**My Stepmother was Born near Hiroshima**

Andrea Penner

Five cranes fly overhead

that April day in ’twenty-nine,

auspicious beginning for

unlucky girl

whose mother died

and father vanished.

Neighbors take her, keep her in

a house of wives and mistresses.

Silk kimonos in their closets—

cotton rags in hers.

Tiny cranes she folds

from paper scraps,

tucks beneath tatami.

Cold nights she frees them one

by one on frosted breath.

Fifteen when firestorms

begin. Sixteen

when they, when we,

drop the bomb

above her creased

creations.

One day

she too

will fly,

miscarry

twice,

and marry

for love.