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Binomial Nomenclature

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Emily Thomas

The morning you died, I stood
outside of the hospital thinking
about some verse in the Bible:

If you believe that Jesus is your savior,
then the Kingdom of Heaven shall be yours.
I couldn't quite remember it right,

but the whispered prayer filled my lungs.
Like fresh spring leaves, a green butterfly
floated down and circled around my head,

gently sprawling in the early sun.
Delicate lepidopteran.
I remembered from biology class

that their wings were covered in scales.
Touch them and they leave a fine dust
between your fingertips.

Abdomen, thorax, proboscis slurping nectar
from pistils, stamen, anthers of a flower.
Danaus plexippus. Monarch.

You in the Kingdom of Heaven
and I, here in Kingdom Animalia.