

	<p>It all started innocently enough, with a challenge. I approached the machine and punched in the confirmation code 623876. You need to register 20 minutes before the appointment starts! said the machine. 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>				
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8	<p>tenuous connections he'd concocted proved the existence of a higher power. 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. 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 'yous' there are that are now driving trucks or selling tacos. 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>	
9	<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>	
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