

20201013 Episode SD

📅 Thu, 10/8 5:02PM ⌚ 5:00

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

woke, settle, thunderous, rise, tracy, reality, atticus, day, stampede, romani, mind, bed, chaotic, intricate, vivid dream, national endowment, desk chair, announce, fire, lai



00:06

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



00:23

Three days out of seven, I wake up to my son's thunderous footsteps, like a small Stampede down the hallway leading to my door. They storm in, and as I do on school days, raised my shades. It's morning time, the two of them announce, if my husband and I don't get up at once, Sterling will climb up onto the bed, dumping around to settle himself in like a mountain near setting up camp. And Atticus will swivel around in my desk chair, opening drawers and disturbing the piles of books and papers that rested neatly in place the night before. One day, I will surely miss this innocently chaotic routine.



01:11

But truth be told, this isn't my favorite way of starting the day. I prefer to be the first one to wake to open my eyes from some vivid dream. And let my mind return to the here and now to roll over on my side to settle into the reality of my physical body. And then to make the decision to rise.



01:36

There is a moment before my feet touch the floor. When I run through the day's work. What do I owe? Whom must I face? what is required of me that I can't afford to escape?

And then, like a sliver of sunlight on the horizon. I think maybe there is good news on its way. Maybe someone has written just to say hello. Maybe if I get out of bed right now. I can take in the early morning light and do something with the ideas taking shape in my mind.



02:11

Today's poem is Cara Jackson's I woke up and the day caught me



02:18

in its mouth like a strand of yarn. I am useful. The motivation for a scarf. Maybe some stitch started to be finished. I will make up someone's heat. I will be a fire so intricate. It can be worn. I woke up and the day called on me specifically through my name through the sky. The way children are thought up, trials pulled through the stars. I woke up and like anyone who wakes and asks why I checked my feet, rubbed the bones for their reality. I keep waking though I've asked for arrest, cornered the moon in the alley pond the dark to assume its place. And still I returned to that burning chin. honor that persistent candle. Because who will wake up if not me? Who will watch the day catch then if I am not the center of its tongue. One of the women who keep waking one of my mother who has asked for rest too, and her mother tucked into an endless slumber. I woke up and the day thanked me for coming so far. I know rest is a long walk from the sun. I know we've been up for so long. That sleep doesn't settle for my blood. Me daughter of the roosters song but when the day calls, I will answer to my name. claim it like a fire rushing toward living things. I will rise because there is someone praying for me to remain still.



04:10

The slowdown is a production of American public media in partnership with the Poetry Foundation.



04:21

This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts on the web@arts.gov the slow down is written by me Tracy k Smith. It is produced by Jennifer Lai, with Tracy Mumford. Our music is by Alexis quadrado. Engineering by Eric Romani and Veronica Rodriguez. Production helped by Susanna Sharpless Editing by Phyllis Fletcher.

