

JANUARY GILL O'NEIL

Zebra

—*for my son*

You are not who they say you are.
You are Nubian with white stripes

and sport a Mohawk for a mane.
Once hunted to extinction,

your deafening bray is a song for the fallen.
Some might even say you are God's mistake.

But how ordinary the world would be without you.
They will say stay in your herd, stick close to your mother's side.

Remember, you are all equine.
Put another way, you are a wild ass.

Raise those ears. Kick your legs.
Gaze that impenetrable stare.

Your forefathers once grazed on African grasses.
Your place in this world is the one you claim.