My Father Sings, to My Embarrassment

By Sandra M. Castillo

at Las Villas, a small Carol City bar with a makeshift stage,
where he spends too much time drinking,
pretending he can learn to play the guitar at forty-five,
become a singer, a musician,
who writes about “Que Difícil Es....”
to live in Spanish in Miami,
a city yet to be translated,
in a restaurant where he has taken us for Cuban food,
where I sit, frozen, unable to make a sound,
where Mother smiles,
all her teeth exposed,
squeezes my hand,
where Mae and Mitzy hide
under the table shielding them from shame
with a blood-red tablecloth,
leaving my mother and me,
pale-faced, trapped by the spotlight shining in our eyes,
making it difficult for us to pretend
we do not know the man in the white suit
pointing to us.
