

Chronicle of the Intervention

(FRAGMENT*)

By Juan García Ponce



It must have been very late when they left the dining room. The waitresses had brought a bottle to the table and had stopped tending to them. Also, the owners were no longer in their usual chairs when they left. It was Esteban who suggested they continue drinking and talking on the porch of their bungalow. The stranger accepted immediately. Mariana took Esteban's arm as they walked through the garden. Then she entered the room to serve the drinks while Esteban stayed behind sitting on the railing and the stranger took one of the chairs. When Mariana came out and handed them their drinks, she did not sit in the rocking chair, as

she usually did, but instead she sat in a chair close to the stranger. Through the darkness the sound of the sea reached them as it did every night. Mariana stood up for a moment to turn off the porch light and to open the door to the room, commenting that she didn't like being in total darkness. She then returned to sit in the same place. Esteban drank in silence, without ceasing to look at Mariana. She did most of the talking, asking the stranger questions. He answered as briefly as possible, paying no attention to the conversation, which for everyone was disconnected from what was really happening, as if the words had lost all meaning, but to the movements of Mariana, whose leg at times brushed against his and whose hand at a certain moment unfastened another

* Taken from Juan García Ponce, *Crónica de la intervención* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001), pp. 873-878.

one of the buttons of her blouse. Esteban registered the irresistible pleasure with which she displayed, each time more openly, her availability. He could see Mariana as if he were seeing her for the first time because everything seemed to happen for the first time, and she wasn't his Mariana but the Mariana removed from every possibility of being possessed because the pleasure she felt before the reality of her own person filled her completely. Then she removed her sandals and a little later put one of her bare feet on the stranger's and for a moment moved it up his leg. The conversation was becoming more intermittent. Mariana and the stranger were able to pretend that suddenly they were only intent upon the darkness through which the sound of the sea reached them, and their dedication to their drinks was also a pretext. In the midst of that tension, time elapsed slowly and completely. Finally, the stranger said something that allowed him to lean toward Mariana and put his hand on her thigh. Mariana looked at his large hand, which was of a color darker than her own skin, and she stopped talking, focused only on the subtle movements of the hand caressing her thigh. And then, suddenly, the stranger took her by the wrist and pulled her, forcing her to stand up, and sat her on his lap. Mariana looked him in the eye and didn't say anything, waiting. Then, she looked down; as if she didn't understand what the stranger was doing as he slowly unfastened the remaining buttons of her blouse and pulled it open exposing her breasts.

"What are you doing?" she then asked.

"Nothing," the stranger answered.

But his hand started caressing Mariana's breasts. After a while she put one of her arms around his shoulders and kissed him on the mouth. The stranger ran his fingers through her hair. After she stopped kissing him, Mariana remained on his lap, entirely at his disposal.

Esteban saw the stranger's head go down to Mariana's breasts and encircle one of her nipples with his mouth. She closed her eyes, but then, unexpectedly she sighed and got up, mov-

ing away from the stranger. He, as well as Esteban, looked at her standing in the semidarkness of the porch with her blouse open and her breasts exposed. She had made a decision, but no one knew what it was.

"Wait," she said turning her head one way and the other to look at Esteban and then at the stranger, and entered the room without bothering to close the door.

Neither one of the two men spoke during her absence, although the stranger filled Esteban's glass in silence. It was a way of saying that he was aware of his presence, but the one who was far away from himself was Esteban. Mariana came back out completely naked. In contrast with the rest of her body, the color of her breasts, her buttocks and the skin around her pubic hair emphasized her nudity. She let a few moments go by without speaking, standing a few steps away from the door to the room, barely smiling while Esteban and the stranger watched her, and then she said:

"Let's go swimming, huh? I feel like doing something like that. Come on."

No one answered. The stranger got up and walked until he was not in front, but at her side, in profile to Mariana's naked body. His hand started to roam over her body, while Mariana stood still. The stranger ran the tips of his fingers over her lips and then his entire hand over her shoulders, her breasts, her stomach, without attempting to break the slight distance that separated them. Then two of his fingers entered Mariana's vagina. His other hand began to run down her back and stopped on her buttocks and finally another one of her fingers also entered her anus. Almost against her will, Mariana opened her legs slightly, her body started to move and soon let out a moan of pleasure, she turned toward the stranger and put her arms around his neck at the same time that she forced him to kiss her on the mouth. She also took him by the wrist and led him into the room.

Without leaving his spot on the railing, Esteban had seen Mariana as if the present were a repetition that gave him back something about

which he was unable to think. Defeated by her own power of seduction, Mariana allowed them to do whatever they wanted with her assuming an attitude of surprise in which she found an irreplaceable pleasure that freed her from all responsibility to herself. To be able to look at her like this also made Esteban foreign to any judgment of her. He entered the room almost immediately. Mariana lay on one of the beds with her eyes closed as the stranger finished undressing. They had not bothered to turn off the light, and Esteban could see their two figures as a single reality in the incommensurable space of the room, where he didn't have a place. When he finished undressing, the stranger's erect penis stood out aggressively from his thin body of narrow hips and broad shoulders. He walked toward Mariana and lay next to her on the bed and kissed her on the mouth. She lowered her arm and took his cock in her hand. Esteban sat on the other bed. Mariana spread her legs and raised her knees up to her chest. From his place, Esteban saw how she guided the stranger's penis toward her vagina and made him enter her. The night that he had slept with her, Mariana had asked Anselmo not to allow him to fuck her, even though while Esteban was inside of her her body said the opposite. Now Mariana, with her hands extended on the stranger's back, her mouth half open and eyes shut seemed to have forgotten everything except for that body on top of her, which gave her such intense pleasure. Her legs crossed over the stranger's back and then stretched out next to his legs; he, in the meantime, had not separated his mouth from one of Mariana's nipples and he moved softly inside of her. During the course of the night, his degradation, that progressive disinterestedness from any preservation with respect to the integrity of his own person, had produced in Esteban the same suppression of personality that allowed Mariana to find her pleasure in a body which didn't seem to belong to her. But Esteban didn't feel any desire, dispossessed of himself, he was no more than the gaze in which contemplation became possible, and that solitary gaze saw Mariana as an absolute

reality that could be possessed through the other, participating from the nearest closeness and the furthest distance of the transformation through which pleasure made her beauty glow, revealing and accentuating her without being able to destroy her even amidst the transformation that completely disintegrated her will, making her lose herself in the series of moans, murmurs and little screams which showed her inevitable surrender to the sensations which the stranger produced in her, at the same time making her be, in the capacity of her body to give him the pleasure he sought.

Through the absence of himself, Esteban felt completely lost in Mariana. His contemplation surrendered him to her and she took him although in that moment she was foreign and indifferent to his existence. His loss was an encounter in a space perhaps nonexistent and impossible to define, but perfectly limited by Mariana's body which Mariana, as a person, had also left behind much earlier, and that body very soon was no more than the sweetness which the stranger had made him enter surrendering him to the possible summit that was found within himself and which left him lying flat and immobile under the stranger's body.

Mariana kept her eyes closed. After a moment, the stranger came out of her and got up without Mariana making any movement. He then looked at Esteban who was sitting on the other bed.

"Perhaps I should go," he said.

"Whatever you want," Esteban replied.

The stranger picked up his clothes off the floor and dressed without hurry.

"Good night," he said to Esteban before leaving. ■■■

**Translated by Margarita Vargas
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