The Astrology Conference, Oxford, April 1977
By Sam Szanto

after Sharon Olds

My father would have arrived first,
pacing the corridors.
He would have worn corduroy trousers,
he may have had sideburns.
My mother, wearing dangly earrings and CND badges,
would have been quickly surrounded by strangers.
My father, who had barely met a woman
until his twenties, would have stolen glances.

She may not have noticed him
until the conference started
and she was dazzled by his intellect.
When they did start talking,
initiated by her touching
his arm and asking a question,
the place and people would have faded.

Three months' later, they married,
unable to believe their bright luck,
unable to believe it would run out, as luck always does.
Early on, she would have brought up having a child.
My father, less sure, but still dazzled,
still amazed to be a husband, would have said, *Yes darling.*
I want to tell them, *You're so happy, the two of you.*
And Mother, the son you have should be enough.
I want to say, *I will not mean to, but I will damage you.*