

## Daystar

By Rita Dove

She wanted a little room for thinking;  
but she saw diapers steaming on the line,  
a doll slumped behind the door.

So she lugged a chair behind the garage  
to sit out the children's naps.

Sometimes there were things to watch –  
the pinched armor of a vanished cricket,  
a floating maple leaf. Other days  
she stared until she was assured  
when she closed her eyes  
she'd see only her own vivid blood.

She had an hour, at best, before Liza appeared  
pouting from the top of the stairs.  
And just what was mother doing  
out back with the field mice? Why,

building a palace. Later  
that night when Thomas rolled over and  
lurched into her, she would open her eyes  
and think of the place that was hers  
for an hour – where  
she was nothing,  
pure nothing, in the middle of the day.