



Daphne

by Will Magee

When, in the mad rush of the pursuit,
She cried out and asked to be transformed,
Her eyes became two flocks of birds,

Her tongue became a crimson butterfly
Trapped, fluttering, behind her teeth,
Until her teeth cascaded out as stones,

Her lips leapt nimbly from her mouth
And darted off, escaping as two deer,
Disappearing in the rippled mist at dawn,

Her breath was now the rustle of leaves,
Her voice the creak of branches overhead,
Her thoughts migrating as a swarm of bees,

Her hair, flowing, came out at the roots
And trickled down her back in streams,
Her spine erupting into mineral springs,

Her legs and arms morphed into logs,
Her breasts a shapeless bank of moss,
Her womb a clearing full of golden flowers,

And, as longing fingers brushed her skin,
Her flesh crumbled off her bones as soil,
Her final gasp dispersed as fungal spores.

They said she had become a laurel, but
That was just to soothe a wounded god —
Instead, at last, she became a whole forest.