

theslowdown_20200721_20200721_128

📅 Wed, 9/30 8:37PM ⌚ 5:00

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

lie, lion, poem, grow, rage, philip levine, feed, poet, writing, detroit, city, slow, restorative justice, sweet, car, stumps, baring, most potent, burlap sacks, writer

00:06

I'm Tracy K.

00:07

Smith,

00:08

and this is the slow down.

00:19

I'm writing this episode, during a time when American democracy seems to be genuinely imperiled. I am writing from feelings of fear and rage,

00:33

and from a deep sense of conviction

00:36

that Black Lives Matter, and that the work ahead slow and difficult as it may yet proved to be, is that of restorative justice. Today's poem is Philip Levine's. They feed they lie in Britain in 1968. When the poet returned to his home city of Detroit, after the city's 1967 uprising, of the poem, Levine has stated, quote, it is, I believe, the most potent expression of rage I have written rage at

my government for the two racial wars, we were then fighting one in the heart of our cities, against our urban poor, the other in Asia, against a people determined to decide their own fate. The poem was written one year after what in Detroit, is still called the Great rebellion. Although the press then and now titled it a race riot, I had recently revisited the city of my birth, and for the first time I saw myself in the now ruined neighborhoods of my growing up, not as the rebel poet, but as what I was middle aged, middle class, and as one writer of the time would have put it, part of the problem, out of a dream, and out of the great storm of my emotions, the poem was born. They feed the lion, by Philip Levine.

02:22

Out of burlap sacks,

02:24

out of baring butter, out of black bean and wet slate bred, out of the acids of rage, the candor of tar, out of creosote, gasoline, drive shafts, wooden dollies, they lion grow out of the gray hills of industrial barns, out of rain, out of bus ride, West Virginia to kiss my ass. Out of buried Auntie's mother's hardening like pounded stumps, out of stumps, out of the bones need to sharpen and the muscles to stretch, they lion grow. Earth is eating trees, fence posts, gutted cars, Earth is calling in her little ones, come home, come home, from pig balls, from the ferocity of pig driven to holiness, from the furred ear and the full gel, come the repose of the hung belly, from the purpose they lion

03:41

grow.

03:42

From the sweet glues of the trotters come the sweet kinks of the fist, from the full flower of the hams, the thorax of caves, from bow down, come, rise up, come the lion, from the reeds of shovels, the grained arm, the poles, the hands, they lie and grow from my five arms, and all my hands, from all my white sins forgiven.

04:17

They feed

04:19

from my car passing under the stars. They lie in from my children inherit, from the oak turned to a wall. They lie in from the sack, and they barely opened and all that was hidden, burning on the oil stained Earth. They feed, they lie in and he comes.

04:50

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