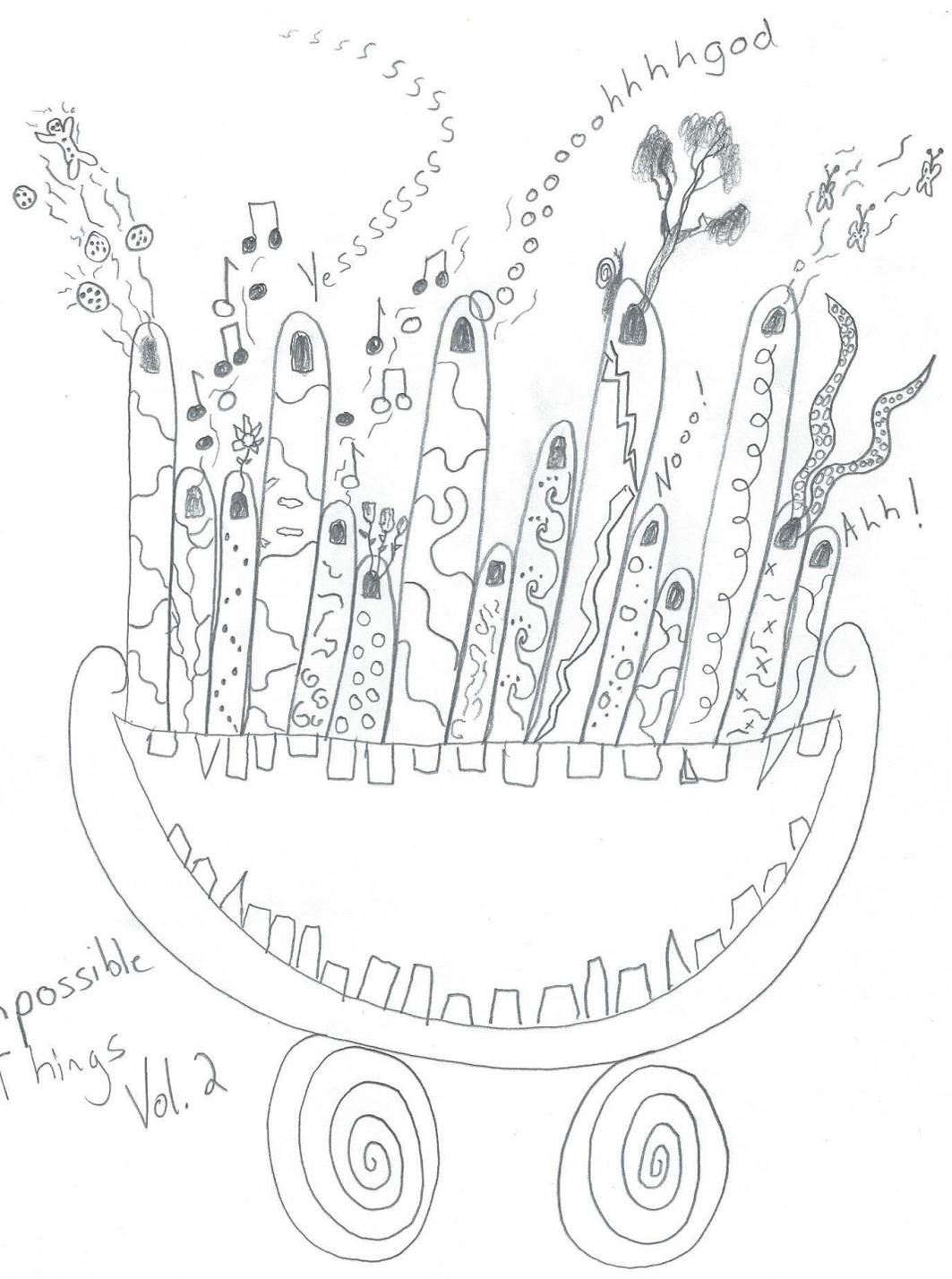


Impossible
Things
Vol. 2



Step Right Up!
Cole Lehman

Step Right Up!

The line curled out of orbit — wrapped around and around and around the nearest star.

Souls from all the universes, dimensions, and planes traveled to this planet to wait ...

And wait ...

And wait ...

Each of them had already cashed in their eternal savings to go on The Ride.

They were waiting to get fitted for the body suit they needed to step onto Earth.

Earth ... You might live for a century in a vibrational physical paradise where you could forget everything, eat other life forms, have almost limitless orgasms, drink chocolate, kill people, make people, and eat plants that helped you remember the universe through all the meat distortion.

Every moment, a treasure of experience you couldn't experience anywhere else.

Or, you might get squished by a car before you found a lover. Or born with a disease that takes your life before you can speak or walk. And worse, one that cripples you without killing you.

It was worth the risk.

Even for a single shimmering moment.

A sunset with a lover, an epiphany with mushrooms or ayahuasca, creating art, performing, finding a song ... Just one of these things would change your soul's possible configurations forever.

And you could have thousands of them.

Hundreds of millions of breaths.

The line of souls led to a white dendrite building that towered above an obsidian plain — its heights swirled with skeleton dragons from the south.

At the base, a portal shimmered beside black circus tents that rippled in streams of green mist.

A calliope piped through the air — screams, smells of fresh baked cookies, orgasms, the feeling of stubbed toes, cheers, sighs, and a kiss spiraled in song on the mists.

Outside the tent stood a tall dark man in a suit blacker than obsidian and a top hat that danced with living silver flames. Beside him, a short assistant, held fierce green in his eyes —like the night shine of a cougar.

They had been taking a break, enjoying cigars from the ride.

"Next!" the short man cried.

The next soul stepped onto the platform, the tall man wrapped his long arm around them, and all three walked into the jiggling fabric mouth of the tent.

“Oh, the wonders you’ll find!” says the tall man as he holds up three faces in the mirror.

“The horrors!” smiles Cougar as it jabs the freshly bodied soul with a needle, drawing a squeal.

“See how it feels?” the dark man asks as he spins them around to measure their chest width with a candy cane fabric rule.

“Do you want this body to look perfect or grotesque? To be the best at everything or crippled?”

“...”

“I want to grow up in Africa, I hear it’s the most beautiful landscape in the world,” says the soul with its back turned to the tall dark man.

He checks a box on his list, smiling.

“Africa it is. Boy or girl?” he asks.

“Girl. I hear they have better orgasms,” it said excitedly.

“Oh they do, yes they do. Many are also wiser and stranger than the boys. Of course, we can’t promise anything besides the basic shapes. And boys who are good at helping girls orgasm are notoriously hard to find. But not impossible!”

The two artists nodded in agreement as they spun the bodied soul around, looking for things to tidy up.

“Is dying as bad as some people make it sound?”

“Not always.”

“Sometimes it’s worse. When it takes years instead of seconds. Dying is the easy part, you just go off on another adventure. “

But, the time spent getting out of your skin. That can be tricky. Or you might not see it coming.

No one knows when it’ll end. You could ride for a 100 years or 10 seconds. You could be in the middle of the most beautiful dream and get eaten by a shark or a disease.”

“Ready?”

“Now off, go on!”

With a slap they send the soul into the portal.

“Next!”

Cougar grabs the soul and pulls them into the tent.

“What do you want to be?”

“I want to save the world.”

“Oh good. They need more of you.”

Cougar and the dark man looked at each other and smirked while their hands worked.

“A few snips here and there. Weave in some arrogance and hope. Courageous self-assurance and you’re all set.”

“Where do I start?”

“That’s for you to figure out. First you must see what the world really is about. And you might change your mind about whether or not it wants saving.”

“It might be better to build a new world instead, “ said Cougar as he sewed the final thread, the soul was now enclosed in the meat suit.

“Or just enjoy the ride and build something beautiful while you’re there.”

“On you go, do-gooder.”

And with hands on the congealing skin, they guide it to the portal, look at the swirling colors for a moment and push them in.

“Next!”

This soul was quiet as they guided it into the tent.

“You’ve been on the ride before?” the dark man asks.

“Yes.”

“Why do you go back? There are so many other experiences to have in this universe.”

“The orgasmic ball of eternal light waves. Fields of flowers as tall as your head with monsters roaming to hunt and riddle with. Songs to find in caves that can open 10,000 years of bliss.”

“Surely you must know this Earth ride is a scam.”

“A moment in a skin suit looking at a flower can’t feel that good. They just want your money.”

“And we hear it’s getting worse and worse every turn. Too many bodies. Not enough space. Torture, class warfare, unnecessary starvation, the breakdown of language, madness, silent war ... The list goes on forever, “ says Cougar.

“Those things are true.

In some ways, it’s worse than anything you can imagine.

And in others, better yet for it.

My last ride I spent wandering the world under the stars. Poor and hungry much of the time. But the people I met, the beauty I found in the forests and in the hearts of strangers ...

The art of each moment in a body.

People shining against the dark maw of death ...

The moments there get sweeter even as the world sinks into chaos.

Because they become all the more improbable.

And it's not like you think.

What you choose here might as well not even exist.

Once you're in the ocean, anything goes.

You're free to be anything you can imagine.

To leave soulmates behind and find new ones.

I want to do it again.

I want to love again.

To be touched while the summer sun hangs like crystal water against the coming night. To swim naked in clear mountain lakes.

I want to dance again.

To feel the stars pumping blood in my veins."

"But you know you might not get any of those," says Cougar.

"I know. But the chances are actually pretty good that I will."

"And dying? You're not afraid of it?"

"No, it's not that bad if it happens quickly. And if it doesn't there are plenty of ways to speed it along." he smiled with a fresh pair of lips.

They finish and walk with them to the portal.

The portal waves like an ocean.

Faces contorted in every emotion, red, blue, a song, rise and fall on the vibrational surface.

This body steps in all on its own.

Cougar and Dark are perplexed.

"Next!" they call out of habit.

And while the next soul steps onto the platform.

They drop their cigars and step through the portal.

Smoke curls from the abandoned cigars and joins the green mists as the next soul stands, not knowing what to do.

About the person who wrote this

Cole D. Lehman doesn't know who, what, or where he'll be when you read this. He loves stories and how they shape our worlds. Cole's fed mostly on sci-fi, fantasy, satire, and magic realism. His love for the potential of this universe, its moving bodies, and wild landscapes seem to remain a constant. Except for moments when the fire is too hot and noisy, the world's spinning too fast, and he's ready to play a new game.

What is Impossible Things?

An emerging collection of short stories, poems, and drawings that exist because people did the impossible. They coaxed ideas, feelings, and visions into shape.

Read more Impossible things at: coledlehman.com

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