

20201016 Episode SD

📅 Thu, 10/8 5:10PM ⌚ 5:00

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

story, draws, father, stunned, calm, naming ceremony, whittled, unexpected events, redder, american public, inception, regrets, retelling, lives, rang, flicking, picture, crescent moon, loss, slow



00:06

I'm Tracy K. Smith.



00:08

And this is the



00:10

slow down.



00:23

Has anyone ever said to you, calm down? Tell me exactly what happened. Because when unexpected events break into our lives, especially if they're harrowing, we aren't always able to name what has taken place. Calm down,



00:42

breathe. Start from the beginning.



00:46

What is the beginning of the story of loss?



00:50

Is it



00:52

I missed the first two calls because I was out with friends. There was someone at the party who interested me. I stayed out later than I should have hoping something might bring the two of us together. I was just getting into bed when the phone rang again. I thought it was odd for my father to call me at such an hour. Then I understood to worry. What about those times when you're there when everything happens? Only You're too stunned to put the pieces together to form a narrative. When does the story of what happened to begin, in a case like that, a day later, in the quiet of after the fact when you shed the first tears, or later still, when reflection and retrospect finally allow you to recount the story for a friend. One of the reasons writers write is to bring structure and sense to the chaos of feelings, reactions, regrets and impressions, to sit there even years later, putting words into sentences, sentences into scenes, telling it in an order that gives it shape and meaning laying it down on the page, so as to claim



02:15

authority over it.



02:18

Sometimes, telling what happened in whatever way you can, is a means of lightening your burden. It summons others to help you bear the weight of your own story, so that you might finally get out from under it. Today's poem is naming ceremony by have fiza gatter My father who spends most of his days painting pictures, says coming home to my mother stroking out was like walking in on an affair. Bending he demonstrates how an aneurism hugged her to her knees. Over and over. My father draws a loss so big, it is itself an inception, a story he knows better than the day his daughters were born. Every retelling different bluer than redder. His memory bruising the neck of whomever he can will to listen. His heart is strong. He has the receipts, a scar on his breast that I've cleaned like a smudge on a window. Over and over. My father draws me a picture of the crescent moon fish choking her hospital room. He loses the story for the pleasure of finding it. His tongue the builder of a maze. I can tell you, our best days weren't glad. He's a history whittled

down to this single story. In my version, when her mind blue boys I barely knew played by root cans of Papst crushed against their shoulders, white balls flicking into krimson solo cups, the knight lost to the draw of a far gone Gurney.



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