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Apollo & Daphne

by Amy Glynn Greacen

The block yields up the girl, just as he'd hoped.
Dead pale, appalled and rooted to the spot.
Turn. Then there's him, the stricken god, in hot
pursuit of a quarry elegantly troped

in metamorphic rock. Turn. Non-foliation
curves smoothly into foliage, carved so thin
it actually filters light—as if within
its protolith, not just marble, but the fruition

of the whole drama, were already there.
His ardor. Her refusal. And the flash
of sudden awareness: this chase, this mad dash,
can have no victor. Turn. Her flying hair

a glancing sting, her final backward glance
somehow at once defiant and blank; his hands
seeking skin, touching bark. Stalemate. Turn. She stands,
arms lifted, leafing. Pièce de résistance.

Passion transforms, and not even a god
Comes out unscathed. Some things simply cannot
be gotten over. Arrow to the heart. Clean shot.
The scent of bay will always leave an odd

Longing. The scent of bay will always be most strong
In full sun. Turn. The contrapposto twists
From stone to girl to tree—each cut insists
We see it's been all locked up, all along.

Amy Glynn Greacen's poems have appeared in *Poetry Northwest*, *New England Review*, and *The Best American Poetry*.

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