

## Fiesta

Because it's summer this side  
of the Ambassador Bridge,  
two carloads of teenagers crash  
their ancient Buicks head-on  
in front of my house  
in an explosion that sends shards of metal  
ricocheting against the sky:  
that shocks the birds from their nests  
in the chimneys and roof gutters  
until the air, as empty and blue as a balloon  
is raining feathers and soot.  
And because we've been waiting  
for this excuse to unclench  
our teeth, our throat muscles hardened  
into bricks by this relentless desire  
for action, for excess,  
we unstick ourselves from our doorsteps,  
begin sorting the procession of arms and legs  
from the cars, their front ends twisted  
and fused as lovers. *Un milagro*,  
says an old woman, sketching a cross  
at my back. No blood. Not one shiny  
tooth cracked. All of them  
alive. A sign  
for the neighbors to turn up  
the radio, for everyone else to settle into listening  
for the sirens which cannot find us  
over *Mi Corazón, Su Corazón*  
and the encroaching layers of dusk.  
For the rival carloads of boys and girls  
to pair off in the darkness,  
hips gyrating in a slow shudder around  
the wrecked bones of their cars  
until the wink of streetlights reflects  
a puddle of oil reshaping itself  
to the face of the Virgin, and all of us,  
the tourists and mothers, all the loose-shouldered  
gang boys, the *abuelitas* and *tios*  
drop hard to our knees  
like we're ducking a shower of roses.