

# theslowdown\_20200727\_20200727\_128

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

garden, indiscriminate, poem, tall, neighbor, pity, working, trees, slow, planted, scrub jays, beautiful, dug, seed, barbary, orchids, bees, longer, american public, sparrows

00:06

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

00:23

I look out the windows at trees, maple, pine, Cypress, cherry, and something with smooth gray bark and waxy flowers, rhododendrons and tall laurels and all the ground coverings and shrubs, the names of which I never learned. I wish I could say I'd dug and anchored and padded them into place, or that I spent mornings and evenings in the piece of the garden tending to them. But the truth is most were here before we arrived, all the rest were planted at our request by the kind of man who keeps everything alive. There's a beautiful combination of joy and reverence and freedom that follows him as he works. He understands the earth the way my father did, who filled our home with orchids and violets and planted tall fruit bearing trees from seeds. Even if I don't know how to attend it, even if I can't name half of what it contains. I believe I can still love this garden and call it my own. Today's poem is happiness by Paisley, ragdoll. I have been taught never to brag, but now I cannot help that. I keep a beautiful garden all abundance indiscriminate, pulling itself from the stubborn Earth. Does it offend you to watch me working in it? touching my hands to the greening tips or tearing the yellow stocks back. So while the living and the dead both snap off in my hands, the neighbor with his stuttering fingers, the neighbor with his broken love. Each comes up my drive to receive his pitying accustomed constellations watches me work in silence a while, rises in anger walks back. Does it offend them to watch me not mourning with them? But working fitfully? fruitlessly working the way the bees work, which is to say by instinct alone, which looks like pleasure. I can stand for hours among the sweet Narcissus silent as a point of bone. I can wait longer than sadness. I can wait longer than your grief. It is such a small thing to be proud of a garden. today. There were scrub Jays quail, a woodpecker knocking at the white and black shapes of trees and someone's lost rabbits scratching under the Barbary is it

indiscriminate? Should it shrink back with her an expert eight Should I to not be loved. It is only a little time, a little space. Why not watch the grasses take up their colors in a rush like a stream of kerosene being lit. If I could not have made this garden beautiful. I wouldn't understand your suffering nor care for each the same inflamed way. I would have to stay only like the bees beyond consciousness. Beyond self reproach. Fingers dug down hard into stone and growing nothing. There is no end to ego with its Museum of disappointments. I want to take my neighbors into the garden and show them here is consolation. Here is your pity. Look how much seed it drops around the sparrows as they fight. It lives alongside their misery. It glows each evening with a violent light.

04:36

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