

Terese Coe

Apollo and Daphne

He shifts into an Attic hound —
Daphne will bend to his law —
and snaps and tears at her peplos,
her linen and blood in his jaw.

She runs again, shouts to her father,
The hound is Apollo, he'll take me!
Beauty is only a curse to me —
destroy me or unmake me!

Apollo leaps for her loosened hair,
her flesh becomes bark as she flies.
Her feet sink into the ground as roots —
the laurel he clutches has eyes.

Pounding the trunk, he hears the beat
of Daphne's sealed-in heart.
In a fury, the god rips out her leaves
for his wreath to war and art.

Former Settlement, New York Bay

Governor's Island

The narrowness of day
leans sideways with the light
across the bluish mosses,
the streaks in purple slate.

Across the rocking waters
the tale is told once more
in masonry and musket
of settlement and war

and nature as men found it
in schist and sandy loam,
Atlantic fog engulfing
the forces and the stone.

On posts that have no torches,
on paths of odd-shaped slate,
on seekers and small children
walking to the gate,

the ghost town sows new seed
before the foghorn moans,
before the last departure,
before the ferry home.