

# Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards\*

**Karen R. Long (00:10):**

Hello. I'm Karen Long. You're listening to The Asterisk\*, a production of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards. An asterisk is a reference mark indicating an omission. Today, we are figuring out some of the holes in our knowledge with poet Tracy K. Smith. She is a new Harvard professor and a two-term U.S. Poet Laureate. She won an Anisfield-Wolf Book Award in 2019 for "Wade in the Water." Presently the campus-wide read at Case Western Reserve University. Another U.S. Poet Laureate, Anisfield-Wolf juror Rita Dove, called "Wade in the Water" the best book she had read among hundreds that year. And Joyce Carol Oates called Smith's poems, "sharp etched as knife blades, swift deft, fleeting, and profound, yet suffused with sympathy like an impersonal and abiding love." Welcome, Professor Smith. Welcome.

**Tracy K. Smith (01:20):**

Thank you.

**Karen R. Long (01:21):**

I believe you have a poem for us today.

**Tracy K. Smith (01:25):**

I do. I thought I would share a newer poem, which is called, "We Feel Now A Largeness Coming On."

**Tracy K. Smith (01:33):**

"Being called all manner of things  
from the Dictionary of Shame—  
not English, not words, not heard,  
but worn, borne, carried, never spent—  
we feel now a largeness coming on,  
something passing into us. We know  
not in what source it was begun, but  
rapt, we watch it rise through our fallen,  
our slain, our millions dragged, chained.  
Like daylight setting leaves alight—  
green to gold to blinding white.  
Like a spirit caught. Flame-in-flesh.  
I watched a woman try to shake it, once,  
from her shoulders and hips. A wild  
annihilating fright. Other women  
formed a wall around her, holding back  
what clamored to rise. God. Devil.  
Ancestor. What Black bodies carry  
through your schools, your cities.  
Do you see how mighty you've made us,  
all these generations running?  
Every day steeling ourselves against it.  
Every day coaxing it back into coils.

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And all the while feeding it.  
And all the while loving it.”

**Karen R. Long (03:27):**

Thank you. Largeness...that feels born of the year we've been through.

**Tracy K. Smith (03:35):**

Yeah, I mean that and the other new poems in this forthcoming volume, "Such Color," emerge out of the summer of 2020 and the feelings of conviction, but also pain, you know, the dawning realization that so much that I thought somehow I would say from, is still there. You know, I think many of us came to feel that way. Nothing new happened in 2020, but it felt surprising, nonetheless.

**Karen R. Long (04:13):**

Last night you mentioned that as well, when you gave the convocation and you talked about history and this sense we comfort ourselves with that there's history, but a border of progress and the piercing of that border is what we are living through.

**Tracy K. Smith (04:35):**

Yeah. I think people who are attentive are always aware that that border is being pierced. But it's easy to be distracted by other things and by the allure of progress. And I think this year with so many of us held in place together watching the same video images, reading the same news and recognizing that the accumulation of trauma hasn't stopped. I think that was a point of reaffirmation for many of us of what we're convicted by and what we wanna seek to change.

**Karen R. Long (05:14):**

And what the alchemy of this poem accomplishes for me at least is there's a feeding and loving of the largeness. The strength is the paradox.

**Tracy K. Smith (05:30):**

Yeah, I think that's, you know, I write poems to get some glimmer of revelation from the feelings that I found myself, find myself, you know, caught up in and getting to that moment in the poem where the struggle and the burden alerts me to this amazing light. That was exciting. That was a gift in a way.

**Karen R. Long (05:53):**

I would say a gift to readers also. I want to comment with you on something that just the way you read feels braided through your body of work, which is this notion of slowness and slowing down and you even call your podcast "The Slow Down."

**Tracy K. Smith (06:17):**

Yeah. Well, life is fast. And I think that is a strategic component of all of the many things that are seeking to pull our attention away from what might be more urgent. And, you know, we give into that all the time. I do many, many times during the day, turn my attention to something fleeting and quick and, you

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know, exciting. But poetry for me is a way of touching base with what's real and abiding and, more than urgent. And in order to get into that space, I believe one has to slow down, create a kind of shield of quiet and listen in inwardly and outwardly. And as I was saying last night, listen in a courageous way. And I love that poetry can enter into that silent space and instruct, console and guide.

**Karen R. Long (07:23):**

It feels almost monastic, if that it's bumping up against spiritual practice to slow and to insist on slowness as a practice. I loved -- when "Wade in the Water" came out -- "Political Poem." And I read it to the staff. I loved it so much where I work and the last lines of that poem, which are about mowers in a Vermont field gesturing to one another and having a silent conversation, are about it lasting. You wished it could last forever, but I love how long it would last if it could last forever. And that felt hooked up for me to what we're talking about, but also sad in the way I don't know that you could write or would write "Political Poem" now.

**Tracy K. Smith (08:26):**

Hmm. Yeah, that poem is quite old. It's one of the oldest poems in the book and maybe the story of it is helpful. It was born as a poem that came out of a dream of myself reading a poem that I had written and saying, "That doesn't sound like me, that sounds like another poet." And then I woke up and said, let me try and claim this poem as my own. And I was in Vermont. And so that setting was not a metaphor for me. It was real. And I was imagining this encounter that, you know, in this day and age is impossible, but what if it weren't? And I published that poem as "The Mowers" not too long after it was written. And then I read at the Folger Shakespeare Library in December of 2016. I wanna say just before Obama's term was ending. And I recognized a different power in that poem. I felt I was in that space saying goodbye to a leader that I respect and love and knowing what was coming. And I realized, oh, this is a poem about politics. This is a poem about our willingness to engage with others, and that felt revelatory.

**Karen R. Long (09:47):**

So good to know that it was renamed. And I felt called just as the instrument with the staff to put my arms up with this poem. It made me think about last night and you began with gratitude and specifically acknowledging the community you were entering. And your last words last night were, "Thank you so much. Welcome." The power of those ideas together made me wonder if this is a practice you developed on your rounds as a U.S. Poet Laureate entering communities.

**Tracy K. Smith (10:31):**

I wish I had thought of that then. I think the feeling of being in a space where something is alive and well, and that precedes you is something that I came to recognize and kind of celebrate during that tour of rural communities. I wanted to acknowledge that though I was in some ways the occasion for the gathering, I was a guest and I was there to learn. I reminded myself of that. And I think that reminder comes with me. This is one of the first public events that I've done since the pandemic. And that feeling of being in a space, being privileged to enter a preexisting space was something that was palpable for me. But I do like the way that you frame that. And I like the idea that sometimes an outsider might welcome you to reenter the space in the community that you've long been a part of.

**Karen R. Long (11:34):**

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And not to wax too metaphorical, but it also twinges in this sense of our country apart and trying to knit together. And the act of proximity being so central to any kind of authentic reentry and knit.

**Tracy K. Smith (12:00):**

It's so interesting that we're in this paradox where all we want is to come back together physically. And all we can think about is our inability to come together psychically or politically. And I think in some large way, this is not an accident, right? We need to, all of us -- no matter how right we believe we are -- rethink what it means to belong to something and rethink what it means to make space for the belonging of others. And maybe that's a great kind of work to be mulling over as we, you know, are still held back from the kind of actual gathering that we all crave.

**Karen R. Long (12:44):**

It's such a counterintuitive notion because our discussions about...where do we park our rage? You know, no matter what faction we stand in, as opposed to where is the point that we enter? And I think that your title poem, for "Wade in the Water" goes right there. It feels like it's in the American canon already -- I love it so much. And it engendered in me a very practical question. And I wondered if it did in you? Because in this poem, a woman you haven't met says, "I love you" in a very specific context of the Geechee Gullah Ring Shouters. After, as you said, last night, we've been on a long, difficult journey of research. And so this poem has asked me to ask myself, if I can say that more often.

**Tracy K. Smith (13:51):**

Yeah. That experience was an education and a kind of healing in a way -- just not just of the immediate anger and resentment that all that history stirred up in me. But you know, of the difficulty of living as a human in the 21st century or in any century really, love is the answer. And so I started thinking, okay, what does it mean? It's easy to love the people that you like, but I think that it's a principle that we're here to reckon with beyond that little small circle of people that we find it easy to love. And so I'm asking myself, what can I see in another that could open up a capacity for that? It's hard right now and we're revealing our true selves in so many spaces. And it's made really clear what we don't like across those divides, but there's something bigger than that, you know, and this is where I find it possible to say: I know racial justice is right. I know that hate is wrong. And I know that what I'm arguing for politically, I wanna hold onto as just, but what about the space and a person who doesn't accept that, that I'm also being asked to honor in some way, right? That's where I get to do some of the struggling that I know all of us need to do. That's the site of conviction for me. And I think that part of the work of this time, if we really wanna take advantage of it, is to find that site, in each encounter in all of us. Right?

**Karen R. Long (15:53):**

So have you made it a practice to say "I love you" or something equivalent to people, even one circle out farther than your intimate circle?

**Tracy K. Smith (16:04):**

Well, I say "I love you" more to friends that I would never, though I feel it, feel safe saying it to. Like, oh, I don't wanna make someone uncomfortable. I say it more. This is a year in which I'm telling my friends

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that I love them. I haven't gotten that step farther to the enemy or the ideological enemy. But I hope that at some point I'm able to get there.

**Karen R. Long (16:35):**

The poem inspired me to try to say it more. And I said it to a woman I'd taken a hike with who I cherish, but she's more of an acquaintance, and I startled her. I said it at the end of the hike and I felt she received it as a bit of a transgression. So it's not without consequence, but all big things are with consequence.

**Tracy K. Smith (17:02):**

Yeah. And that transgression that she felt, I'm sure stuck with her and she pondered it, right? She got to a place where it could mean many things, one hopes, and that's perhaps a gift you gave to her, this option of saying, all right, what is love?

**Karen R. Long (17:20):**

And now we'll pause for a short break.

**Karen R. Long (17:22):**

The Asterisk\* is a project of the Cleveland Foundation to bring more readers and listeners into conversation with the best writers in English. In this case, recipients of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award. We'll now return to the conversation.

**Karen R. Long (17:48):**

So here we have in October, a new baby.

**Tracy K. Smith (17:51):**

Yes.

**Karen R. Long (17:51):**

"Such Color" — I'm holding up an advanced copy and just loving its heft because it's a collection-plus. And I want to start with the title. I'm fixated on the last words, because they're the last words of an old story, the last poem in "Wade in the Water." Is that proper to think that way?

**Tracy K. Smith (18:20):**

Yeah, absolutely. The poems, "An Old Story." Oh, that's so funny. The poem, "An Old Story," is one that I wrote as kind of like this myth. I wanted to create something adequate to the moment that could also be a guiding poem. We received so much myth and I think we should take it upon ourselves to generate the myths that our age requires. And I liked emphasizing in talking about that poem, that the color is people. It's us. It's an extension of the book's fixation upon race and what race is and has done in this country. The new poems in the book begin in that same space. And they're thinking about what race is doing and what we need to move through to something else. So it's really deliberate. A lot is deliberate in this book, the color scheme, the brown of the skin of the young child on the cover and the brown of the font.

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It's all trying to say, "This is what I'm thinking about. This is what we need to love in this country." Which many of us don't.

**Karen R. Long (19:44):**

You found the Gordon Parks photo, which gives me chills, from 1963. Gordon Parks has an Anisfield-Wolf Book Award. And when I look at it, my first impression is beauty. And calm. This is a boy. He calls it "A Boy With June Bug." The boy is holding the bug on a string, on his forehead.

**Tracy K. Smith (20:13):**

Yeah, there's so much love in that image. Think about how children make little things, but this kid has very gently and lovingly tied a string to a bug. That's gotta be like a pet, right. Even for a day. And it's there on his forehead where his, you know, like the third eye should be, or is. And it's just such a beautiful image of trust and peace and, and belonging. This child is safe. He feels safe in this physical space. It's a beautiful, natural background for the photo. And I just wanted to honor that impulse, and him, and the conditions that made it possible for this day in his life to take place the way that it seems to have.

**Karen R. Long (21:06):**

It seems significant that his eyes are closed because you call us -- and called us last night -- to interiority. To taking care of the interior life and feeding it specifically with history. It makes the call to a very ahistorical people and to young people, which is an a-historical time of their lives. When they're in the act of shedding their original family unit. As a professor how do you work with that?

**Tracy K. Smith (21:48):**

Well, writing poetry urges someone to draw upon even that which they believe they've shed. So that's interesting, right? Young people, many of them are really new to college, bringing in memory, using the distance between where they are and where they've come from to return to sites of complexity. And that's really helpful sometimes, you know, with the safety of distance to go backward in your mind, and to kind of think things through differently than habit typically allows.

**Karen R. Long (22:28):**

Yes. I look at those years as so important to the formation of identities and such a privilege to have Anisfield-Wolf books in those hands, as identities are information. So it's especially delightful to think of 1,600 students here in Cleveland, from 79 countries, holding "Wade in the Water."

**Tracy K. Smith (22:55):**

Yeah. I feel very grateful and I hope that it offers them touchstones in this country's history that they might have learned quickly or not at all as things that they can turn to -- and find something new and useful within, right. These facts, these events, these perspectives, these transgressions are part of the material that we're still building upon.

**Karen R. Long (23:30):**

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Right. And you take all the varnish off with the letters in "Wade in the Water" from people who wrote Abraham Lincoln after the fighting stopped. Can you talk a little bit about that and how you think about them now?

**Tracy K. Smith (23:48):**

Yeah. That's another one of the oldest poems in the book. And it arose out of an invitation from the National Portrait Gallery to write a Civil War poem. And I at first recoiled from the invitation, because I just have a natural instinct, a distaste, for the way the Civil War is often discussed. You know, reenactments and what always has struck me as a disingenuous attempt to say that it was not about slavery. But I said, okay, I want to write a poem. And I want to learn something different about this conflict and finding those primary sources, the letters and the deposition statements reminded me there were people and lives and urgencies whose investment in that conflict were not theoretical. There's one man, who is writing to Lincoln and saying I'm willing to sacrifice my son for the cause of freedom and humanity. And I realized, oh, those are, those are literal terms for him, for him and his family and, and thousands of people, if not millions of people. And I was in. I was invested, I could, I often say I could feel that the wind off of the breath of these letters still. They didn't feel historic. They didn't feel stilted. They felt alive and in progress and in a way they are.

**Karen R. Long (25:18):**

Where did you find them?

**Tracy K. Smith (25:21):**

I found them in two books. One is "Families and Freedom." I'll have to look at the note to give you the authors names. Let me do that.

**Karen R. Long (25:30):**

I am thinking about a question I sometimes get on my rounds: isn't Anisfield-Wolf making matters worse? And I think the question when that comes up -- because you know more than one person who's volunteered into the space holds the question. And I say, "Thank you for asking, there's a one-word answer to your question. And that's 'history.'" And every year we honor a book of history and every year we invite you to think anew.

**Tracy K. Smith (25:52):**

Wow, yeah -- that's part of our dialogue right now, right? Like, why are you stirring this up?

**Karen R. Long (26:13):**

It's so contested.

**Tracy K. Smith (26:15):**

Yeah.

**Karen R. Long (26:15):**

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Which feels very connected to what you said at the top about reflecting on what the summer of 2020 required of us.

**Tracy K. Smith (26:25):**

We've gotten so used to it in this country to just put a bandaid on it and move on and say it's behind us because we've turned our back on it. And this is that fastness that I was talking about earlier. Right? Part of it is a distraction and a deliberate one from what could actually be called, called into account. I think, and I know you know this. There's a way of tending to the past that is not simply riling folks up, but saying, okay, there's a wound here. And if we want to actually fix it, we've gotta diagnose it. We've gotta figure out what it's built of and, and how it touches all of us and how we can each in our different ways make it right.

**Karen R. Long (27:16):**

And in integrating, I had an old white man say to me, which I've held so close, that we all have our identities and we stand in them, but our identities include what we've longed to become as a nation.

**Tracy K. Smith (27:33):**

I love that. That's beautiful.

**Karen R. Long (27:36):**

So please let us know where we can find these letters.

**Tracy K. Smith (27:40):**

Okay. So the letters come from "Families and Freedom: A Documentary History of African-American Kinship in the Civil War Era." And that's edited by Ira Berlin and Leslie S. Rowland. And then the deposition statements that make up much of that poem as well, are from "Voices of Emancipation: Understanding Slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction through the U.S. Pension Bureau Files." And that's edited by Elizabeth Regosin and Donald R. Shaffer.

**Karen R. Long (28:16):**

Thank you. And I need to say Ira Berlin is also an Anisfield-Wolf winner. So from the group history to the personal history, it feels poignant to me that you, the undergraduate at Harvard, return to Harvard as a professor. Talk about that.

**Tracy K. Smith (28:41):**

It's a tremendous feeling. I'm still kind of moving gratefully within. I understand the degree to which Harvard gave me the tools and questions to become the person I've become. And I feel like I'm gonna get emotional talking about this, but I think I found a sense of calling and I found a point of access into the history of black people that had always made me feel fearful of feeling pain. As a child, growing up, even talking to my parents about their experience of growing up in the Jim Crow South, there were silences that I cleaved to out of fear of feeling pain. And so entering into the curriculum in African American studies there at that time, being a student of Skip Gates and others, gave me a way of feeling free to move around and listen and ask and discern all that had been distant and shadowy for me by choice, you

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know? And it also gave me access to African American literature that calls to me and invites me to want to find a voice. And so it's still, I've only, you know, been in the area now for a month. And so moving through campus, moving through the spaces, I feel the largeness of that, and it's a really beautiful feeling. I'm excited and grateful and humbled to be able to contribute to that experience and other experiences for students.

**Karen R. Long (30:29):**

You write so beautifully about that familial silence in "Ordinary Light," your memoir from 2015. And I think of you as that girl in Fairlawn, California...Fairfield, California connecting then to Harvard, but also connecting back through your poems and your travels with your poems, to that rural child, small town child on a military base, which is this own kind of culture that's suppressed. And it feels again like this fabulous integration, these levels of coming home.

**Tracy K. Smith (31:14):**

I mean, that's what, in lots of different ways, and each of us has a different vocabulary for it. I think that's what art invites us to do, right. To come home and to realize home is lots of things. It is the place we think of when we first hear that word and it's different regions within ourselves. And then home is a "large elsewhere" that we might be fearful of entering, but that we must somehow enter to be whole. And that's I think the miracle of language, the miracle of art, but lots of things get us to that, that realization.

**Karen R. Long (31:51):**

And the privilege of learning, learning through life and lifetime. So another element I'm thinking about you as a learner, is a milestone you reach next to when you turn 50. Talk about that.

**Tracy K. Smith (32:09):**

Oh yeah. I guess I've been thinking about it for a while. Right. Once I passed 45, I was thinking, oh, soon I'll be 50, whatever that is and means. I'm getting closer, and so now I kind of know, oh, this is me at 50. And I think I'm excited to get to know this person. You know, I'm excited to claim a feeling of power that's different from what I felt when I was in my thirties or even in the early part of my forties. I don't know what else it will mean, but I think there's another kind of charge that I'm willing to accept as well with my work. I think that the new poems in "Such Color" for me are about receiving that charge in a way. And in fact, the process of writing a lot of the new poems, which are thinking about race and ancestry and history and America, you know, I guess I've been writing about that for a while, but these poems have come into being differently. Part of my self care during the last difficult year was a meditation practice. And I'd always thought meditation was about clearing your mind and just being in silence. But what I encountered was what I genuinely believe is a kind of two-way dialogue, right? With lots of different things. And there's a rhythmic insistence in these poems that mimics part of that dialogue. And there are figures and visions and even like the notion of ancestors in these poems, because they feel literal to my experience of that dialogue. And it's not that I'm trying to persuade readers to enter into that exact space. But I'm really interested in what it could, what it could mean to be able to be in engagement with many different largenesses.

**Karen R. Long (34:31):**

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I just was thinking largenesses. It feels that poem you read us at the top arrived now. Not just because of what happened chronologically, but what is happening in your chronology. That you are becoming 50 and the tradition of elders is specific in your tradition.

**Tracy K. Smith (34:58):**

I did research, the trip I was alluding to when I was talking about "Wade in the Water" was actually research for an opera that I have been working on that will premiere next summer in Cincinnati. And it's called "Castor and Patience." And I visited the Sea Island communities. One of which, Sapelo Island, was really special. And the Hogs Hammock community, which is, many of these communities, which begin as communities of enslaved people. And then in Reconstruction, many of them were able to purchase land from the government and build homes and allow those communities to become autonomous. And they have survived against great encroachment by the government and others. Hogs Hammock has dwindled -- when I was there, it was, I think, 60 people. And I think it's, it's gotten smaller since then. People pass on and then other people leave. And there are lots of really awful circumstances like property taxes ballooning that make it impossible for some people to hold onto that land. So I spent time there and my collaborator, Greg Spears, and I were fortunate, blessed really to be able to spend some time with Cornelia Bailey, who was a matriarch and a defender of this community. And also a historian. She wrote a really beautiful memoir called "God, Dr. Buzzard, and the Bolito Man" that tells us her story and her family story. Sitting at her kitchen table several years ago now, before her passing obviously, she said, "You wanna write this story? You gotta talk to the ancestors. You got to look dressed like the ancestors. Seek them out, and they'll help you write this story. I can tell you what I can tell you, but it's a bigger story than that." And of course she is famous for having really delineated the ties between West African tradition and the very specific traditions and the community in the Sea Islands. And that sat with me for a long time. And I didn't really know what to do with it, but I loved hearing it from her. But I feel it that way now and I think you're reminding me of that.

**Karen R. Long (37:26):**

And last night you said of the ancestors, their masterpieces are their existence --

**Tracy K. Smith (37:34):**

Their survival.

**Karen R. Long (37:35):**

Their survival. Yes. Because all that we have is because they survived and all that they still give.

**Tracy K. Smith (37:48):**

Definitely. And I, you know, space, time continuum, I'm interested in that. I think they are still giving in a way, but of course the legacy is what we also refer to. And, you know, when you talk about the strategies of survival, the strategies of just keeping going, many of us are born into them in a way, right? There's a vocabulary that we inherit from our parents and grandparents and so on and so on. A way of looking at things and naming things and explaining things to ourselves. That's part of the legacy of their survival. And it's bigger than that too.

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**Karen R. Long (38:30):**

And of course you would be tuning into the language.

**Tracy K. Smith (38:35):**

The language is amazing. I feel like I really want to write a chapter or teach a class -- maybe both. One will help the other. But on the oracular nature of black vernacular language. Of course it's been talked about and theorized for generations, but I'm really interested in how it lives in poetry and in our day-to-day lives, the home language that many of us recognize.

**Karen R. Long (39:05):**

Last night, you read for us the Baton Rouge poem. And the second stanza is echoing around in my breastbone. This is "Unrest in Baton Rouge," and it's of course after the photo of Jonathan Bachman of the woman standing before the police, in her dress billowing. And the second stanza is a question:

**Karen R. Long (39:21):**

"Is it strange to say love is a language  
Few practice, but all, or near all speak?"

**Karen R. Long (39:48):**

Maybe it's my emotion in this conversation that feels connected.

**Tracy K. Smith (39:57):**

Yeah. I was thinking about that sense of receptive language and the sense of love is a choice, right? Something we can turn away from or that we can kind of, become beholden to in some way -- vehicles out of it. And I want to try and find as many different metaphors for understanding and holding onto that. And, you know, like you say, language is one of the first ones I turn to. But, there's a line I'm not gonna remember very well from Elizabeth Bishop's poem, "The Riverman," which is about someone who is being initiated into voodoo. And he's talking about all the steps of becoming kind of sanctified and the devotion and humility of that. And there's a moment where he says that he speaks the goddess's language, but only like a dog. He understands it, but he's never uttered a word. And, I wonder if that's how love is for many of us?

**Karen R. Long (41:17):**

The ineffable is coming more fully into your practice. So I thank you for that as someone who wants more of that. I also want the very practical and beautiful knowledge of what you're reading now.

**Tracy K. Smith (41:33):**

Hmm. Well, I was just rereading "The Fire Next Time." I have it in my bags here. I think many of us the world over have returned or returned to Baldwin in the last year and a half, and it's wild to me that where he left off as a writer, as a thinker, is exactly where we are right now. And, you know, he speaks so much about love and about what it means to get outside of the trappings, the things that normally contain love, like religion, which is, you know, where he reminds us full of anger and hatred. But he also

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talks about that really difficult love when he's writing to his nephew: you don't need to seek to be accepted by whites, but you're gonna have to accept them. And part of that is loving them as you would love a younger brother who you need to guide to recognize his failings. And this is the work that America doesn't wanna do, but this is the work that many of us who are willing, maybe need to accept and do different ways, right? This is the loving work of tending to some, someone who is deceived. And it's awful and it's painful and it's burdensome, but I think that's right where we are right now.

**Karen R. Long ([43:08](#)):**

It is. Thank you.

**Tracy K. Smith ([43:12](#)):**

Thank you.

**Karen R. Long ([43:13](#)):**

Thank you so much.

**Karen R. Long ([43:16](#)):**

The Asterisk\* is brought to you by the Cleveland Foundation. The executive producer is Alan Ashby with help from producer Tara Pringle Jefferson. Cleveland Public School students working with the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society wrote and performed our original score. I'm Karen Long, manager of the prizes. Visit [Anisfield-Wolf.org](http://Anisfield-Wolf.org) to learn more on the history of the award, about previous winners, and upcoming events. And thank you for listening.