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DTC 101

10/7/2013

The Library of Babel - Arranged

by Jorge Luis Borges; arranged by Trevor Cashmore

The Library of Babel, one of Jorge Luis Borges's most esteemed and powerful works, is a speculative fiction describing a universe which entirely consists of an infinite library, containing all possible books. The story is a conceit for humanity's differing approaches to our own vast and unfathomable universe, to how we cope with our existence. From chaotic disorder – the 'divine disorder' – some seek significance and truth, while others can find only nonsense and futility.

Inspired by the recent text-adventure game *The Message* by Jeremy Lonien and Dominik Johann, and Borges' own story *The Garden of Forking Paths*, each section of my arrangement of *The Library of Babel* provides the reader with possible paths to pursue in the form of hyperlinks. A minimalist approach emphasizes the few illustrations used to highlight important and/or powerful passages, and highlights the hyperlinks in each passage. The piece has been constructed with a deliberately labyrinthine layout – for instance, the complete contents are never given to the reader, forcing them to delve back into the Library repeatedly if they want the full story, making it into more of an adventure than an essay.

The Library of Babel was about the meaning of life, asking the greatest question of all: does the universe have meaning, despite its inherently chaotic

nature? Or is existence meaningless, random and futile? And in this arrangement, I hope to encourage the reader to explore the Library; and in those explorations, to perhaps discover some meaning in the universe themselves.