

20201007 Episode SD

Fri, 10/2 12:55PM 5:00

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

bed, sit, work, bedtime story, poem, sleep, part, slow, slats, receding, heavenward, bedding, accept, propped, national endowment, subversive, wanda, serenade, boundaries, fetal position



00:06

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



00:22

Not always, but often, I write these episodes in bed with pillows propped behind me and the lights off. It's usually after bedtime, or before the morning is supposed to begin. I'm tired. But I'm also comforted by the idea that the world is at rest, and that I am getting a bargain on an hour or two hours of bonus time. Yes, the larger part of me would rather be asleep. That's why I am not sitting at a desk, or on a couch or at a cold kitchen counter, which would give me no choice. But to accept that what I am doing is work. In the mess of bedding, I can listen to the quiet of my dogs sleep, and I can feel my own ease and rest nearby receding. Like I sometimes tiptoe out of my son's room after reading them to sleep.



01:25

I'll be honest, and say that I find myself doing more and more from bed these days. Anything that doesn't require my computer's video camera to be trained on me can be done sitting up in bed. Perhaps this is my trade off for accepting that I work too much. Please tell me that I'm not alone. In that regard. Please tell me that you too, are meeting deadlines and getting a jump on things, checking off tasks from your to do list, all while losing sense of the boundaries that used to keep life from feeling like one big messy sprawl. Get getting out of bed to do this work elsewhere. even getting out of bed to make a cup of coffee that I then bring with me back to bed is to accept that my downtime. My

respite is over. And I'm not ready to do that just yet.



02:27

Today's poem is bedtime story by Wanda Coleman. I recognize the way its speaker tries and fails to resist the tug. The promise the sweet serenade of her bed.



02:42

bedtime story by Wanda Coleman



02:47

bed calls. I sit in the dark in the living room trying to ignore them in the morning, especially Sunday mornings. It will not let me up. You must sleep longer. It says facing south. The bed makes me lay heavenward on my back. While I prefer a westerly fetal position facing the wall. The bed sucks me sideways into it when I sit down on it to put on my shoes. This persistence on its part forces me to dress in the bathroom where things are less subversive. The bed lumps up in anger springs popping out to scratch my dusky thighs. My little office sits in the alcove adjacent to the bed. It makes strange little size which distract me from my work sadistically I pull back the covers and put my typewriter on the sheet and turn it on. The bed complains that I'm difficult duty. It's slats are collapsing. It bitches when I blanket it with books and papers. It tells me it's made for blood and bone. Lately spiders, ants and roaches have invaded it searching for food.



04:13

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. To get a poem delivered to you daily, go to slow down show.org and sign up for our newsletter. And follow the slowdown on Instagram and Twitter at slow down show