

A Life

by Rachel Escott, 2008

The stone rose above the water line like the crest of a mountain, the peak of an iceberg. It would be a good resting place, on which a white layer of quartz described a crisp cross in the grey granite. A good omen.

The nymph swam towards the rock and grappled with the smooth slopes, leg after leg hauling its muddy carcass into the blue air. Its mother would not have recognised it in its low-lying state, its armour spiky and defensive, sludge-brown with ages. It stepped awkwardly and uncertainly into the sun.

There it rested and was vulnerable. The heat shuddered through it like anguish, rending the armour. A beauty stepped forth, shivering with the excitement of pale green wings and a needle body that felt the breeze and knew its meaning.

Knew it too soon, for the fresh-born dragonfly embraced the breeze while it was still a tender innocent. The breeze took its fledgling wings and lifted it, up to the bulrushes and down to lie gently on the water. And a trout, in a midday doze, saw the flash of green and snapped it, and the dragonfly could never know the beauty of its iridescence.

The End

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