

POETRY

# Almería

by Mari-Carmen Marín



"South Point Lighthouse" by Timothy Phillips

It is your sea, the sparkles of light  
shining off its limpid waters on your  
days of Levante, the ones that as a child  
I wanted to trap in my hands to carry  
with me always; the waves  
I imagined were trying to reach  
for the sky like foamy feathers  
propelled by Poniente winds;  
it is your beaches, their wide shores  
of thin-graveled sand, where I yearned  
to bury my tired feet only to be met  
by the water's moistened lips; the strolls  
along el paseo marítimo on summer  
evenings, the smell of calamares, pinchitos,  
the taste of my first kiss while having tapas  
in El Tío Pepe, one of its chiringuitos;  
it is your sun, whose light shines brighter  
and longer than others, your red sunsets  
with yellow splashes across your sky,  
which paints in blue your winter nights; it is  
your narrow streets — their old cobblestones,  
their busy bars, their shops — that I wandered freely  
when I was young; it is your Moorish fortress —  
*La Alcazaba* — crowning the city; it is your name,  
*Al Mariyat*: the mirror that I need  
to find myself, a blown-out candle, when  
away for too long and lacking  
your fire to see its flame  
burning back.