Luxury

Nikki Giovanni

I suppose living
in a materialistic society
luxury
to some would be having
more than what you need
living in an electronic age seeing
the whole world by pushing a button
the nth degree might perhaps be
adequately represented by having
someone there to push
the buttons for you
I have thought if only
I could become rich and famous I would
live luxuriously in New York knowing
famous people eating
in expensive restaurants calling
long distance anytime I want
but you held me
one evening and now I know
the ultimate luxury
of your love.

Poem Analysis
In this poem, Giovanni overlooks the idea of what she thought was the true luxury in her life. Instead of finding comfort and luxury in fame, she found it in her soul mate, because to her, luxury came out from love rather than what the materialistic worlds referred to as ‘luxury’.

The literary devices used in this free-verse poem are symbolism and denotation. Symbolism in poetry is basically an object, person, situation, or action that stands for representing something else more complex or abstract. In this case, the situation described in the poem about the elements of living luxuriously are the “symbols” that help us understand that the poet meant those as the luxuries of the materialistic world. And then the other situation she describes, “but you held me one evening and now I know the ultimate luxury of your love” explains what she thinks of a luxurious experience.

Besides that, another minor literary device used is denotation. Denotation is when a meaning or the significance of a piece of writing is straightforward, and in a clear-cut manner. In this poem, you don’t have to decipher much, therefore, denotation is used.