

The Seagull

(FRAGMENT*)

By Juan García Ponce

There were still about three weeks left in the traditional two-month summer vacation. The sea was so peaceful and transparent that it only seemed to exist so that the light would play on the white background of the sand, setting it in motion as it obeyed, in its journey toward the beach, the delicate rhythm of the waves, and the sky was a mere dazzling emptiness, without a shadow, in which you couldn't distinguish the sun, in such a way that even the sun hid behind its own light. In the meantime, after that single kiss, the union between Luis and Katina seemed to have entered, without their will either interfering or being able to change it, another dimension. They were closer to each other, but now in a secret way, which made Luis feel that she was more distant than ever as he turned Katina into something impenetrable, which nevertheless seemed to be over and over again at the limit that would bring her to open herself forever, but without him knowing how to trespass that limit, at the same time that the fury that assailed him all of a sudden came between him and his own desires. Katina pretended that everything was still the same and Luis, at times, tired, did too; but nothing was true. And now, besides, when the presence of the others seemed more intrusive than ever, as they made his own need for Katina's proximity, for the contact with Katina's skin and lips, for Katina's surrender, appear like an attribute of theirs or which, at least, he had ascribed to them, with no interest



in finding out which of the two was true, proved more intolerable than ever and made him divide himself between an inevitable loyalty to the memory of so many past summers that forced him to consider them his friends, a part and a reality of his own world, and the irrepressible desire that they all would disappear, leaving him with Katina, free in that pure center without space that together they had created. ■■

Translated by Margarita Vargas
And David E. Johnson

State University of New York at Buffalo

* Taken from Juan García Ponce, "La Gaviota", *Encuentros*, Letras Mexicanas Collection 104 (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1972), pp. 83-84.