

The Possibilities

Word Count: 723

Imagine finding it at the bus stop. Imagine the day is gloomy, storm clouds looming ominously. You sit on the lone bench under the bus stop's glass structure, grateful that the dreary weather has kept people indoors. You start sifting through your bag looking for your phone-for what else could *possibly* keep you from dying of boredom-when you accidentally drop your wallet. You lean down to pick it up, but something catches the corner of your eye. Floating in front of you is an orb made of pure light. Not a light you recognize; not a light anyone on earth would recognize. The orb flickers through stages of opacity, sometimes becoming invisible to the eyes. An aura surrounds it, and you know instantaneously that this light had been around for a long time, around when the Earth itself had only been a small smudge in the painting of the universe. You know that only a light skim of the orb with your fingertips will grant you powers beyond anything described in the fictional stories you avidly consume. Perhaps merely staring at it long enough would unlock the secrets of the universe. And it is all so terribly alluring.

Yet the few pedestrians milling about the sidewalks, in a hurry to avoid the miserable weather that is bound to come, do not seem to notice the magnificent light. A teenager in a pale-yellow sweater even scurries right through it. You start reaching out, the enticement too hard to refuse, when you pause, and snatch your hand back in fear. The terror of being different, being feared by others. Because you know with every atom of your being that the orb is not a hallucination, but that the orb only *wants* to appear for

you. This revelation scares you even more, because you have *accepted* that this is reality, but this reality is not one known to humanity. So you walk away, body trembling with the force of your unease, forgetting about your plans for the day, and returning home.

The next day you once again begin your walk to the bus stop. It is a happy and warm day, *completely contradicting the day before* you muse. You smile, liking the hope the thought brings you. A short distance away from the bus stop, you pause, your smile slowly widening. You close your eyes and sigh, for everything is as it should be, and everything is normal. Then you open your eyes and your smile drops. For today everything is not ordinary, and the light is more luring than the day prior. For the second time, you run from it, this time getting inquisitive looks from the many strollers enjoying the warmth of today.

Everyday since, you wake up planning to take a different route, naively hoping for a pattern to end. You take the bike route, order a taxi, wait patiently to hitchhike, walk the sidewalks, try different bus stops, but the orb is always there. And after four months of seeing the dreadful ball of power, the lure of the orb is so powerful that you feel like you may combust if you do not succumb to the urge. *Tomorrow I WILL touch it* you think determinedly. So the next morning you get up, knowing your decision as surely as you know the orb will be at the bus stop, waiting eagerly for your touch. Except, it's not there. You look around in confusion. You search for so long that a teenager, the same

one who walked through the orb originally, asked if you needed a doctor. Your cheeks flush, and you stammer out a no, then meander away.

Every morning thereafter you walk to the bus stop, hoping to see the orb that you so tragically avoided in the past. And every morning as you grow old, your movements become more sluggish, your heartbeat gradually slowing down, until not even an echo remains. Yes. There you die, at the bus stop, your last memory being a light so magical, that you know the angels have decided to finally claim you. Then you remember that this is only your imagination, and that the orb, and anything remotely magical does not exist, nor have you died. You will go on living your dull life, doing nothing but wonder ... what if it *is* possible?