

Missing Words

by *Jess H. Brewer*

December 1, 2021

1 Excerpt from Borges

On the burning February morning Beatriz Viterbo died, after braving an agony that never for a single moment gave way to self-pity or fear, I noticed that the sidewalk billboards around Constitution Plaza were advertising some new brand or other of American cigarettes. The fact peined me, for I realized that the wide and ceaseless universe was already slipping away from her and that this slight change was the first of an endless series. The universe may change but not me, I thought with a certain sad vanity. I knew that at times my fruitless devotion had annoyed her; now that she was dead, I could devote myself to her memory, without hope but also without humiliation. I recalled that the thirtieth of April was her birthday; onm that day to visit her house on Garay Street and pay my respects to her father and to Carlos Argentino Daneri, her first cousin, would be an irreproachable and perhaps unavoidable act of politeness. Once again I would wait in the twilight of the small, cluttered drawing room, once again I would study the details of her many photographs: Beatriz Viterbo in profile and in full colour; Beatriz wearing a mask, during the Carnival of 1921; Beatriz at her Firsty Communion; Beatriz on the day of her wedding to Roberto Alessandri; Beatriz soon after her divorce, at a luncheon at the Turf Club; Beatriz at a seaside resort in Quilmes with Dalia San Marco Porcel and Carlos Argentino; Beatriz with the Pekingese lapdog given her by Villegas Haedo; Beatriz, front and three-quarter views, smiling, hand on her chin. . . I would not be forced, as in the past, to justify my presence with modest offerings of books — books whose pages I finally learned to cut beforehand, so as not to find out, months later, that they lay around unopened.

2 Nouns Blanked

On the burning _____ died, after braving an _____ that never for a single _____ gave way to _____ or _____ I noticed that the _____ around were advertising some new _____ or _____ of American _____. The _____ pained me, for I realized that the wide and ceaseless _____ was already slipping away from her and that this slight _____ was the _____ of an endless _____. The _____ may change but not me, I thought with a certain sad _____. I knew that at my fruitless _____ had annoyed her; now that she was dead, I could devote to her _____ without _____ but also without _____. I recalled that the _____ of _____ was her _____ on that _____ to visit her _____ on _____ and pay my _____ to her _____ and to _____ her first _____ would be an irreproachable and perhaps unavoidable _____ of _____. Once again I would wait in the _____ of the small, cluttered _____ once again I would study the _____ of her many _____ in _____ and in full _____ wearing a _____ during the _____ of _____ at her First _____ on the _____ of her _____ to _____ soon after her _____ at a _____ at the _____ at a seaside _____ in _____ with _____ and _____ with the Pekingese _____ given her by _____, front and three-quarter _____ smiling, _____ on her _____ I would not be forced, as in the _____ to justify my _____ with modest _____ of _____ — _____ whose _____ I finally learned to cut beforehand, so as not to find out, _____ later, that they lay around unopened.

3 Nouns, Scrambled

first	series	universe	vanity	times	devotion
self-pity	fear	sidewalk	billboards	Constitution	Plaza
February	morning	Beatriz	Viterbo	agony	moment
myself	memory	hope	humiliation	thirtieth	April
politeness	twilight	drawing	room	details	photographs
birthday	day	house	Garay	Street	respects
father	Carlos	Argentino	Daneri	cousin	act
wedding	Roberto	Alessandri	Beatriz	divorce	luncheon
Beatriz	Viterbo	profile	colour	Beatriz	mask
brand	other	cigarettes	fact	universe	change
Carnival	1921	Beatriz	Communion	Beatriz	day
Turf	Club	Beatriz	resort	Quilmes	Dalia
chin	past	presence	offerings	books	books
San	Marco	Porcel	Carlos	Argentino	Beatriz
lapdog	Villegas	Haedo	Beatriz	views	hand
pages	months	past			

4 Verbs Blanked

On the burning February morning Beatriz Viterbo after an agony that never for a single moment way to self-pity or fear, I that the sidewalk billboards around Constitution Plaza some new brand or other of American cigarettes. The fact me, for I that the wide and ceaseless universe already away from her and that this slight change the first of an endless series. The universe but not me, I with a certain sad vanity. I that at times my fruitless devotion her; now that she dead, I could myself to her memory, without hope but also without humiliation. I that the thirtieth of April her birthday; on that day to her house on Garay Street and my respects to her father and to Carlos Argentino Daneri, her first cousin, an irreproachable and perhaps unavoidable act of politeness. Once again I in the twilight of the small, cluttered drawing room, once again I the details of her many photographs: Beatriz Viterbo in profile and in full colour; Beatriz a mask, during the Carnival of 1921; Beatriz at her First Communion; Beatriz on the day of her wedding to Roberto Alessandri; Beatriz soon after her divorce, at a luncheon at the Turf Club; Beatriz at a seaside resort in Quilmes with Dalia San Marco Porcel and Carlos Argentino; Beatriz with the Pekingese lapdog her by Villegas Haedo; Beatriz, front and three-quarter views, hand on her chin. . . I not as in the past, to my presence with modest offerings of books — books whose pages I finally to beforehand, so as not to find out, months later, that they around unopened.

5 Verbs, Scrambled

pained realised was slipping was may
change thought knew had annoyed was
given smiling would be justify learned
died braving gave noticed were advertising
be would wait would study wearing
devote recalled was visit pay would
cut find lay forced

6 Nouns & Verbs Blanked

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