

## Close Talking Episode #120

**"In Youngsville" by Tyree Daye**

**February 26, 2021**

**<https://soundcloud.com/close-talking/episode-120-in-youngsville-tyree-daye>**

### **Show Notes**

Jack 0:08

Hello and welcome to Close Talking, the world's most popular poetry analysis podcast from Cardboard Box Productions Incorporated. I am co-host Jack Rossiter-Munley and with my good friend Connor McNamara Stratton, we read a poem,

Connor 0:21

talk about the poem,

Jack 0:23

and read the poem again.

Connor 0:25

Before we get into today's selection, a quick note that if you like what we do here at Close Talking and have a spare minute of your time, it would mean the world to us if you would give the podcast a rating and review on Apple podcasts.

Jack 0:40

Those ratings and reviews help boost us up the algorithm and find new listeners.

Connor 0:44

And if you have suggestions for future episodes or comments on this one, you can send us an email at [closetalkingpoetry@gmail.com](mailto:closetalkingpoetry@gmail.com).

Jack 0:54

And you can also find us on social media, on Twitter the show is @closetalking, I am @jackrossitermun, and Connor is @connormstratton. On Instagram the show is @closetalkingpoetry, and on Facebook, it's [facebook.com/closetalking](https://facebook.com/closetalking). We also have a website [closetalking.com](https://closetalking.com) where you can find all the past episodes of the show. And Cardboard Box Productions has just launched a newsletter UNBOXED, and if you go to [cardboardboxproductionsinc.com](https://cardboardboxproductionsinc.com) you can subscribe for more behind the scenes stuff on Close Talking, and all of the other literary and cultural history podcasts that Cardboard Box Productions makes. On with the show.

(Close Talking theme music)

Hello, and welcome to this all-new episode of Close Talking the world's most popular poetry analysis podcast. So today, as always, we have an excellent poem that I think we're both pretty excited to dive into this is one that I selected it is called well, if you look for it on the internet, you will find it under the name "In Youngsville" and is by the poet Tyree Daye. Because of a reference made in a review of his 2017 book *River Hymns*. I believe it may appear in that book under the name "Lord Here." And I am not lucky enough to be an owner of that book so unfortunately, I was not able to fact check that because also due to, you know, the ongoing global pandemic, I was not able to get my hands on a copy of it in time to fact check that in addition to that information not being available on the worldwide web. So for the purposes of this episode we are going with "In Youngsville" and it may appear under another title. Tyree Daye, the author of this work you know, a rose by any other name would smell sweet a poem by any other title would be written by Tyree Daye. He, so the title is particularly appropriate "In Youngsville" because Tyree Daye grew up in Youngsville, North Carolina, which is a pretty small town. I think it has about 1157, I think is the latest number of residents. He is a very accomplished writer with many different accolades to his name, as I said that his first book *River Hymns* came out in 2017 and his latest one *Cardinal* just came out in the later part of 2020, from Copper Canyon Press. And he in describing his 2020 book *Cardinal* described it as addressing the question where can Black people go to be safe? Which is a big question. And yeah, you can hear him read some of the poems from that book online. And it is definitely a very moving and searching examination of that question. He is a teaching assistant professor at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. His first book won the APR Honickman First Book Prize. Am I saying that correctly, Honickman right. Yeah, yeah. He has been a Cave Canem fellow as well, which is through that, and through that fellowship, he has had a lot of writing support that he credits with helping his his work along, we can go right into the poem.

Connor 4:32

Let's do it.

Jack 4:34

"In Youngsville" by Tyree Daye

I learned what a bullet does to a back, to a mother.

After every funeral it rains, I was told that's God crying in Youngsville.

My uncle walked our holed streets until he died sun soaked, broken in,  
left me young boy and bitter in Youngsville.

Hallelujahs knocked on screen doors, let the lord in.

We stood on porches and watched the saved stitch wings in Youngsville.

Black berries hung in my aunt's back yard where we cut  
the asshole off a trout, guts laid on a cutting board in Youngsville.

We were told a storm was a sermon,  
lightning horse whips the sky, milks rain in Youngsville.

Connor 5:37

So good.

Jack 5:38

It's so good. Yeah. So our traditional starting point is a little bit of a narrative breakdown. And also just to the degree that we can in the audio medium rendering a little bit of what is on the page for our listeners, obviously, we encourage everyone to look at the poems so that they can experience it visually while we talk about it, if you're able to do so. But also, if you're out driving, and commuting, and whatever we know, that's not always possible. So, you know, please don't look at the poem while you're driving, concentrate on the road, you know, that long asphalt poem that runs across the country. So this poem is basically it's ten lines broken into five couplets, and each of those couplets ends with something in Youngsville. So that becomes you, you get a sense of that, as it's, you know, when you experience it being read, you get that sort of returning in Youngsville, and Youngsville but just in terms of how that comes across on the page, it's at the end of each of these couplets. So in Youngsville, hangs off of those lines in all but one case is the second line is longer than the first. So it really does kind of stand out visually when you look just quickly down the page. And that's kind of the structure of what is, in the end a fairly short poem. Though breaking it up so much into the couplets also has it take up a little bit more space than you would expect, which I at least felt a little bit of resonance with like a very small town that ends up having a bigger impact or presence in an individual's life than it necessarily does on the on the map. Yeah, and there's not, I don't know, a particularly strong, single narrative thread through this. It definitely has elements that you can sort of thread through it. And as I was reading through it sort of, there's a lot of family references. There's the mother, the uncle and the aunt who all get call outs, aunt aunt, I go between the two sorry, listeners, if that becomes distracting. There's also a lot of explicit call outs to religion and spirituality. There's God, at the end of the first couplet, there is let the Lord in in the third couplet. And there is the storm was a sermon in the last couplet. And there are also these little flashes throughout the poem. And some of it is encapsulated in this sort of storm and rain imagery, but they're these little flashes of violence, that are sometimes not necessarily expected, but they come up what feels pretty naturally in the flow. So the first line is really striking. "I learned what a bullet does to a back, to a mother" very striking grabs you, but the the bullet and the back, and all of the imagery sort of flows. But then you also have these very surprising instances of rougher language or violent acts where you have "Black berries hung in my aunt's back yard where we cut / the asshole off a trout, guts laid on a cutting board" So it's these three different pieces of family, God, religion, spirituality, and intermittent flashes of violence, were the three main threads that I pulled out, I don't know if there's anything else that you were pulling out, obviously, there's also Youngsville as a recurring, just you're being drawn back to a specific place throughout the whole poem, as well. So all of this is kind of the threads that move through in service of the place. I don't know if you have other things that kind of leapt out at you or that you think are important to signpost at the beginning.

Connor 9:30

Yeah, no, no, I think that's exactly right. Yeah, it's it's very much a poem of, of place and sort of childhood and this kind of and of memory and like, sort of like the way a place makes a person growing up. And I think that there's all of those other themes that you you drew out kind of go into that. And yeah, it's it's it's also I don't know if this is too early to get into it, but I believe,

Jack 10:13

Never too early. I would I'm counting on you for this.

Connor 10:17

Man oh, man. Well, I believe it could be considered a blues poem, which is, yeah, it's an interesting form, it's a very popular form. But it's, it's cool because so, you know, it's obviously very related to the music form of the blues. And so in, you know, in that sense, it, it's very directly rooted in, you know, Black American music traditions, and sort of folk traditions and oral traditions. And the poem, kind of, you know, like, you can hear it the sort of repetition and refrain of in Youngsville kind of does the work of the blues in the sense of this returning. And there's also like, yeah, you know, blues poems can be there's kind of different, there's sort of different, like, formal, it's not, it's not as exact, as, you know, like a villanelle maybe. But I feel like a lot of especially like contemporary blues poems have have this kind of couplet structure. And then the this like repeating word or phrase that happens at the end of each couplet. And similar to and you're more familiar with, with the nuances of the blues, as a as a music, in music, but there's a way I feel like, one of the kind of, sort of beauties and geniuses of the blues is the way repetition and kind of, like, creates subtle differences in meaning in in ways that, like, could be kind of simple, like, if you just like, wrote it out, you know, but the way that it repeats and kind of develops sort of like, it acquires new meaning the sort of repeated phrase. And I feel like that sort of aspect of the blues is very much a part of definitely this poem, and also like blues poems, more generally. Where, like, Youngsville, kind of each, each time it happens again, it's, it's slightly different. I think this is something that Danez Smith has talked about, not in maybe reference to the blues, but in reference to something else, which is like this kind of both/and of joy and pain, like, not like joy, despite pain, but like both are kind of happening. Which I think, is I don't want to like generalize, but I feel like that's a part of the blues too where there's this kind of this kind of like, you know, and it's in this poem too where like, it's, it's, there's, there's, I mean, it leads with pain, right? It's like "I learned what a bullet does to a back, to a mother. / After every funeral it rains, I was told that's God crying in Youngsville" and you know, there's the young boy and bitter but in the way that like, there's no like, and yet, "Hallelujahs knocked on screen doors," and like, and yet there's no and yet "Black berries hung in my aunt's backyard" and that that moment too that you pointed out is such a good kind of example of it is like "Black berries hung in my aunt's backyard where we cut / the asshole off a trout" got slayed on a cutting board, in Youngsville where there's this kind of, you know, sweet black fruit in the backyard with family at the same time that there's this, really, you know, you know, gritty fish, fish work going on. And the the hallelujahs happened just sort of at the same time as the funerals. Like that kind of thing that dynamic is, is common in blues poems

Jack 15:34

Totally. And I think both of those elements that you pulled out the repetition that kind of builds over time, is an enormously significant part of a lot of blues music. And you can have either musical or lyrical repetition. A lot of times both a lot of the, you know, the most kind of iconic blues form that most of you will probably be familiar with is like a line, the line repeats, and then there's a third line that rhymes with it.

(music clip)

But they are also kind of getting into the Delta blues and the older styles. I mean, these guys will just hang out on the same chord for a long time, like John Lee Hooker, he's gonna play an E, and he's gonna go and it's gonna be great. And it's like,

(John Lee Hooker music clip)

It's captivating. It's enthralling. It's almost hypnotic at times. Like, that's where the kind of rhythm to a song comes. There's this amazing improvised song by Hound Dog Taylor and his band called "Let's Get Funky," which starts off with them discussing whether or not they've had a shower, and whether or not that's a good thing.

(Hound Dog Taylor music clip)

It was recorded apparently, like 2am. And they were all drunk. But then it's this one repeated riff. And you just, that's an instance where like, the energy builds over the course of it, and you just like, it is such a groove.

(Hound Dog Taylor music clip)

It's so good. And that is definitely like one kind of electrified version of this kind of musical element because there's also almost no words to it. There's like sort of words, but not really, and it's just this great groove. And like an acoustic version of that I've been lately, I'm always listening to a lot of blues stuff. But I've lately been diving into the Alan Lomax archives, many of which are on YouTube, his videos that he did, including, I think it's one of the most viewed videos from that channel, we'll be sure to link it is this guy, Belton Sutherland who is just sitting on a porch playing the guitar

(Belton Sutherland music clip)

And he is just playing this riff that completely sucks you in it's kind of telling a story. It's not like the words are the same the whole time. But it is this driving, increasing lament. So here where the the words of the repetition with "in Youngsville", in in those instances, it's this kind of musical repetition of like, this one rolling riff that just keeps you moving with the story and the you can hear the emotion and the vocals and everything but it's like, this whole element of a repetition

(Belton Sutherland music clip)

Connor 19:59

No

Jack 20:15

And kind of along those lines, particularly in Delta blues, the other element that you were talking about which is this sort of mixture of the the joy and the pain and it's not like it turns from one to the other, but they're intermingled - the, the most classic blues, quote, iteration of that is you see me laughing, laughing just to keep from crying, which is used in many different songs. And it's kind of one of these stock blues phrases. That's another element of repetition, honestly, in the blues is that, you know, artists very freely borrowed from each other and took hold chunks of one song and put them in another one. Robert Johnson's, "If I Had Possession Over Judgment Day" uses the music from, you know, either called two trains running or rolling, and tumbling, they all use the basic, same underlying music, and some of the verses are the same or really similar.

(Robert Johnson music clip)

But that element of, you're not turning from hard stuff to sing about good stuff. You are acknowledging all of the sort of hard stuff, sometimes just putting it to a groove that you can dance to. Even these lines, that we were sort of talking about "Black berries hung in my aunt's back yard where we cut / the asshole off a trout, guts laid on a cutting board in Youngsville" it does, on the one hand turn from the sweet fruit to this, you know, gritty fish. But there's also kind of an element of humor in the abruptness of the turn. To not just say that we gutted a trout, but to specifically call it the asshole and to like, bring in this whole other tone of language there. It's like, it's the aunt's back yard, it feels very at home. Like there's a whole kind of feeling of I mean, food, as an as a way of bringing people together is there. The tradition of possibly learning how to gut a fish from an older relative is something that I feel implied in those lines. Like, there's this jolt of violence, and it's gritty, and it's kind of like, I can smell the fish and I do not love that. But like, it's sorry, I you know, it's not my thing. But it's, it's infused with all this other stuff. So that, you know, there's there's both of these things going on at once.

Connor 23:19

Yeah, no, that's a really great point. It is, it is a turn. And it is, yeah, that beginning and, you know, there's just so many things like "After every funeral it rains, I was told that's God crying in Youngsville", you know, from that line, you know, that the speaker grew up going to a lot of funerals, right? It's like for, for the, you know, the, like, the what is said about funerals to be that kind of crystallized, you know, like implies that this is a regular part of growing up, you know, in Youngsville in the speaker's community. And which is then kind of like, personalized in the second stanza with the uncle, and you get, there's so many like, echoes and links in this in this poem that I just love of, you know, "My uncle walked our holed streets", where you kind of, you know, so you get a sense of potholes and this kind of, you know, maybe there's some, I

don't know, racist structural disinvestment in the town or whatever, but also the holed streets echoes I feel like the bullet from the first stanza, where there's this kind of I don't know and then you know, "until he died sun soaked, broken in" that's a great line. It includes this sort of vernacular syntax of like, "left me young boy and bitter in Youngsville" where, right it could be, like, left me, a young boy or left me as a young boy or something like that. But there's no, it's just "left me young boy and bitter in Youngsville." And, of course, you get the young and the young, together in that line of young boy and Youngsville. The line is very short. And you also like, yeah, and you really get, I mean, says it outright, like, bitter of like, growing up in this town is kind of, you know, at least from what we know, so far in the poem, like, all these losses, all these deaths, and also, you know, that and that's, that's also the, the, like, the power of that first line of the double like "to a back to a mother" of like, not just what the bullet does to the person that it hits. But you know, the mother that's left grieving the loss of their kid.

Jack 26:36

There's a really incredible article, a couple years ago, I believe the title was "What Bullets Do to Bodies." And this, it's a long form piece, I think, from the Huffington Post. And it basically details like, exactly what the title says, this person talked to a bunch of like, trauma doctors and emergency surgeons about what physically happens to people's bodies when they are hit by bullets. And it is incredible, just as like a feat of writing and also taking something that you think you know, about, like you think, you know, the harm that a bullet does, and you absolutely have no frame of reference for the scope of damage that a bullet does to a human body. And that, yeah, that phrasing in that first line, put me in mind of that, and I think, yeah, that language of a back and a mother, separating out the body and what that body means in a community and in a family. And then also saying, a back and a mother making it so encompassing in the language, because it can be many backs, and many mothers was like, yeah, it's it hits hard as a first line.

Connor 27:53

Yeah, I look forward to reading that, you know, you have such an interesting sense of like, the poem builds Youngsville so carefully and beautifully, I think with with this collective sense of the town, and that's kind of like "Hallelujahs knocked on screen doors, let the lord in. / We stood on porches and watched the saved stitch wings in Youngsville", like the hallelujahs is doing the knocking. You know, like, the fact that it's not, you know, it's not someone saying hallelujah, or like, the sound of utterance of hallelujah personified. And, and then the entrance of we. And, like, also, there's, but there's still the, like, "the saved stitch wings," is like those who, you know, either it's like, those who didn't die or weren't killed. There was those who were saved by the Lord or whatever, are making wings like I'm thinking angels, and it's like, their actions are still for one too it's like we we're watching the saved so so there is some, the speaker's not necessarily among the saved necessarily. But also like even even in this turn, there's, there's, like, everything's toward death in some way. It seems.

Jack 29:50

Yeah, and the turn feels like it's a turn in focus not in, like, tone entirely or in like, as you were saying the the pain and, and other elements still live alongside each other, it just feels like a

little bit of a, I don't know, it's like, you know, when you're on your Google Maps, and it says slight right? It's like, it's that kind of a turn, it's like, you're basically still going straight, but you needed to be in the left, like the three left lanes continue, and the other two go off on to exit 50, whatever. It's like, that's the adjustment that you're making in the middle of the poem, you're making an adjustment to kind of go in just a little bit of a different direction. It's noticeable, and you have to pay attention to it, and you have to do it. But it's not like, you know, you're headed in the wrong direction. And then you have to go back where you came from, or you have to just go off in a totally different one. It's just

Connor 30:52

Yep, yeah, that's, that's right. Oh, that that's funny. That's, that's right. That's right. I'm getting into the one thing that's cool about this poem too, is like, the sounds really get going. I mean, they're never not there. But like, you know, like, "I learned what a bullet does to a back, to mother. / After every funeral it rains, I was told that's God crying in Youngsville." Like, there's definitely, the rhythm is there. And that kind of continues in a lot of ways, like each it feels, you know, in sync with the rest of the poem. And there's the bullet in the back, and kind of the b's there and like, things but then like when you get to, like "Black berries hung in my aunt's back yard where we cut / the asshole off a trout, guts laid on a cutting board in Youngsville" is just like, damn. Like the b's in that first line with the r's, and this kind of like, man, every time I start thinking about this stuff, I wish there were just better terms for it. But we're going to the Greek stuff, okay, folks, I'm sorry.

Jack 32:23

Until somebody comes up with a new widely accepted way of categorizing this stuff, we're stuck with the Greeks..

Connor 32:30

We're stuck with the Greeks. It's this, it's the spondees, which are the the kind of like, double stressed, like, long long together, which is like not in, like, in the first line, "I learned what a bullet does to a back, to a mother", there's like, it starts with what is the most familiar Greek word, the I am, like, I learned, learned is what stressed I is not stressed. There's a lot of I think, like, anapest maybe or something which is really getting in the weeds, but like this kind of it's very common in English, which is this double unstressed, and then a stressed like, to a back what a bullet where it leads into the bul. But like what a it's not anything. But throughout the poem, when there's the two stressed syllables it's really like it, a it like brings the attention to it, but it shifts the rhythm and it happens in great places in this poem where like, "My uncle walked," that's like normal, iambic, "our holed streets", so that's got this kind of holed streets, "until he died". And then "sun soaked, broken in," which is kind of like three, you get three stressed syllables in a row there which is like real knotty. And then like, "left me young boy", young boy's like in there and "bitter in Youngsville." And then, but this like "Black berries hung", like blackberry, berry, you know, but it's kind of there. But then like "Black berries hung in my aunt's back yard" like it. It's there's a lot there's a lot of similar things happening where there's like the b's of black and back, the ka of black and back the the a of looking back. And then the double stress of black bear. And then back yard and then the r's of berries and yard. And then it



kind of like where we cut kind of has the berries hung. And then there's this a. I mean, I guess I go with aunt maybe maybe it's if it's aunt to it's totally

Jack 35:35

I just kind of have always gone back and forth. I said it when I first read the poem and so I've been trying to be good and stick to just one for the purposes of this recording. But in my life I hop around between them.

Connor 35:48

Yeah, being near Chicago it's definitely aunt for me.

Jack 35:53

Chicago, your aunt from Chicago.

Connor 35:59

But I don't know, I don't know how they say aunt in Youngsville. So I defer, I defer to to Youngsville pronunciation of aunt. But at any rate, like then you get, you know, I mean "asshole off a trout," great.

Jack 36:21

Sounds like the start of a great phrase. Yeah, who is out of here like the asshole of a trout.

Connor 36:28

Yeah. And then you get the uh's in that last phrase, which, which you had in the first line, but it was slightly less, it had less attention than the other sounds because that, like you were paying attention to the blackberries in the backyard, but you get the hung, and then you get the cut. And then you get the "guts laid on a cutting board in Youngsville." And it's just like, boom, boom, boom. I don't know. And then this last stanza is like, it's like so much. And I love it because it's also the "We were told a storm was a sermon" and it which echoes that "I was told that's God crying in Youngsville", which is a lovely repetition of phrase, but then also with a little bit of difference. So like, you get the we, at the end, and you kind of have this, it's it's almost like the poem is kind of building we from an I like as it's going, but because it's also like a told it's like, you can kind of, the phrases don't have to make as much sense as like maybe they might otherwise and so, like it's this it gets to this point where like the sound is like, more than the sense in the language where it's like "a storm was a sermon" okay, that's, that's fine. But still, it's a very tight, like storm and sermon has a lot of similar sounds in it. But then like "lightning horse whips the sky, milks rain in Youngsville" is just like, whoa, I don't even know. And, but like, there's just like the I sounds and lightning and sky. The ing that goes to the Youngsville, the horse that has the storm in the sermon, the er's and then the whips that goes to milks ish. And then I don't know and it's also just very like, very stressed like "lightning horse whips the sky". It's like ing of lightning is like the least stressed part of the first, you know it's like it's like it's like saying you like unique New York over and over again. It's like "lightning horse whips the sky," like the is the first respite you get and then it's like "milks rain in Youngsville" which is like whoof you know, whereas by contrast that that we were told "a storm

was a sermon" is just basically three stressed syllables like told storm and sermon like has are the three and there's so much loose. It's so much easier to say that. Yeah, and it's just it really like, I don't know. It's, it's, it's yeah, it's it's kind of wild. But it also it has a lot of what has been happening where we have this kind of synthesis of the sort of like, figurative metaphorical connection that was started in the beginning of like, the god crying as rain, and like a storm, then we get to like a storm being a sermon. And then we get all this sort of like, really intense storm imagery, that's, but also it's, it's very strange, you know, like, "lightning horse whips the sky," I mean you can kind of, you get the thunder crack of the like horse whip. And then milks rain. It's like, it's like milks is like a verb. But it's like, also, it's just like a, there's milk? And I don't know, um, and it's all coming down right on Youngsville. So you really get this like, it's like this fucking heavy sermon, you know? And, yeah, I don't know. But the sounds and the rhythm is just like it's doing so much. And it really it's like, it's all in the blues, rhythm it all you know. But it's changing and developing in this amazing way.

Jack 42:13

Yeah, it definitely each couplet feels different to say. I mean, obviously, they look different on the page, that's kind of almost always the case to greater and lesser degree, like, the the sound differential is very noticeable as you read through the poem. If you if you have not read this poem out loud, obviously, you'll hear us read it, but just go through yourself and read it out loud. And you will absolutely feel all of the stuff that Connor was talking about. As you start to read through it and try to read it in a in a cohesive kind of way. It definitely, you feel it. And it's very neat. I'm glad you pointed out the storm, that book ends the poem, or at least the references to rain and storm that book end it because it is really interesting that it is sort of happening on both sides of the poem. And also the the way that that second line is constructed "After every funeral it rains, I was told that's God crying in Youngsville" is really interesting to me, because that could go one or one of two ways. It could be that the speaker was told that when it rains, after funerals, God is crying in Youngsville. Or it could be the speaker saying when I myself was physically in Youngsville, I was told that rain after funerals was God crying. And I love that duality. Because it is no matter what either way you're reading that it's intensely of the place. But it can also point to going outside of that place or the speaker leaving that place, not entirely taking with them the understanding they have of what rain after a funeral means but bringing it to other places as well. So in the first one "After every funeral it rains, I was told that's God crying in Youngsville." So if the speaker is being told that piece of information in Youngsville, it then becomes a universal piece of information about rains after funerals, which extends beyond Youngsville itself, or the speaker is being told that's what happens in Youngsville, in which case, it's still bringing the universal to the place, which I really like.

Connor 44:38

Yeah.

Jack 44:40

And then having that come back around and kind of get remixed into, "We were told a storm was a sermon, / lightning horse whips the sky, milks rain in Youngsville", it's now no longer tied directly to a funeral but it does come directly after this imagery of the gutted trout. So it's

coming this next reference to the to the storm and to you know, sort of a bringing the rains back in even if they are rains milked from the sky. They do come in after a death or after reference to a dead creature, and and saying that the storm is a sermon that's just yeah, it's the whole last line is just such evocative language. It's nice to just kind of sit in it and let it be is the kind of lines where I like it so much I'm not tempted to try and parse it too closely. For like, specific meaning, I'm very content with it to just be a lot of great evocative imagery that, you know, paints pictures for me of storm clouds and lightning strikes and resonates with the rest of the poem. And I can reflect it back into the poem, but I do find myself not necessarily drawn to like, wanting to dig into those lines specifically to be like, I wonder what the milky rain about. Or milky and rain together, what's going on there and just like now, that's just some really great imagery. I love it. I'm kind of okay with it.

Connor 46:15

Should we read it again?

Jack 46:18

Let's do it again. This is "In Youngsville" by Tyree Daye

I learned what a bullet does to a back, to a mother.

After every funeral it rains, I was told that's God crying in Youngsville.

My uncle walked our holed streets until he died sun soaked, broken in,  
left me young boy and bitter in Youngsville.

Hallelujahs knocked on screen doors, let the lord in.

We stood on porches and watched the saved stitch wings in Youngsville.

Black berries hung in my aunt's back yard where we cut  
the asshole off a trout, guts laid on a cutting board in Youngsville.

We were told a storm was a sermon,  
lightning horse whips the sky, milks rain in Youngsville.

(Close Talking theme music)

So Connor,

Connor 47:29

So Jack

Jack 47:32

What you what you've been culturally experiencing lately?

Connor 47:38

Oh, that's a good way to put it, I like that.

Jack 47:42

Keeping it keeping it broad, maybe even watching incredible dance performances on the internet.

Connor 47:48

I wish, oh, I wish I'd been listening to a lot of jazz piano. Two albums come to mind. One is a classic Waltz for Debby, by Bill Evans.

(Bill Evans music clip)

Who yeah, was he was the, he played piano and the kind of blue album and was sort of of that era and it's just a really, he's a very like impressionistic, soft jazz player.

(Bill Evans music clip)

And that's like one of his his well known ones, and it's great for doing the dishes. And then there's a slightly newer album that I've been loving that's by Abdullah Ibrahim. It's called Cape Town Revisited. And he's particularly Water From the Ancient Well.

(Abdullah Ibrahim music clip)

Is this incredible song. And, yeah, it's just I don't know, there's a certain feeling that it evokes that I cannot quite describe but yeah, it's just I don't know, I recommend both of those albums. Waltz for Debby and Cape Town Revisited.

(Abdullah Ibrahim music clip)

Jack 50:32

That sounds great. I'm definitely gonna have to look up Water From the Ancient Well now.

Connor 50:36

It's a great song. It's one of those songs that's like, it's like it's kind of like joyish, where it's like, it like fills you up. But it's not like peppy, or like really like upbeat, necessarily. And it's not really sad, but it's like it's not quite hopeful, because it's not necessarily thinking that things are gonna get better but it has this kind of determined joy to it. But that's also feels easy. I don't know. I don't know how to say you just got to listen to it.

Jack 51:21

I'm gonna have to listen to it and come into my own sort of conclusion, I guess.

Connor 51:26

Okay. Well, Jack, I must enquire aside from Naomi Osaka's brilliant Australian Open win, what cultural? Well, what, how have you been experiencing culture and what kinds of cultures have you been culturally experiencing?

Jack 51:50

Well, I have not been engaging with anything quite as highbrow as you know, these brilliant jazz compositions. I have been going more in a pretty aggressively joyful upbeat just kind of like heck yeah, we're getting these dishes done direction and that has meant listening to the Russian band Little Big.

(Little Big music clip)

I don't know if you're familiar with the Russian band Little Big -

Connor 52:33

No

Jack 52:34

They are quite something.

(Little Big music clip)

They kind of got their start as like a Russian version of the seemingly more problematic by the day South African band Die Antwoord. As far as I know, Little Big does not have any of the issues associated with that South African act. They were the Eurovision Song entrant for Russia with their song Uno, which is basically just then counting in Spanish and dancing around.

(Little Big music clip)

Uno, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco, seis is this song Uno. But they're wearing bell bottoms. And they dance where they like move their legs like this. And so the bell bottoms move crazy.

Connor 53:50

This is exactly your shit. I love it.

Jack 53:56

Yeah, I like a lot of stuff. But this one's really been hitting home for me just because like, you know, it's winter. The pandemic continues. It's like getting better, but I'm not gonna get vaccinated for a while, my parents are in the early stages of vaccination, like nothing's really changing in the immediate future. So

Connor 54:14

I support it.

Jack 54:16

By Nananana, nanana, nananana nanana. Nana, yeah, man. Well, oh, yeah. Little Big if you just need some some oomph. When I am not assiduously managing my endorphin levels with Little Big, I have been as has become what I am noticing to be a pattern in my recommendations, something that is on HBO, which is the movie Judas and the Black Messiah, which is about Fred Hampton. It's really, really good. If I had a criticism of it, it would be that Fred Hampton was incredibly young, he was 21, when he was killed. And the performance by Daniel Kaluuya is amazing. He's definitely not 21 years old. And like the the youth of that movement, and the energy of really, really young people making significant change and doing really important work, and just the number of years that somebody would have ahead of them that were just completely snuffed out. And just like the impact that somebody could have, by the time they were 21, like Fred Hampton put together the Rainbow Coalition, when he was like 19 and 20 years old, to be that skilled as an orator and as an organizer at that early age, like thinking about what he might have been able to accomplish, and just the injustices in how the FBI went about, you know, doing horrible work on progressive and radical groups in the in the 70s. It's a really, really good movie on a lot of levels, not least of which because it draws attention to that. And yeah, my only criticism is that they were really young. And the actors are incredible, like LaKeith Stanfield's great, Daniel Kaluuya's great, but they're not like in their late teens or early 20s.

Connor 56:34

Now, I've heard great things about that movie. I'm really excited to watch it.

Jack 56:38

It's really, really good. Very, very tough.

(Close Talking theme music)

Hello, everybody. Thank you so much for listening. This is co-host, Jack Rossiter-Munley, just reminding you that there are a ton of ways that you can get in touch with us and we love to hear from you. It's always great to know if you have a different reading of this poem, or any of the other poems we've covered. Or if there are any poems you wish we would cover in the future. You can send us an email at [closetalkingpoetry@gmail.com](mailto:closetalkingpoetry@gmail.com) or the show and Connor and myself are all on Twitter. That's another great way to connect. I am @jackrossitermun, Connor is @connormstratton, and the show is @closetalking. You can also find us on Instagram @closetalkingpoetry or on Facebook at [facebook.com/closetalking](https://facebook.com/closetalking). See you next time.

(Close Talking theme music)