows intimately, like a daughter knows her father knows her brothers knows the scent of scotch on her grandfather's breath. The comfort of their manliness stoic is stone, they will kill as easily as threaten even the softer bodies of their

women. It is a logical equation, a management of ethics and who are the dead, the slaughtered and the erased tribes and tribes whose faces I do not know. Though I know that the logic of this pragmatism, this expiation of guilt, but the embrace of guilt, as a kind of penance is familiar. And the faces of those bloodshot eyes, skins chalky with deprivation, the weary look of slaves. Those faces are as familiar as the panting bodies of the football team strewn on the wide grass, undressed in the heat, sweating, bodies broken after pleasure. The familiar look of black bodies coffered by desire and violence, familiar as this and that saying the Darwinian logic. Perhaps it is true, that for us to live so well. Some of them had to die. offered in the soft voice of a Midwestern woman who never rushes her words, who carries in her throat, the secret to receiving mercy, a kind of forgiveness and expiation of guilt, who we count among those and whose mouths ice couldn't melt. Mel's of tender duplicity, perhaps, perhaps for us to live as we do. And by this I mean we who contemplate anger and bombs and chance today. Perhaps it's true that someone will have to pay as we say.



04:39

The slow down is a production of American public media in partnership with the Poetry Foundation. This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts on the web@arts.gov