Butterfly blood

When I was a kid,   
there was a song in the charts   
in which the singer’s dreams seemed   
to infiltrate his lover’s dreams: it sang   
of *the bright, elusive butterfly of love*, but even   
then, I heard it as *butterfly blood*, as if the lover,   
dreaming, expected to kill the thing he desired.

And now, I picture a butterfly, too scared to  
emerge from its Pandora’s box, in case the  
first being it meets – rather than let it sit   
on the back of his hand and breathe  
with its tortoiseshell wings – might   
swipe it to a smear of greasy dust  
and butterfly blood.