

	<p>It all started innocently enough, with a challenge.</p> <p>I approached the machine and punched in the confirmation code 623876.</p> <p>You need to register 20 minutes before the appointment starts! said the machine.</p> <p>Ok, the machine did not say the number is wrong, thats a win. Five minutes later, success, the appointment bouncer machine, prints 623876 on a peace of paper.</p> <p>“Challenge accepted,” I muttered, channeling my inner ego. “No need for paper;</p>				
1					
8	<p>tenuous connections he'd concocted proved the existence of a higher power.</p> <p>Naturally, being the sort of godless heathen that gets their kicks from questioning everything, my first thought was: “Prove it, mate! And while you're at it, explain those giant dinosaur angry birds that had the planet on lockdown for a few million years!” Were they some sort of divine avian punishment? A biblical plague with feathers? Did you forget to build the arc big enough?</p>	<p>was insisting, with the fervor of a particularly zealous used-car salesman, that the Theory of Everything boils down to...God.</p> <p>Yep. The old fella himself. Or herself. Or whatever non-binary deity happens to float your ark.</p> <p>Now, I'm no theologian, but I've seen enough logical fallacies to recognise one when it throws a theological punch in the face. This chap proceeded to mumble some gibberish, a veritable word salad, before declaring that the</p>	<p>many other 'you's there are that are now driving trucks or selling tacos.</p> <p>And that was just the warm-up. The main event came in the form of an interview with the, shall we say, “allegedly” smartest man in the world.</p> <p>Maybe he just memory palaced the hack out off an IQ test.</p> <p>Now, you'd think the smartest man would be discussing the implications of quantum entanglement or perhaps the best way to fold a fitted sheet. But no, this paragon of intellect</p>	<p>a “super” human, you'd at least make them ergonomically sound for the 21st century. But no.</p> <p>Then, just to keep things suitably surreal, a program about complete strangers, each sporting the same face. Not twins, mind you, just...doppelgangers scattered across the globe like poorly placed Easter eggs.</p> <p>Apparently, the universe had hit the “copy-paste” button a few too many times. You start to wonder if it's all just a bit rubbish, and how</p>	
	<p>So, naturally, I did what any self-respecting skeptic would do: I looked skyward and muttered, “Alright, God, if you're really up there in your sky palace, and not just some cosmic figment of the smartest man's imagination, give me a sign.” You know, something subtle, like the sky raining down lobster tacos or a chorus line of singing squirrels.</p> <p>So, the next morning, armed with this barrage of bizarre information, I made my way to the passport office, that monument to</p>	<p>hope and international travel. And that's where things got truly...un-normal.</p> <p>I was killing time in the waiting hall, minding my own business, when a giant of a man, rose from his seat. He was so tall he had to duck to leave the waiting hall. You can imagine it was quite the show, a giant, just like the Dutch Giant from YouTube. Less muscular, a little beer belly but the same incredible height.</p> <p>Now, I'm all for a good coincidence, but it gets better. Shortly after the giant lumbered</p>	<p>off, two slender women in their sixties, identical down to the last wrinkle, strolled past me and up the escalator. Ten minutes later, they passed by again, only now I was extra sure that I was not imagining things, I'd taken a closer look.</p> <p>The universe, you see, was clearly having a bit of a laugh. A giant man, two identical women, all within a matter of a day after questioning the very fabric of reality. Was this the almighty's subtle way of responding?</p>	<p>Maybe the smartest man had a point. Or maybe a higher intelligence was just messing with me. The jury, as they say, was still out, maybe for Pizza, probably flattened under a collapsed ceiling somewhere, neatly arranged in slices.</p> <p>Fast forward to today... the universe didn't leave any more signs, but maybe I should take a break from seeking mental challenges with the universe.</p>	
9					
11					