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A Year Without Love

By Anahí Berneri

World-wide famous poet
professor in his autumnal years
looks for companion, partner, protector and friend
young lover, delicate soul,
exuberant, frank and beautiful spirit
for sharing bed, meditation, apartment,
help to beat the fury and the guilt of the world,
innocent as slave or master...
deadly tender to the fast pace of time
find me if you can,
I'm here
I'm here alone
with the alone
A YEAR WITHOUT LOVE
April 26th, 1986
April 26th
I've spent all afternoon
trying to write two ads for a magazine
I didn't waste any time to write one of them
I offered french classes, translations and PC work
Good body
It was the other one that really took me all afternoon
What am I? What am I looking for?
I wanted to seem like a masculine boy without specifying it,
I wanted my personality reflected in my speech
without saying how I am
At the end, I don't know if it's clear
But it's done, I delivered it
and it's going to appear just like that
I look for a manly, active, protective, well endowed friend of lover
for stable relation and safe sex.
Let's see how its going...
Lean over
Take a deep breath
Again
Yo are a bit better
Anyway, we should consider the possibility
that you to stay in a hospital.
but not here.
If you wait me a minute I'll be back with an application
What a mess, Pablito!
I was about to get things in order
but I got low blood pressure
it must be the dye, no?

maybe if you inhale some acetone remover.
Uh, It's so late!
I've got to wash the dye away
and I don't know what to wear.
It's OK, when I finish with the dishes
I will put everything in order
I don't know.
She was slept in the couch with the telephone
Does she have any friend?
Is she going out with anyone?
I don't know. I wish,
we are not getting along at all lately
Well, you will have to move out
Ok, as soon as I get
a husband that supports me I'll do it
If you continue looking where you do!
What are you doing with a book from Neruda?
Don't know, maybe someone gave it to me
The first poet I read was Neruda
I read it with my aunt, I was 13 or 14
Sounds fun!
Let me see
"Joy
I was a taciturn young man
I found out your hair was scandalous
What's wrong with it? I like it!
You like such things!
At that time we used to play
the game of the glass with my aunt
Really?
Well, I moved the glass!
I wrote poems,
I said I was Pablo Neruda from the further away
Did she believe you?
Yes! A couple times I told her it was me,
but she refused to believe me.
Anyway you could tell it wasn't Neruda's poems.
Yah! I can imagine. What were they like?
I don't know, some stupid thing
But that was the way I started writing
Thanks to my aunt
Thanks to Neruda!
Let's go dancing, be my guest!
I had thought of going to the movies

The movies, the movies?
Not, to the other one
No, I pass, I'm inviting you to dance
Come on! Lets go!
June 15th
I continue with this damn sickness,
terribly porn
I have a fungal infection in my crotch
with the shape of a heart
that I've tried to heal with propoleo, aloe vera
and a green bolivian cream
that got me erect
and I believe it helped a bit
My current concern is Luis
I met him the day I went to the disco with Nicols
He took me to his house,
and even insisted that I shoul spend the night
But I didnt want to
What if I started coughing and awaked him?
No, I don't like that movie!
No, not that movie
has bad energy
But we agreed to call
We were going to meet this afternoon
I left him two messages
but he didn't answer
Yeah? No?
Ah! They said it was a bad one
What do you think?
I'm waiting for a call
If I got him sick?
Yeah. I must have got him the fungal infection
and that's why he's not calling me
OK dear, as you say, it's OK
It's OK, it's OK
Maybe it's better he doesn't call me
No, look, you have to clean it
No, don't wash it
You have to heal it
Yes, you have to put it three days
in the terrace in a container with water and salt
Yes, a container, a casserole, a deep plate
No, not a tapper because it is plastic and very dirty
Yes

No, I can't go today
On Tuesday, we'll go to the movies on Tuesday
OK, I'll continue with the explanation
Put it away from everybody, nobody has to touch it, OK?
otherwise the energy get contaminated
It is a talisman that will get useless
For instance, I have it hanging
But you can use it on the bro,
I don't know, figure ti out
Hang up, Hang up!
Wait a second
Ain't you listening to me? Hang up the phone!
I'm waiting for a call. Hang up the phone!
I pay for the phone
My dad pays for it
My dad!
Ungrateful
With all the things I do for you!
Faggot!
-90% off all the scandals on the streets where we stay
are made by the sons of the well off families of Palermo
that come here to molest us,
to throw stones to us and shout us all sorts of things.
Why don't they complaint about it!
It's our only way of living.
What do they want?, That we go out and steal?
To kill people...
Pablo Perez
Cough
Very well
Again
You have to get your CD4 up
You will start taking AZ
Eh, no
I'm feeding well
I'm having vitamines, health teas
It doesn't depend only on alimentation.
You know that 300 is a limit value
I won't take AZ
Lets repeat the tests in a while
Your defenses are very low
and your lungs are not well
You cannot wait.
You have to start treatment as soon as posible

Look, not all the medics think as you do
More that one was killed by giving him AZ
What?

I won't be your laboratory rat
to see if you get the dosys right
Take AZT to hang on
Until when?

Till a new drug appears that really cures?
Take a pill to stay alive
I prescribed myself Amoxidal
and increased the dosis of Bach flowers
When the magazine was published
I received several calls answering the ad.

Let me explain you

I'm a very, very pasionate guy
Finally, I made a date

I swear to you that if something I hat
is to wake up in some other peoples house
I love sex, but in my house and in my bed.
He wasn't handsome, but wasn't ugly either
Do you agree?

He looked most like an allien

Let's go?

Answer from submissive man
to my ad 84087

- Let's go
- I'm short

What?

I'm short

So? Lets go?

Untill we got up he could have taken me anywhere

I would have obeyed

Hi, Pablito

Hi, aunt

Pablo, this is your father

How is it posible! How the hell do I do to talk to you!

If the line ain't busy this machine answers

There are some spots in the x-rays

You'll need to make some studies

What kind of studies?

A test to discard tuberculosis,

a Computer Assisted Tomography

and also a bronchial fibroscopy with a biopsy

I'd like to solve the cough problem because...

Don't worry about that
This hospital is espezialized on respiratory diseases
You'd have to stay at the hospital a couple days
But, is there a way to make it ambulatory,
maybe in another hospital
Yes, but it's not convenient to you
we'd lose time
coming and going
Do you have a partner?
No, I did when I lived abroad
He was also infected
He died a few months ago
OK. Shall we program it for next week?
July 12th
When Herv died we were no longer together
Today I remembered him dying
Even when I didn't witnessed his agony
Did he let him die?
Was he affected by me leaving?
What did he do with my things?
Did he throw them away?
Did he forgive me?
Did he hate me?
Did he ever loved me?
I opened his notebooks
I needed to know
I only found my name next to a strange address
I didn't see him suffering
But now I can't stop imagining it
I finish with some things and we have some drinks
If you have told me I wouldn't come
Why? I wanted to see you. It's a little while and it be over.
Have a seat
Are you leaving tomorrow?
Yes, but instead of Rio they send me to Neuquen
It's only a week, anyway
Are you coming back on Sunday?
Yes, no. Monday, Monday evening
How are you doing? Everithing OK?
What have you brought me? Poems?
No, some pages from the diary.
I'll leave them to you
OK, coll, I'll read them later
Something wrong?

No, no, no
Are you OK?
Yes, yes
Only some tests that went wrong
Take a seat
Hadn't you find a doctor that you liked?
Yes, the one from the Ferrer hospital
He want's me to stay in the hospital to make some tests
What tests?
I don't know. A biopsy,
a tomography and something else.
When are you going?
I don't know if I'll go.
I don't really feel like it.
You have to do it Pablo.
I'll go with you
It's on Monday
So?
Nothing. You are out,
I don't want you to change your plans
What's the problem?
I'll came back earlier
It's just some tests
Nothing to worry about
OK, lets do it so
"TICKETS"
Take out your tongue
Say a
Lay down
How do you do?
No. Stay put
I brought you something to get entertained
Ad 33036. Franc spirit
idealist
looking for sharing pleasures
sex, friendship,
with masculine man up to 40
Me, 30, 1.73 mts, 64kgs.
skinhead
(HIV+)
I published another ad
I wanted to explain that "sexo seguro"
means "safe sex" not "for sure we'll fuck"
Wasn't as succesfull as the first

Ah, look
I imagine because I wrote HIV+
Don't know, 1 cm
Only one person answered, a hairdresser
No, with a machine
When I was a child,
I loved to make braids to my little sister
To gain some time,
I started to answer other people's ads.
Who is this?
Pablo
I'm coming down

OK:

I've just rang,
I think he is coming down
Pablo
Yes
I'm Juan. How do you do?
Here comes the sheriff
We call Baez the sheriff
Ah
Hi, how are you doing?
Hi, How do you do?
You came together
Yes, we already introduced ourselves
OK, let's go upstairs
Yes, let's go
How lucky we found each other
Don't you think, Pablo?
Do you want something to drink?
Yes, whisky or vodka if you have
You know, Juan, Pablo has experience
He frequented the leather bars in Paris
Yes, some friends took me
to a couple of them
I lived for some time there
Did you lived a long time in Paris?
I lived... Three years
And why did you come back?
Some family matters
There are very good leather bars in Paris
The Chax, the Keller
Where did you go?

The Chax..., the Keller...
No, I went to the Mec
The Mecson, yes
It was near where I lived
Some bars are even better
that the ones in San Francisco
Really?
I lived some years in San Francisco
And why did you come back?
As if I knew! I like to come and go
He bring us toys...
OK, Pablito, would you like to tell us
what sort of things you like
What are your limits, would you?
- Yes
- Yes, what?
Yes, what?
He doesn't know
Yes, he does
No, he doesn't know
Yes, he does. Yes Sir
Come on, tell us
OK, Pablito, if you don't stand something
you can shout RED
Is that clear?
I think that my pasion for leather
started in my childhood
I always liked the super heroes
their muscular bodies
the tight suits,
their masked faces
they formed my ideal
of strong and protective man
Are you still giving classes
in the gas company
In the water company
This month I'm gonna get only 220 pesos
I had arranged 700
The company pays three months
and the French institute does not take responsibility
On top of that I have to register for taxes,
pay the social security...
Did you go to the medic?
I'm doing some tests

Do you need money?
If you can...
This month, with the aunt,
we still didn't finish paying the taxes
I've been paying everything
for three months now
With the money you give me, of course
I've been thinking..
about the apartment,
that maybe we could,
given the location and the size of it
maybe we could get a valuation
I believe that with the money we get
we could buy two one room apartments
Not for the aunt,
I do not have any problem with her
Can we talk about this another time?
Yes, sure. You have to go?
I have to go back to the office
Let's go
No, stay, stay
I'll take care of the bill
No, stay, stay
I'll send you the money this afternoon. OK?
Do you have a dog?
If you have a dog
No, that's from a friend
that brought it here and forgot it
From this month on
I will charge 30 pesos per class
OK, I owe you 10 for the next one
August 31
I have decided to start a new chapter
because a value changed and it disturbs me
CD4... 100
That means that my defenses are so low
that even an angina could kill me
This month Saturn is over my house of health
perhaps my feelings are wrong
How do you do?

OK:

I have the results from the tests,
I wonder if you have a minute to look at them

OK, I'll go look for your clinical history and I will receive you

- Have a seat, wait for me

- Thanks

Well Pablo

When will we start with the medication?

Eh, look, Oscar

I'm not taking AZ

It's a pity, because the three drugs cocktail is working

Let's do this,

I prepare the papers for the medication

because the process is going to take some time,

meanwhile you think about it

Reasons?

For what?

Why do you live with your aunt?

My mother lives in a rented apartment, very small

She lives with my brother

Actually, my aunt's apartment is also mine

You are the owner?

No, no, not me. My dad's

Half and half, but my dad supports it

My aunt has psychological problems

She doesn't work

How many brothers and sisters?

Two

My sister is dead

Cause?

Suicide

Actually, my brother is half brother

Salary?

Eh, 100, 120...

Total salary!

That would be 320

How you doing?

Good afternoon

How you doing?

Good afternoon

I'm sorry I'm a bit late

No problem

Your name was...?

Pablo, Pablo Prez

Nicols friend

A while ago I had brought you some texts

Poems

Let me see...
Here they are
Yes, I have read these
Interesting
Very interesting
But in this country poems do not sell, see
It's so difficult for an argentine writer
to publush poems!
I write poems myself
Perhaps you could be part of
an antology with other writers
But certainly not this year
But we'll have you present
Eh...
I'm writing a novel too
Really?
It's a diary, actually
About?
It's the life of a writer
that have AIDS and...
when he feels he's going to die
starts writing his diary
The life of a gay with AIDS...
That could cause some interest
From 300 to 500
Juan...
Sheriff
Pablito what a surprise
How are you?
Jos Luis, Ricardo
Jos Luis is the one that organized this
Ah, How much is the ticket?
Keep quiet that today it's on me
Pablo is a writer and some day
he will write the story of my life
Won't you, Pablo?
Do you want to go to change?

OK:

Go with him
Hello
Everyting OK?
Can I?
Yes

What, you won't share?
Really?
You, Juan
Sheriff
And that guy?
Martn?
He is one of Bez lovers
He's very well
Sort of
I've been with him once
But he's not your type
Why?
Maybe in a couple years
maybe he will turn
a little more interesting
Maybe you like him for yourself?
Don't you know the sheriff at all?
I'm gonna go round to take a look
In this plane we found three negative states
this is crazy
Take, open it
Do you have Martn's number?
No, I don't have Martn's phone number
But if you want
I can give you his email address.
The glasses?
Down there
Pablo, you know that
the sheriff
doesn't like this things, do you?
it's ok sharing lovers,
as long as he is present
but, he shouldn't find out
What will you tell me?
That he was in jail, that he beated his wife?
that whole story?
That's what they say.
How did you know?
Anyway, he doen't need to find out
As far as I know,
Martn is interested in guys about 50 or older
It's OK, if you don't want,
just don't give it to me and that's it
Ough, OK, Pablito, OK Pablito

I'll look for my notebook
and i'll give you the email address
But, do you have a way to send it?
Yes, yes, I'll manage
OK, write it down before I regret
I'm already regreting
- Come on
- Do you have...?
Yes
masterinboots,
boots from the english word boots, double oo, t, s
masterinboots@top.com
Where do I plug the cable?
Anywhere
It doesn't connect
I'm coming
That smells good
What?
A great smell is coming from the kitchen
Try it, tell me if it's OK
It's spicy, isn't it, I overdid pepper
No, it's OK, it's hot, but tasty
Lacks some salt, there it conected.
It obeys only your commands
It's slow, you have to wait
Whom are you writing to?
To Martn
Who?
Martn. A guy I met
at the leather club party
You didn't tell me anything!
Didn't tell you?
No
No, because nothing happened yet
OK, hurry up
that dinner will be ready in ten minutes
"Master, I allow me to write you
to tell you that I need discipline..."
"Slave
"Your deductive logig works pretty well.
"I'd love to have my boots real shining.
When you call me (798 0106),
you will introduce yourself saying: I'm your slave, sir"
Hello

I'm your slave sir
Who?
I'm your slave, sir
Hi, how are you doing?
Longing to be at your feet
OK, OK, but first a few questions
Who gave you my address?
A friend
A friend who?
Juan
Juan. Juan the hyena?
Yes
Yes what? Yes sir!
Yes sir
Are you alone?
Yes
And how are you?
Are you lying down, in the bed? How are you?
I'm on my feet
On your feet, very well, now on your knees
Yes
Told you on your knees! Are you?
Yes, yes, yes sir
Yes sir, very good
Now take care of my boots
I'm not listening to you! I'm not listening
OK, stop it.
We'll meet next Thursday in a bar near Retiro
How do I recognize you?
Actually, we've already met
You are Pablo, from the leather club. Aren't you?
Yes
How did you do the other day?
Fine, but I would have loved getting those whipping
Ah! You like to spy on people
A little
I'd like to have you here now,
tied up to a tree
How I wish I were there!
Where are you?
in the backyard,
enjoying a bit of the hat whether
I don't care how far we are. I can go!
No, no, dont. I live with my parents

Ahh!

Well, but I'm going downtown on Thursday anyway
I'll be free at about 10
We can meet if you want
Yes, yes, yes, whatever you like
OK, hold on
that I'll go find something to write

OK:

AZT, three in the morning, two at night
five
each twelve, eight and eight
nine and nine
eight and eight
Do they call it coctel to make it attractive?
That one imagines a delicious nectar
in a crystal glass with two cherries?
Just seeing the DDI tablet get me nauseous
Yesterday I waited 15 minutes
untill it completely got dissolved
I tried to drink it with different sodas and juices
to make it more pleasant
But I think it dissolves quicker in water
It's funny, but I love the AZT tablets
They are just like a 90's masterpiece
A riding unicorn welcomes me
October 9th
The appointment date finally came
Today I woke up early
ready to start a new life
I'm tired of suffering because of my weak health
I decided to start with a macrobiotic breakfast
That I took form a naturist magazine
I want to keep a healthy diet,
feel strong.
I went to a dietitian store
and bought drinks in the supermarket
I arranged, cleaned, and shined things
and even got my aunt out of the apartmtment
Then I prepared a Valeriana and Quirquincho tale tea
a mixture that had already proved good before,
helps to make easier to wait and calm anxiety
while stimulates sexual arousement
Good

Do you live alone?
Yes, sort of
Have a seat
Would you like something to drink?
Coke, or vodka or...
Or what?
Or whisky
No. Vodka, Vodka
Great
OK, I will turn on...
It's hot, isn't it?
What's up?
What do we do?
Eh?
Bring something
- Where do I change?
- Over there
When I come back
I want to find you there
in the corner
Yes, sir
If he were thinking about me
as much as I do think about him
he would have called me several times
I'd like to get out
to buy something to eat
But if he calls me while I'm out?
Is this love?
I even feared for this diary
At least it's a relief I can go on
as long as Martn doesn't call me
And I hurry up because I suspect
that if I fall in love
I wouldn't be able to go on writing this
that tries to be, on top of everyting,
a diary about the search for love,
lost of love, of desire
and fear to the death.
What am I writing?
Pure bullshit!
I don't know what else to write
in order to distract me
Hi, Pablo, this is the sheriff
I have something for...

Hi
Hi, Pablito
How do you do?
Wanting to see you
Yes, I have a lot of work these days
And what were you doing right now?
Told you. Working
You could tell me something more
Something wrong with me?
No, No
No, sorry
I'm translating an article for a french magazine
Yeah? What is it about?
Some stupid thing
Some instructions for getting a boyfriend
A female magazine, for me, for you...
No, not for me, Pablito, but sounds interesting.
And? Did you met someone lately?
No, I told you, I have a lot of work
On top of that, I'm a bit sick
I think I'm going to bed now
If you want I can do some treatment to you...
Do you?
You could also rest a little from work
No, really, I've got to finish this for Friday
Really
It's a pity, because I wanted to show you
some stuff I brought from the trip
And I bought you a present
Really?
Look, I'm not feeling well, really
Don't be upset
but today I'm not good company for anyone
You know very well it's not like that
I like very much being with you
Besides, I have a real surprise
And you are going to like it
What surprise?
You'll know if you come
OK, I'll take a shower and I'll be on my way
I'll be waiting
So good you came, Pablito!
You know Martn, don't you?
Yes

Well, wait for me while I change
Did you tell him?
I wanted to find you like this!
Martn!
Still!
The right or the left one?
The left one!
Very good, the little slave
Very good
Very good!
Now you will have your prize
or you already want to leave?
Everything OK?
You'll stay? Won't you?
Hey!
What?
Bye
Bye
The values remain stables
we continue the treatment
Come to see me in three months
You do the tests
and then you bring me the results
OK?-

OK:

Thanks
December 31st
This morning Martn called while I were working
I thought everything had faded with him
And I still think so
and that he only called me to fuck
with the excuse of the happy new year
A year without love?
Come on, hurry up that my old man is waiting for us!
Hurry up!
Take this!
What are you doing with that! Take it out!
What?
- Take it out! You filthy... How can you p...
- But that is for twelve o'clock!
How can you put a panty together with the food!
It's for good luck! Leave it there!
Take it out because I throw it!

- Ah! Ok!
- Take it out!
- You want to fuck my year!
- Yes, I want to fuck your year!
- Come on, it's late, late, very late!
- OK, Don't you see that is a new pan...
Everything remains the same
None of my predictions will became real this year
Nothing bizarre happened
Unless of course
the fact that I have to continue living
like something exotic
A YEAR WITHOUT LOVE
AIDS diary
Pablo Prez
HIV Positive
Leave it, leave it!
Stop, pablo
They do it to sell more
It's always like that,
it's in the contract
it's only the cover
it's your novel inside
I know why you are like that
because they draw you an ugly lady
I look like a woman!
Ah, see, I knew it!
Come on, I invite you dinner
to celebrate
Pablo, this is Juan
I saw your novel in the library
Very nice the drawing in the cover!
Congratulations! Call me
"... my aunt Nefertiti,
that I dare call her Nefritis
in the intimacy of my writing..."
Yes, Maceio
Hold on a moment
Have a seat if you want
Dad, what are you doing here?
Something happened?
Something happend to the aunt?
No, I came to talk to you
Your aunt is in my house

She is very upset
And I am very disapointed
Why?
You know!
I am surprised you could do something like that
Why did you have to talk about family matters?
What family?
It's my story!
It's my life, no one name appears
Besides, you...
Look, we...
we helped you
as much as we could
Pablo...
And with all that happened to us!
He's looking for you
I'm leaving
Yes, yes, sorry
When I come back tonight,
I don't want you to see you here
This is Nicols house, please...
Hi, Hi!
Hi, I'd like to talk to Juan
Pablo
Ah, Ok, no,
nothing important
No, no
I'll call him later -
Thanks
Julia, this is Pablo
OK, I phoned you to call off tomorrow's class
I'm moving and...
No, I still don't know
I'll call you as soon as I know
No, no, I'll call you
Bye

TICKETS:

Good night
one ticket for the show and for the wardrobes
Thanks