

Differences*For Zita**(From Budapest Poems)*

The early differences
I saw in you
were just your country's
way of being set apart
in one corner of the world,
till the many more
you so personally are
could fly out from within
with the dry chir-chir
of your dragonfly name.
And have kept on coming
since first I saw you
in that small boat
resting on its oars
in clay-cloudy Lake Velence.
On the south shore
a last century poet's
monarchy-yellow villa
had become a museum
after a great tank battle
the year of your birth.

Amid the smoke of papers
in a capital of cellars,
lines were being drawn:

fields, streets, books,
nature herself casually
changing identity.

Old titles and haloes
struck down in your country's
successive invasions

are now moons afloat
in the lake, or gold
noddings on hairy stalks.

Our boat rustles into
an island of tall reeds
far from any world:

the air turns green
around your breast
where your dragonfly namesakes

form a living cloud.

—No matter how
difficult the times,

you never thought
of taking flight
across frontiers glowing red.

A green wingspan
fills the space between
those eyes where you

come to yourself
amid each difference's
tiny shiverings,

born of longings
we must never quite fulfil
to remain human.

Your summer blouse blends
with the dragonflies.
I see you hover,

freed from gravity
and obligation,
above ground you never chose

setting yourself apart
from nature's right
to come and go,

discriminations
fluttering against
an open window.

Kenneth McRobbie