

Deanne Kennedy



Stripper, or What's In A Name

What did you say?
What job do you do?
I could not have heard right –
Repeat it, please do.

I am a stripper –
I told you,
Yes, that's what I do.

I take pieces of wood,
I access the shape,
And decide what formation
That raw wood will take.
I get out my tools
And strip till I find
Exactly the image
I have in my mind.

Oh, I see, you're a craftsman,
You carve, is that true?

No ma'man,
I'm a stripper,
And that's what I do.

I discard the dead wood,
I strip off each layer,
I strip it until
I like what I see there.

Calabash

Oh, right! You're an artist!
You create things, do you?

Please ma'man,
I'm a stripper,
And that's what I do.

The satin smooth curves
Beneath the rough bark
Emerge when I strip –
As I said from the start.

Ah! A sculptor of wood
You are, in my view!

No ma'am,
I'm a stripper,
And that's what I do.

And ma'man, you could do
With some stripping yourself;
I would gladly remove
All those layers myself.
All those preconceptions,
Hypocrisy too,
I could strip away,
Thus revealing the truth.
But for you I think
I might need a sharp axe
To hack off the surplus
Before you face facts;
Before I expose
Your form pure and true,
Because I'm a stripper,
And that's what I do.

I'll peel you,
Unsheathe you, denude every part,
I'll see for myself
What goes on in your heart.

Why dress up my job
In those terms to please you?
I said I'm a stripper,
And that's what I do.

