What if everyone on earth aimed a laser pointer at the moon at the same time? What if you could drain all the water from the oceans? What if all the lightning in the world struck the same place?

What if there were a book that considered weird, sometimes ridiculous questions, and it was so compelling that you found yourself skimming its pages to find out what would happen if you threw a baseball at light speed?

With What If, Randall Munroe has written such a book. As he does in his extraordinarily popular xkcd webcomic, Munroe applies reason and research to hypothetical conundrums ranging from the philosophical to the scientific (often absurd, but never pseudo) that probably seemed awesome in your elementary school days—but were never sufficiently answered. It’s the rare combination of edifying and fun.