We start off our story with a man named Craig McGuinness. He is a very scientific and curious person intent on pursuing psychology and neuroscience in college. However, his intellectual gluttony results in an egregious imbalance with practicality and actually making a living. This was also after he got fired from his position as a psychology assistant professor for "unfair grading" to the students, but the real reason is because he tried to have inappropriate sexual relationships with his students. He toils and suffers from one odd job to the next after graduation from college and not being able to find a self-sustaining job from his psychology degree. Craig, after witnessing a resurgence of MBTI and Enneagram trending on social media during an outbreak of a new virus (a new pandemic akin to COVID-19) in the US starting from 2038, has an idea on how he could survive. In the year 2039, he creates and propounds his own purported personality framework (supposedly based off of Jung and Enneagram) and complements it with his own book (akin to the official "MBTI guides" on the 16personalities website) and official website (named relationalgrowthtrajectories.com) that sells resources based on this framework. Not only that, but the official website also provides both free (cursory) and paid (more comprehensive) typing sessions from assistants/followers of the ever-growing McGuinness's school of RGT, whom he was able to recruit and cultivate through his network of psychology nerd friends back in college. To make the website even more appealing to the masses, McGuinness pays artists/visual designers to help create cute chibi-style avatars for each of the 12 types in his framework/system that everyone can relate to. Craig is also now happy that he can also finally make his psychology degree to good use by leveraging it as his credentials/ethos when it comes to publishing research papers or official "literature" based on this pseudoscientific psychometric/personality framework/system. Craig claims that his new RGT framework is more sound and innovative compared to existing frameworks like Enneagram, MBTI, and Big 5, because it posits that everyone not only has a unique type, but they also have a unique growth trajectory/life path. The pandemic is only a factor that makes the growth of this system even faster, because everyone is confined to their homes online.

Craig McGuiness named this system Relational Growth Trajectories (RGT). Here is his framework in detail:

Three main instincts/nodes: knowledge, wealth, love

Based roughly on enneagram instincts

Knowledge -> roughly social

Love -> roughly sexual/one-to-one

Wealth -> roughly self preservation

Directed Acyclic Graph between these three nodes

What each of the 6 distinct directed edges (otherwise called improvement/growth directions) are called:

Knowledge -> Wealth = Application (A)

Wealth -> Knowledge = Education (E)

Love -> Wealth = sYmbiosis (Y)

Wealth -> Love = Security (S)

Love -> Knowledge = Passion (P)

Knowledge -> Love = Introspection (I)

There are 8 possible types, and each type is a Cartesian combination/ordered triple of growth direction (as delineated above) that one prefers among (W, L), (L, K), and (K, W).

These types are canonically numbered from 0-7 inclusive.

Type 0: Application-Security-Passion (ASP) -> The Survivalist

Cyclic? Yes (deposition)

Type 1: Application-Security-Introspection (ASI) -> The Strategist

Cyclic? No (growth path knowledge -> wealth -> love from topological sort)

Type 2: Application-Symbiosis-Passion (AYP) -> The Confidant

Cyclic? No (growth path love -> knowledge -> wealth from topological sort)

Type 3: Application-Symbiosis-Introspection (AYI) -> The Introspective

Cyclic: No (growth path knowledge -> love -> wealth from topological sort)

Type 4: Education-Security-Passion (ESP) -> The Hedonist

Cyclic: No (growth path = wealth->love->knowledge from topological sort)

Type 5: Education-Security-Introspection (ESI) -> The Student

Cyclic: No (growth path = wealth->knowledge->love from topological sort)

Type 6: Education-Symbiosis-Passion (EYP) -> The Giver

Cyclic: No (growth path = love->wealth->knowledge from topological sort)

Type 7: Education-Symbiosis-Introspection (EYI) -> The Artist

Cyclic: Yes (sublimation)

Two distinct cycles:

Sublimation cycle = Knowledge -> Love -> Wealth -> Knowledge (EYI type)

Deposition cycle = Knowledge -> Wealth -> Love -> Knowledge (ASP type)

For the six acyclic types (Type 1 through Type 6), the first node in the topological sort represents natural instinct while the third and last node in the topological sort represents the optimal end goal for self improvement.

For the two cyclical types (Type 0 and Type 7), the end goals for the subject are ever changing and cycling around the three fundamental instincts/nodes (among knowledge, love, and wealth), so they can't be defined. However we may still define for Type 0 and Type 7 which of the three instincts/nodes comes the most naturally/innately for them.

This forms these subtypes:

Type 0K: Knowledge comes first, thus the transition knowledge->wealth is the first transition. They are named the Applied Survivalist.

Type 0W: Wealth comes first, thus the transition wealth->love comes first. They are named the Stable Survivalist

Type 0L: Love comes first, thus the transition love->knowledge comes first. They are named the Determined Survivalist.

Type 7K: Knowledge comes first, so knowledge->love is the first transition. They are named the Brooding Artist.

Type 7L: Love comes first, so love->wealth is the first transition. They are named the Innocent Artist.

Type 7W: Wealth comes first, so wealth->knowledge is the first transition. They are named the Quixotic Artist.

Also, acyclic types can be alternatively called static types, while cyclic types are alternatively called dynamic types. For static types, the third node/instinct the subject can subconsciously or consciously try their whole life to cultivate, yet according to theory, it is impossible to cultivate the final instinct/nodes fully or completely because the two base instinct/nodes (first two nodes) will compete against such cultivation.

The 6 static/acyclic types can also be sorted according to sublimation vs deposition (somewhat like a Reinin dichotomy in Socionics) based on whether the growth path from their 2nd

node/instinct to their final/optimal node/instinct in life is in the sublimation cycle or in the deposition cycle.

Type 1 is deposition because its growth path is knowledge -> wealth -> love, with wealth->love being in the deposition cycle.

Type 2 is deposition because its growth path is love -> knowledge -> wealth, with knowledge->wealth being in the deposition cycle.

Type 3 is sublimation because its growth path is knowledge -> love -> wealth, with love->wealth being in the sublimation cycle.

Type 4 is deposition because its growth path is wealth->love->knowledge, with love->knowledge being in the deposition cycle.

Type 5 is sublimation because its growth path is wealth->knowledge->love, with knowledge->love being in the sublimation cycle.

Type 6 is sublimation because its growth path is love->wealth->knowledge, with wealth->knowledge being in the sublimation cycle.

Type 0 is pure deposition, and type 7 is pure sublimation, since those two types are cyclic/dynamic types.

Alternatively and canonically, this system can have 12 total types: 6 static and 6 dynamic, where each of the 3 subtypes of Type 0 and Type 7 are split into a type of its own right. Relabel the 6 static types as Type 1S, 2S, 4S (static + deposition), 3S, 5S, 6S (static + sublimation).

Type 0K is essentially the dynamic version of Type 1. Thus, type 0K can be relabeled type 1D.

Type 0W is essentially the dynamic version of Type 4. Thus, type 0W can be relabeled type 4D.

Type 0L is essentially the dynamic version of Type 2. Thus, type 0L can be relabeled Type 2D.

Here, the D stands for dynamic (another term for cyclic). These are the dynamic + deposition types in terms of dichotomies.

Type 7K is essentially the dynamic version of Type 3. Thus, type 7K can be relabeled Type 3D.

Type 7L is essentially the dynamic version of Type 6. Thus, type 7L can be relabeled Type 6D.

Type 7W is essentially the dynamic version of Type 5. Thus, type 7W can be relabeled Type 5D.

Together, these three types make up dynamic + sublimation in terms of dichotomies.

Overall, dichotomy summary for the refined 12 type version:

Static + deposition: 1S, 2S, 4S

Static + sublimation: 3S, 5S, 6S

Dynamic + deposition: 1D, 2D, 4D

Dynamic + sublimation: 3D, 5D, 6D

Note that in socionics though, the way I'm defining the "static-dynamic" dichotomy here is actually closer to how "result-process" is defined. Static/acyclic = result (well defined/fixed endgoals) while dynamic/cyclic = process (perpetually varying endgoals)

The irony (which will be central to the theme of the fictional story this system will be used in) arises from the fact that despite this typology attempting to purport that people are defined by their unique growth paths/cycles (depending on static/dynamic) rather than a fixed and immutable type, the growth path/cycles themselves are discrete, immutable, and stay fixed, which makes this still nonetheless a system that attempts to reify the complexity of human personality into discrete static boxes, despite initially appearing otherwise.

It is now the year 2041. In the wake of the new pandemic that started in 2038, the majority of the population is confined to their rooms, and much like back in 2020, most classes and events are held using Zoom, or some other video meeting service. In the US, the RGT personality framework has now become widespread both as a social media trend and in contemporary esoteric personality/typology communities online that attempt to analyze the framework more deeply and "correlate" it to other systems such as Enneagram and Socionics. Different factions emerge concerning this framework, and in two distinct forms:

(1) The typology community are essentially elitists that dismiss the "surface-level stereotyping" and meme-making surrounding the cute chibi-style avatars of the RGT types as frivolous and shallow.
(2) Different schools of interpretation start to emerge as well, among the followers of the RGT framework. (think different schools of socionics/enneagram) Different branches emanate from McGuinness's original literature about RGT. In particular, McGuinness's original literature posits that the system only has 8 types (Types 1-6 being static and Types 0 and 7 being dynamic). One of his associates/followers, Kevin Henry, expands his framework to make the subtypes of 0 and 7 into actual types, making the system have 12 types. This school of interpretation is named the Henry school of RGT. Another one of his followers, Miranda Sparks, thinks that McGuinness defined sublimation vs. deposition dichotomy wrong for the static types, and that those delineations should actually be reversed (e.g. 3, 5, 6 are deposition in Sparks' system while 1, 2, 4 are sublimation in Spark's system), this is since from Miranda's point of view, the directionality of the 1st node (innate/most natural instinct) -> 3rd node (goal instinct) should be used to determine this dichotomy rather than the directionality of the 2nd node (innate/most natural instinct) -> 3rd node (goal instinct) for acyclic/static types. People in

the typology community perpetually fight over which interpretation/school is better - Sparks, McGuinness, or Henry.

Sparks, McGuinness, and Henry are also among the main people on McGuinness's website (as well as the many offshoot websites made for the RGT system) that sell RGT interview/typing sessions. They've also each produced their own literature/websites for this personality/typology system.

Now after all this exposition, enter our protagonist, Cheyenne, a 19-year-old sophomore in university in the year 2041. As for her personality traits, she is overall very extraverted, sanguine, and has a neurotic need to be accepted and welcomed by others in their groups. Cheyenne sometimes feels really guilty over acting friendly, nice, and effusive for what she's worried was the ulterior purpose of being accepted by others, although she in fact is kindhearted and personable naturally but just isn't sure what's the best way to convey it. In around December 2041, right before the midterm exams, she was watching the newest blockbuster movie in the theater with her friends and wanted to research more about what people online were saying about one of the characters in the film that she admired, Delilah Pearson. This is when she stumbled across the RGT typology system, because people were discussing what Delilah's RGT type could be (it was a standstill between 1S and 1D).

One thing led to another and Cheyenne quickly became fascinated/engrossed into the RGT personality framework and the community of people surrounding it, being drawn to the cute avatars and active discussions on social media. Cheyenne was excited to tell everyone she knew about the fundamentals of the RGT framework, and told her IRL friend Jasmine (we'll flesh her out later) and her boyfriend Albert all about it, the latter who didn't seem all that interested at all, and cynically dubs the person who invented the framework a "scammer up to no good". She got so obsessed with this personality system and figuring out who she was that she was willing to defer her schoolwork for the purpose of researching and conversing with people online about RGT. As a result, she does quite poorly on her midterm exams in December 2041. At home, due to being raised according to strict standards by her parents (who wanted to bring up a refined and academically cultivated girl adhering to the "woman in STEM standard"), she gets berated. Cheyenne's mom, being slightly more understanding of her daughter than her dad, tries to wholeheartedly have a serious but genuine conversation with her about her suddenly failing grades, and Cheyenne not wanting to disappoint her parents about her incipient mental spiral/identity crisis just told a white lie about getting a cold around the time of the midterm. She promises to them that she'll pull her grades up by the next semester.

Come early next semester, Cheyenne joins a RGT-themed Discord server for the sake of community. In that Discord server elitism (and not always overt elitism) runs rampant, including people frequently disdaining Love and Wealth-first types as shallow while sycophantically glazing types 1S, 3S, 1D, and 3D instead. Cheyenne starts to calibrate her behavior towards what she saw as the best type: 1S ("The Strategist"), and some edgelord teen on that Discord Server whom we'll call Perry becomes attracted to her persona, reinforcing Cheyenne's LARPing. At this point in early 2042, her boyfriend Albert already started seeing a difference in Cheyenne's behavior, trying to ask her what was wrong, in which she told him that it was

nothing significant. Eventually, Cheyenne starts to experience profound stress from being de facto required to play two parts of her personality to stay true to what Albert wanted her to exude and the different/colder/more analytical persona that the RGT Discord community "admired" for intelligence and willpower, just like the character Delilah from the movie Cheyenne watched. Cheyenne eventually goes so deep in the rabbithole that she asks to get typed via a voice call by the Discord community members, feeling extremely nervous that she won't get 1S or 1D as her type, but to her relief, she "passes" the typing session/interview and gets an official badge of 1S in her community.

Eventually, Albert comes to resent Cheyenne's duplicity and lack of transparency/honesty when probed on her unusual behavior and breaks up with her, which makes Cheyenne crash out even more, because she takes this as a sign that maybe she's just delusional and she could be merely orchestrating her behavior as a 1S or 1D. Desperate for answers, she goes to get typed by a professional RGT practitioner this time and pays Miranda Sparks, one of the authors of the framework, $250 for a more comprehensive video typing session, in which much to her chagrin, she gets a result of a Type 6S (love -> wealth -> knowledge). Due to the axiom posited in RGT that one cannot change their RGT type trajectory, especially if it's static like hers, nor can they ever realistically hope to cultivate their third/lifelong "inferior" instinct/node (for 6S this would be "knowledge"), Cheyenne becomes unstable and depressed and starts really doubting her intellect and feels like she's innately flawed. She starts feeling suicidal, like life is not worth living anymore if she's just some shallow 6S and can't change it. She reads more about the differences/distinctions between Miranda's and McGuinness's systems in terms of how they defined the nodes/instincts, and then uses "at least I'm still a Type 1 under McGuinness's original system" as a coping mechanism. Around this point in time, Cheyenne gets closer to Perry, a type 3D (7K/"Brooding Artist" in McGuinness's original system), an online friend whom she met on the RGT discord server, who was initially attracted to Cheyenne based on her persona. Perry is notably incredibly friendly and open-minded, and after talking with Cheyenne some more decides that he really admires Cheyenne being 6S (Love -> Wealth -> Knowledge), static > dynamic making her more stable and grounded in theory compared to him being dynamic on the system and his goals always changing. He ironically understands Cheyenne's need to orchestrate her personality much more than her previous boyfriend Albert, who was more direct and blunt, does. He decides that he likes Cheyenne's true 6S self over her 1S persona she is adamant to orchestrate, since as much he was drawn to the fascination of Cheyenne's 1S persona, he didn't want her to be an empty caricature either or have her suffer the fate of losing her original self. Perry tries to convince Cheyenne that she shouldn't just put herself in rigid boxes, and tries to remind her that typology systems like RGT don't define who she is and will be, and even praises/compliments her on how fast she's learning the system/how intellectual he thinks she is despite being Knowledge last on RGT. Cheyenne feels at the same time flattered by her compliments but confused on why Perry wouldn't just type her as Knowledge first (Type 1 or Type 3) if she is in fact that smart. Perry reminds Cheyenne that RGT only measures relative, intrapersonal, instinctual/node strengths rather than absolute metrics such as human intelligence, but this goes in one ear and out the other mainly because Cheyenne still suffers greatly from guilt by association. Perry suggests that Cheyenne could just be the exception of her type's stereotypes when it comes to intelligence, creativity, and

cultivation, but to Cheyenne, just her type/group being perceived as dumb alone is enough of an indictment on her personality as shallow and lacking substance. (ironically a contradiction that she fails to realize since by LARPing her idealized type, she is being just as, if not more, shallow). Perry tells Cheyenne that he used to idealize certain types in himself as well, and reminds her that real 1S's wouldn't really enjoy being a 1S at all, and that "the grass is always green on the other side". Although there's a side of Cheyenne that wants to effusively thank Perry for telling her the harsh truth in an approachable way and she was once reciprocally romantically attracted to Perry, she one day impulsively blocks Perry for exposing said truth, because she can't handle the harsh truth about her identity/type being delivered to her anymore, leaving Perry puzzled. At this point Perry, realizing how deleterious the RGT system is to mental health in general, decides to firmly leave any RGT discord community that he was previously in, and block/cut off ties with anyone still associated with RGT.

There are several times in the spring semester of 2042 that Cheyenne tries to seek therapy for her identity crises, but therapy is always inadequate because she cannot admit, even to herself speaking out loud, much less to the therapist (who uses the RGT as a diagnostic tool as well), that she suffers from the neuroses/weaknesses of a Type 6S rather than a Type 1S. When the therapist probes her deeply on her struggles, Cheyenne regurgitates textbook struggles from the Type 1S literature/descriptions, which not only makes her reflections seem extremely contrived/orchestrated, but the therapist is treating her for the "wrong struggles/neuroses".

Come time for final exams, Cheyenne barely has any motivation left to actually study and prepare, since all of her mental effort has been focused on her ever unstable sense of identity. Since most college classes are now held on Zoom, Cheyenne sees an opportunity to cheat on her final exams and gives in to that opportunity for the fear of disappointing her parents. She has a further mental breakdown on deciding whether she should cheat or not. On one hand, cheating would run anathema to the values of a typical Type 1, who values pure and unfettered knowledge first rather than materials/resources or a need for admiration, but on another hand, she didn't want to disappoint her parents and be forced to tell them the truth about her identity struggles stemming from the RGT debacle. She gives in to cheating, and doesn't get found out. Her parents congratulate her for pulling her grades up and praises her on her intellect, but Cheyenne feels like she really didn't deserve such praise, not only because she was academically dishonest, but also because she violated the ideals/"rules" of her idealized personality Type 1 "The Strategist" who places knowledge first and foremost.

This is the final straw that pushes her to contemplate suicide standing on a bridge, but desperate to get validation for one final time, she goes on McGuinness's original website for RGT and requests to get typed officially by him, paying the full $400 for a four hour long video call typing session. But it turns out this "typing session" will last much longer than just four hours... In the typing session, McGuinness appears to impugn/harshly berate how his rival Sparks typed Cheyenne, and told her that Sparks's reasoning for her being Type 6S was only surface-level. In reality though, McGuinness is just telling Cheyenne what she wants, being easily able to sense her distress and that the way she was calibrating her responses seemed like she really wanted to get typed 1S, initially to make some more quick money without much mental effort, but also because he is attracted to what he sees as Cheyenne's potential and

wants to recruit her as a business partner. He sees Cheyenne as serving dual purpose - her expressiveness and sociability would make her have decent availability with typing other people on the site and overall be a very "friendly/approachable typist", while typing her as 1S would give her writings/literature about RGT that she contributes to McGuinness's site ethos and credibility to newcomers, since a 1st-knowledge type was expected to be naturally erudite. This is also due to Sparks quitting being a RGT practitioner and McGuinness losing one of his resources/typists. Ostensibly, this is due to Sparks wanting to invent/expand her own version of RGT and disagreeing with a lot of McGuinness's RGT axioms, but it's implied this is actually likely because of Sparks finding about McGuinness's shady past, undermining his credibility. Plus, "healthy/friendly/agreeable 1S's" McGuinness thought were rare and Cheyenne's presence on the site would be a fresh dose of novelty. Over the course of summer 2042, McGuinness gradually starts to groom Cheyenne online, using her insecurity about not being 1S or 3S as leverage, criticizing everyone else who typed her/evaluated her (including Perry) as lacking credentials and being charlatans that didn't really know what they were saying. In front of Cheyenne he lambasted them all for hurting her feelings, and told Cheyenne that she made the right decision by filtering out "elitists that just try to fit her inside a box" from her life by blocking Perry. McGuinness uses such compliments to get Cheyenne to be romantically attracted to him, seeing him as her "savior" who really truly understands her personality.

Over this time, Cheyenne appears to become more mentally stable and decrease the frequency of her suicide attempts, but also herself becomes a lot more emotionally stunted, blunt, analytical, and insensitive of others' feelings, to the point that that therapists are now considering diagnosing her with NPD or ASPD. Under McGuinness's influence, she starts to forget about her real personality and even to her, it starts becoming hard to tell what's real and what is orchestrated. Cheyenne nonetheless leaves a testimonial on the McGuinness's RGT website expressing gratitude to him for "helping her understand who she really was and self-improve" and praising the framework for its analytical and logically consistent qualities. Eventually, Cheyenne enjoys a promotion to become one of the official RGT typists/practitioners, and even gets some of her own literature/interpretations of this typology framework published on that site, so she technically did fulfill what past-Cheyenne coveted/dreamed of. She now enjoys exclusive privileges as the website admin and first disseminator of new knowledge as McGuinness's wife. The story ends with her first typing session that she's due to provide, in which her client happens to be her ex-boyfriend Albert. Looks like he somehow got duped into the system too, despite initially calling it "the work of a fraudulent scammer".