

# Standing still in insect season

by [Jean Keskulla](#) in the [August 8, 2006](#) issue

When it touches you, you *will* keep still,  
in spite of black flies hovering—  
fiercely itching, lumpish red spots to come—  
feeling the day lighten, half-laughing  
at yourself, you look so silly

with a butterfly on your arm.  
Flawless wings open—orange, deep-brown—  
and close to make one dead leaf,  
on each side a tiny silver sickle,  
moonsliver, which gives it the name,

*Comma*. Knobbed antennas in front  
like turned-around exclamation marks.  
Meaning, in the Beginning, when butterflies  
were made, for the first time the Word  
needed a speck of punctuation.