

1999

# Cozy Apologia

—for Fred

rhyme is constant

10 lines  
each stanza  
represents  
theme, but  
enjambment  
suggests latitude  
within it.

I could pick anything and think of you—  
 This lamp, the wind-still rain, the glossy blue  
 My pen exudes, drying matte, upon the page.  
 I could choose any hero, any cause or age  
 5 And, sure as shooting arrows to the heart, — simile  
 Astride a dappled mare, legs braced as far apart  
 As standing in silver stirrups will allow—  
 There you'll be, with furrowed brow  
 And chain mail glinting, to set me free:  
 10 One eye smiling, the other firm upon the enemy.

— Hurricane outside  
figure, reminiscent  
behaviour — juxtaposition  
of violence.

This post-post-modern age is all business: compact disks  
 And faxes, a do-it-now-and-take-no-risks  
 Event. Today a hurricane is nudging up the coast,  
 Oddly male: Big Bad Floyd, who brings a host  
 15 Of daydreams: awkward reminiscences  
 Of teenage crushes on worthless boys  
 Whose only talent was to kiss you senseless.  
 They all had sissy names—Marcel, Percy, Dewey;  
 Were thin as licorice and as chewy, — simile  
 20 Sweet with a dark and hollow center. Floyd's

contrast vs violence.

metaphor — personification — nature's  
strength creates intrusion.

Cussing up a storm. You're bunkered in your  
 Aerie, I'm perched in mine nesting vs stoic stance  
 (Twin desks, computers, hardwood floors):  
 We're content, but fall short of the Divine. ← acknowledges less than ideal.  
 25 Still, it's embarrassing, this happiness—  
 Who's satisfied simply with what's good for us,  
 When has the ordinary ever been news?  
 And yet, because nothing else will do — defeated  
 To keep me from melancholy (call it blues),  
 30 I fill this stolen time with you.

RITA DOVE

loyalty  
email

sarcastic — but also  
comparing to relationships

rhyme  
scheme  
changes

metaphor  
juxtaposition

brackets  
suggest additional  
info.