

The Slowdown - 442 - Foerster

Thu, 10/15 2:16PM 5:00

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

grandma, zetas, road, overgrown, cedar, grassy, bent, hay bales, damaging, footprints, derailed, white, grass, home, left, deep ruts, untended, lesions, divergent, history



00:06

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



00:22

History is a worn path. Deep ruts eaten into Earth make up a road. But there are additional routes, footprints, and wheel grooves and grassy straits few have traveled. The Myth of a central history of America is damaging to those whose stories have been left untended, overgrown, and it is damaging for those who believe the one heavily trafficked road is the only road. It has become clear to me that the work of survival for this fraught nation is the work of stopping to listen to the many divergent narratives of America.



01:11

Today's poem is leaving Tulsa by Jennifer Elise forester



01:19

for ko Seta.



01:22

Once there were coyotes Cardinals in the cedar, you could cure amnesia with the trees of our back 40 ones. I drowned in a monsoon of frogs. Grandma said it was a good thing. A

promise for a good crop. Grandma's perfect tomatoes, squash. She taught us to shuck corn laughing never spoke about her childhood or the faces in gingerbread tins stacked in the closet. She was covered in a quilt the creek way. But I don't know this kind of burial. vanishing toads thinning pecan groves, peach trees choked by poms, new neighbors tossing clipped grass over our fence line. griping to the city of our overgrown fields. Grandma fell in love with a truck driver grew watermelons by the pond on our Indian allotment took us fishing for dragonflies. When the bulldozers came with their documents from the city and a truckload of pipelines. Her shotgun was already loaded. Under the bent chest not the well were co Zetas husband hid his whiskey buried beneath roots her bundle of beads. They tell the story of our family, co Zetas land flattened to a parking lot. Grandma potted a cedar sapling I could take on the road for luck. She used the bark for heart lesions doctors couldn't explain to her. They were maps, traces of home the Milky Way where she's going, she said after the funeral. I stowed her jewelry in the ground promised to return when the rivers rose on the grassy plane behind the house one buffalo remains along the highways gravel pits, sunflowers stand in dense rows. telephone poles crook into the layered sky, a Crow's beak broken by a windmills blade. It is then I understand my grandmother. When they see open land, they only know to take it. I understand how to walk among hay bales looking for turtle shells. How to Sing over the groan of the county road widening to four lanes. I understand how to keep from looking up. small planes trail overhead as I kneel in the Johnson grass combing away footprints up here, parallel to the median with a VISTA of mesas weavings. The sky a belt of blue and white beadwork, I see are hundred and 60 acres stamped on God's forsaken country. A roof blown off a shed beams like bent matchsticks, a drove of white cows making their home and a derailed train car.



04:41

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