

Name:

Poets Bear Witness Part 2, continued

Trayvon, Redux

by Rita Dove

Move along, you don't belong here.

This is what you're thinking. Thinking
drives you nuts these days, all that
talk about rights and law abidance when
you can't even walk your own neighborhood
in peace and quiet, *get your black ass gone.*

You're thinking again. Then what?

Matlock's on TV and here you are,
vigilant, weary, exposed to the elements
on a wet winter's evening in Florida
when all's not right but no one sees it.
Where are they – the law, the enforcers
blind as a bunch of lazy bats can be,
holsters dangling from coat hooks above their desks
as they jaw the news between donuts?

Hey! It tastes good, shoving your voice
down a throat thinking only of sweetness.

Go on, choke on that. Did you say something?

Are you thinking again? Stop! – and

get your ass gone, your blackness,
that casual little red riding hood

I'm just on my way home attitude
as if this street was his to walk on.

Do you do hear me talking to you? Boy.

How dare he smile, jiggling his goodies
in that tiny shiny bag, his black paw crinkling it,
how dare he tinkle their laughter at you.

Here's a fine basket of riddles:

If a mouth shoots off and no one's around
to hear it, who can say which came first –
push or shove, bang or whimper?

Which is news fit to write home about?

*Rita Dove, "Trayvon, Redux".
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