

Carnival

With pride the zebra takes its place
Orating prudently with grace,
Fulfills the stage and audience
With wisdom, meaning and some sense
About the problems of his skin
Society has put him in.

‘Oh, let me tell you, all my pain
Derives from one most cruel game
Which people play when I do pass,
Their noses up, mine to the grass.
They laugh at me and wonder why
I’m black and white the same, Oh my!

And I do try to figure out
What all my color is about.
Which stripes have been my native roots
That you all call my attributes?
This jumble of my skin is hard,
My pity just a small reward.’

Then, suddenly, a roar, a sound
Of laughter, mocking, booms around.
The ape is rolling on the floor,
His sides, he’s holding, asking for
The zebra – horrified – to stop.
His laugh has made his foolscap drop.

‘Just look at all these puzzled jerks
Who watch a showman when he works.
Can you, dear zebra, not recall,
You are a donkey and we all
Disguised ourselves. I have to tell
That I was stoked, you played it well!’

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