

Portrait of an Overthinker

by

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Four enter and sit at a table. Each represents a part of the mind.

- REASON:** *(placing a binder with documents on the table)* Good morning everybody.
- EMOTION:** Oh god, he's got the binder, please, reason, I can't take another decision, why are we here?
- MORALITY:** What is "here," emotion? Are we even anywhere?
- INSTINCT:** I just know this is for some ridiculous reason.
- REASON:** We have been summoned to determine what variety of sandwich to eat for lunch.
- INSTINCT:** I knew it.
- EMOTION:** Variety... what is "variety"?
- MORALITY:** What *is* variety?
- EMOTION:** No, I meant the definition--
- REASON:** Variety means type.
- INSTINCT:** Look, all I'll say is let's stay away from the chicken in the fridge, I don't feel good about it.
- EMOTION:** Oh my god. It has salmonella, doesn't it.

Music starts.

- REASON:** It does not have salmonella.
- EMOTION:** We could die!
- REASON:** It does not have salmonella!
- EMOTION:** How do you know that, reason?
- REASON:** There's no veracity to that at all. We need to concentrate...

Reason looks over. Emotion is confused.

- EMOTION:** What is "veracity"?
- MORALITY:** Exactly. What *is* veracity?
- EMOTION:** No, not that way--
- REASON:** It means accuracy. Look, we need an efficient sandwich that contains all the necessary meal nutrients.

INSTINCT: I don't know about this nutrition stuff. Healthy, unhealthy... I don't feel too good about it.

REASON: What do you mean?

INSTINCT: Just these scientists, like, deciding... ehh.

Reason stares at instinct, emphatically confused. Instinct nods.

MORALITY: Look at you, a rebel against authority. A sole light in the darkness, in the endless river of sheep--

REASON: Okay, I made reports on the eight possible sandwich choices we have.

Reason slams a couple documents onto the table and spreads them out. Each has a photo of a sandwich with details about that type of sandwich.

We've eliminated the chicken, now we need to get rid of six more. I suggest peanut butter be removed.

EMOTION: *(on the verge of tears)* But I love peanut butter!

REASON: Okay! Then we won't remove peanut butter.

INSTINCT: They say peanut butter is unhealthy, though.

EMOTION: *(shocked)* Unhealthy? We could die!

REASON: You just said you don't agree with nutrition science.

INSTINCT: Yeah, but I have a feeling peanut butter is *actually* unhealthy.

EMOTION: Does it have salmonella?

Pause. Reason thinks.

REASON: Yes, it has salmonella.

EMOTION: *(extremely afraid, gasps)* SALMONELLA? WE COULD DIE!

INSTINCT: I think we should get rid of it.

REASON: Okay, it's done. We have six left.

EMOTION: *(on the verge of tears)* Oh, there's still so many--

INSTINCT: It'll be fine, emotion, I mean, what is left?

MORALITY: What *is* left?

INSTINCT: There can't be a ton of possible sandwiches.

MORALITY: What is *left*?

EMOTION: Reason will make this so complicated.

INSTINCT: I bet you're right.

MORALITY: What is *right*?

REASON: Well, also in my consideration I included... toppings.

INSTINCT: This conversation will collapse.

EMOTION: (*gasps*) Toppings?! I can't handle those, oh, the layers! Ham first? Cheese first?

REASON: No, I just mean in the sense that if we put avocado in our BLT, that makes it a BLAT.

INSTINCT: We'll be fine, I trust my gut.

EMOTION: Oh my gosh, our gut! What about our gut health!

REASON: Our gut is fine.

EMOTION: Should we take a pomegranate shot?

REASON: Our gut is fine!

EMOTION: (*on phone, googling*) We need dietary fiber!

REASON: OUR GUT IS FINE! What is your problem?

MORALITY: What *is* your problem?

EMOTION: (*showing phone*) Our gut needs to be healthy. We could die!

REASON: Okay, well, we'll make sure the sandwich has...

EMOTION: Dietary fibre--

REASON: --Dietary fibre in it.

MORALITY: What is your *problem*?

INSTINCT: I feel like grilled cheeses have fibre.

REASON: Okay, so grilled cheese.

EMOTION: (*googling*) I'll look that up, instinct.

REASON: And are we putting bacon in the cheese?

INSTINCT: Sounds good to me.

MORALITY: But what is the *right* thing to do, gentlemen?

REASON: ...it's a sandwich--

EMOTION: (*looking at phone*) I don't know if grilled cheeses have dietary fiber--

REASON: Emotion, just listen to instinct, he's always right.

INSTINCT: Look, my gut tells me--

EMOTION: Well, what if you didn't have a gut?

REASON: Emotion.

EMOTION: That's what happens when you don't get enough dietary FUCKING fiber!

REASON: We have one left, let's just vote on the grilled cheese.

INSTINCT: So, instead of eliminating five, we just choose one out of six?

REASON: Yes, exactly, so let's put it to a vote.

MORALITY: Democracy.

REASON: See, morality understands.

Reason flips over the grilled cheese paper, and swats away the rest.

INSTINCT: I'm onboard.

REASON: This is the report for grilled cheese, I just need you all to sign--

EMOTION: (*showing his phone to instinct*) But look, instinct, google says grilled cheese doesn't have dietary fiber.

INSTINCT: Oh, that's interesting.

REASON: No, guys, we're already deciding.

INSTINCT: I don't know, reason, maybe I was wrong.

REASON: No, instinct, we're signing right now.

INSTINCT: Maybe... my gut feeling was wrong!

MORALITY: Beautiful vulnerability.

EMOTION: This is what I was saying!

REASON: NO! GUYS! STOP! SIGN THE PAPER!

INSTINCT: Maybe we should reconsider the chicken sandwich.

REASON: NO. WE HAVE ONE LEFT, GRILLED CHEESE? DO WE WANT THAT?

Emotion raises his index finger. This is make-or-break.

EMOTION: Does it have salmonella?

REASON: ...NO! OF COURSE IT DOESN'T HAVE SALMONELLA! NONE OF THESE DO! JUST PICK A SANDWICH FOR GOD'S SAKE!

EMOTION: None of them have salmonella?

REASON: OF COURSE! OF COURSE NONE OF THEM HAVE SALMONELLA! I JUST NEED YOU GUYS TO PICK A SANDWICH! ANY OF THE SANDWICHES I LISTED!

EMOTION: *(panicking)* ...what is salmonella?

REASON: *(head in his hands)* Oh my god.

MORALITY: What *is* salmonella?

REASON: Stop, you idiot--

INSTINCT: I knew this would collapse.

MORALITY: What is *salmonella*?

BLACK.