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At night the air in the dirt streets of Saltillo grows dense and black, but not cold. The brown skinned men whose rotting teeth are hidden by their cream colored straw hats, stare at women passing quickly by. Not far away numbered balls are knocking against the sides of a felt covered table, and low secretive voices are discussing the dinero for the winner. The only light escapes from tiny cracks in walls, underneath strong wooden doors, and from a ceiling of twinkling stars. Tall iron gates stand guard in front of courtyards where there are no flowers or gardens. No children are laughing and playing hide-n-seek among freshly stuccoed houses. Church bells do not ring out under the sweating sun after mass on Sunday morning. Young girls don’t hold veils before their faces as if to shield their innocence. Only a rusty children’s bike and a worm spare tire are left to sit in the shadow of the moon.

Kari Tiscornia