

Jane Blanchard

Excursion

The morning gorgeous, Actaeon decides
To take a walk before the hunts begin,
So leaving bed and breakfast off he strides
Toward where the thickest forest starts to thin.

To his surprise, there Artemis presides
While bathing with her current retinue
Since she believes that very site provides
Sufficient privacy from public view.

He gets more than a glimpse and is amazed,
But she is neither flattered nor amused;
She tells him not to speak because he gazed,
And such offense may never be excused.

He goes, then hears his dogs and sounds a call:
They come to find a stag, devour it all.

Iphigenia

I do not yet accept that I should lose
My life because my father caused offense.
It seems the goddess wants some recompense
For her beloved stag. Could she not choose
One of my younger sisters — maybe use
An animal instead? The consequence
Of action or inaction is immense.
Is death a duty I may not refuse?

There is no longer any pretense of
A wedding here. My mother is distraught
And even furious at those who brought
Us to an altar never meant for love.
Who else around can offer sound advice?
Am I indeed to be a sacrifice?