Zygopleuralistic Proliferation:

During the winter months of last year I had rather low levels of philosophical neuroplasticity, so when I got the invitation that Dr. Martin had just completed a new experiment, I was all too eager to visit despite the man’s reputation.

Dr. Martin was somewhat of a legend in the sector of thought experimentation and mechanics. His material genius allowed him to physically demonstrate his mental genius. Up until a short time ago he actually was a licensed doctor, however, he privately extended his training in ways that the board didn’t agree to be ethical. Through that training, though, he had acquired a medical and biological expertise unlike any man before, and coupled with his mental and material genius, it meant that his experiments were a spectacle capable of putting your previous knowledge and understanding of the world six feet under.

Ushered in from the blustery winter night did I finally lay eyes on the lab of Dr. Martin: a small white room bearing an inordinate amount of carving tools, metal boxes, computers, and a small metal sink. That was all the normal stuff. For the occasion, there were two large bins in the middle of the room. My heart direly wished for the bins to be empty but my mind knew there to be something in them. It must be the new experiment.

“I call this one 'zygopleuralistic proliferation.’” He extended his arm towards the bins, motioning for me to look inside. What I saw caught me quite off guard.

In each bin was *exactly* half a man. I couldn’t possibly think of something so odd and so seemingly useless to have laying around in a lab. It was oddity in the zenzizenzizenzic form. How could this possibly be an experiment? Luckily, I didn’t have to wait long before Dr. Martin explained it to me.

“I vertically sliced this man only a couple of days ago.” He muttered it casually, as if he cut up people often, which he probably did. “The idea was to make it so each bin is *exactly* equal in body parts. I’ll tell you, the organs were quite messy to deal with because they didn’t line up symmetrically. Now, you may wonder why I have two bins each containing an assortment of body parts. The thought experiment is this: do the bins contain half a man or a whole man? Your natural inclination is to say half. Tell me why that is so.”

“Avoiding the nitpicky, I’d say a man is generally constituted by a brain, a heart, and all necessary organs. Clearly each bin doesn’t contain a full brain, heart, and necessary organs. On top of this, if each bin were to be a whole man the body would need to function as such and be able to live.”

“To tackle your first point: assuming you trust my word and value my reputation for honesty and attention to detail, I can tell you that each bin contains the minimum biomass of brain required for life, as with the heart and organs. When I say I evenly divided the man, I mean evenly. Each bin has half of each cranial lobe, each nerve, each lung, each intestine, each bladder, etc. And I’ve consolidated and spliced the openings so that each organ is able to perform necessary functions. As to your second point: I assure you that each entity is perfectly capable of living, albeit not well, for a long enough amount of time to be considered human. The problem I face right now is that I don’t know yet how to bring the dead back to life. And the only way I could gather the necessary parts for this experiment was to use a dead body. If I could find a way to jolt them to life then you would see. I’m close, I just need a little bit more time to work out some details. Anyways, have you any further conjectures towards this experiment?”

Against all better judgment I knew Dr. Martin had a point here. Assuming he really had split the vitals *exactly* in half, each one would theoretically be a different man. Just because they looked odd didn’t mean they didn’t fit the biological definition of a human. I had seen people without limbs or without eyes before. So be it if these men had considerably less parts than others, it was possible. “Well…” I desperately tried to think, yet couldn’t come up with a reason for them not to each be a new man. “Well, it’s mighty interesting, I’ll give you that.”

A smile formed on Dr. Martin’s face. He knew he had won me over for the moment. “That’s a good man! I know it’s hard to think this way, but you can’t negotiate with the truth. It was hard for me when I first came to the realization. However, I think we can both safely conclude that the entity in each bin is an entirely new man!”