

Mary L. Bradford

TRIAD

STEPHEN

carries secrets he hasn't had time
to decode,
takes his clues from me
as I search for signals myself,
decks his walls with Johnny Cash,
a brass rubbing, a moonshot,
writes a poem: "Get out of my hair, war,"
and in his nightmares is suddenly
grown-up and suddenly irrational
like the grown-up world.

LORRAINE

secretes vats of grey matter
in her organic, pulsating room,
creates swirling abstracts
which she sells for pennies,
anxious to be what she is,
she is saved from the cliché
of her Shirley Temple looks
by the butterfly blur
that flits across her face
and curtains her secret self.

SCOTT

dresses on the move
amid small-craft warnings
of colds and other catastrophes,
smiles and rubs
my lipstick brand,
chooses a coat outgrown last year —
red and blue like superman's —
walks out alone,
his body enough to shelter him
from rain and other agonies.