

Friday

A windmill's rusty music distances
like a tune from David's
lute

ROBERT MAPSON

OUR PLANE SKIMS THE JUNGLE

our plane skims the jungle
seeking the lost city:
xanadu or new york, london or troy,
following the smooth fingering river.

i read a book on lost civilisations,
we discuss our lost lovers,
i am distressed at the few poems i have with me.

on the river we pass lone explorers in canoes
singing verses from old sagas,
till the river becomes a road: less still,

a sculpture of the mood of warning, and we land.
but this is only a tourist spot,
a point to change cash for plastic toys
and the city of ideas lies further inland.

i ask of the native seller at a bazaar stall
why the discrepancy in the prices of his wares,
crudely carved figurines, perhaps of regional gods.
"that, sir, is because the cheaper ones have no shadows."