

FAITH

Deborah Paredez

New Year and the boys crouching over empty
Coca-Cola bottles, firecracker wicks lit

one after the other, the stars under
a mantilla of spark and smoke.

They move like Sunday's regulars
— kneel-stand-and-kneel-again —

all that brilliance above collapsing
the blasted mine of sky.

Us girls, we're not much
for what we can't hold,

prefer the sparklers' hiss
and crackle — comet crowns

burning down the prayer
houses of our hands.