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Borges knows the human psyche well enough to intentionally alter the states of peoples' he will never meet. In "The Aleph" he proposes a spiral exploding from the perspective of man onward into the infinite. In "The Zahir" he illustrates the spiral imploding eternally into the depth of man. The two stories are microcosms of each other in a funny way, their common theme is infinity. Borges pleads with the reader to attempt the impossible: to comprehend vastness of a story which has by an inevitable chain of events found its way into their hands, summoning arguments of predestination. Originally the puzzle of inevitability sent my intellect into hyper-driven self-destruction. It hit young and I would ponder infinity constantly, but I didn't begin really work on the question until age sixteen, just before my original attempt ENC1101. It is no *coincidence* that I didn't stay in college long the first time.

The protagonist in both stories, who happens to share his name with the author, displays symptoms of what the DSM-IV may diagnose as mild mania and chronic depression. He is somewhat delusional, obsessive, easily fixated, withdrawn, and lonely. Not surprisingly the character's chosen occupation is writing. In neither works is Borges searching for the focal noun of the story. The Zahir and Aleph come to him, which indicates the author being withdrawn and somewhat delusional. Daneri in "The Aleph" is symbolic of Borges' (the author) own frustration with literary masturbation and the sad taste of a foolish public. The impossible lover in both stories is likely a symbol of the author's inability to find sincere love in real life. The most notable connection between the author and the character is their unavoidable obsession with infinity. By representing microcosmic infinities on both sides of the human lens, the two pieces together are a fascinating model of the objective infinite perspective.

I enjoyed reading “The Garden of Forking Paths” the most out of this block. Perhaps I favored it because it was my first exposure to Borges, the explosives opening a deep well of appreciation. Many things came to mind reading this story, most notably the time I spent in Philadelphia. The architecture in German Town by the river in Philly is very European because most of it was built by early immigrants. More, though, the story made me think of Schrodinger, a mathematician famous for his abused kitty. Science and the intuitive mind understand that every decision is inevitable, even if they contradict each other. The consciousness experiencing one or the other has branched its self into a separate existence/world/dimension. From the other works we read By Borges I feel that “Garden” is an excellent introduction to his style and philosophy. His work quite literally consumes the reader.

Falling from heaven is a commonly used metaphor in Christianity. Marquez, in “A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings” uses it literally to tell a story. In opening discussing three days of gray, rain, and invading crabs the author sets the mood. His character falling to a town that has damned angels as being players in a conspiracy fits the punishment metaphor. The fall of the angel, the townsfolk rich in faithlessness and gullibility, and the story of the spider-girl are clues that consequence and piety are the themes. I cannot rid my mind of an image: a leper covered in sunflower-sprouting sores, though I have never seen a leper. The story reminds me of autumn. Autumn is not to be confused with fall. It is darker, grayer, mysterious, full of consequence, and often in my life sad, desperate, and lonely. I did not address whether the man was an angel or not because it is like differentiating a nation of people from a political nation. It’s in the beholder, and our townsfolk were no believers in angels. In this case the authorities never decided whether he was or was not an angel, they fell into their Zahir of political manipulation and obsessed over the man’s navel, dialect, size, and understanding of *their* languages.