

The Messenger

Volume 2007
Issue 1 *The Messenger* 2007

Article 66

2007

B/art/ender!

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Recommended Citation

Quaglia, Jordan (2007) "B/art/ender!," *The Messenger*: Vol. 2007 : Iss. 1 , Article 66.
Available at: <https://scholarship.richmond.edu/messenger/vol2007/iss1/66>

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Blat/ender!

(How m)any
Im/ports/
are in t(his)
one line?

The ansluuvr is
how are you?
I'm feeling
just wine.

/I/ntoxi/can't/
beLeave
my pal(llet)s
Don't (b)rush me!

One more dr/ink/
For I (p)ain't
as drunk as
th/I/s can(vas) be.

So CritiSize
and CritisEyes
I'll still(life) down
a jeroboom.

My hab/it
Sure(al)ly is/n't
an Edgar
Allen Poe(m).

—Jordan Quaglia

Psst. DeSez. DeSez, it's me, wake up.

Poor Vernor DeSez rolled over in his head, his consciousness rotating inside the fat-slick lining of his rotund body. Really rolling over would have required a lot of shifting on the tiny cot, just to keep his center of gravity more or less on the center of the bed, where it was least prone to flow slowly to the rhythm of his snoring over the edge and fall with a great thud on the floor. Really rolling over would have indicated that he was already awake, had not fallen asleep, had not fallen asleep in the forty-five minutes since lights out which were worse than all the hours to come before morning, worse because the cabin was still full of insidious whispering that pretended for minutes at a time that it had finally relented to the tide of night.

In his head he rolled away from Petey Perry, whose nasal prattling was the closest thing to friendliness he could hope for on most days. He rolled over and over an acrobatic seven-hundred and twenty degrees in his head, wondering how far away he would be by now if he were really rolling. Out the door, down the dirt path, headed for the soot-filled fire circle. He imagined Petey following him, chattering crazily all the way, scrawny arms full of dry wood blocking his freckled face, matches drooping from the corner of his mouth. Be a pal, Petey, and set me on fire. He wondered if his fat would crackle and gleam like Grandma's Thanksgiving turkey, in the oven on hour three, getting crispy. He wished he had a whole gleaming, fatty turkey now.

Dear Mom,

Thank you for sending me the chocolate chip cookies in the mail. They were wonderful. The chocolate did