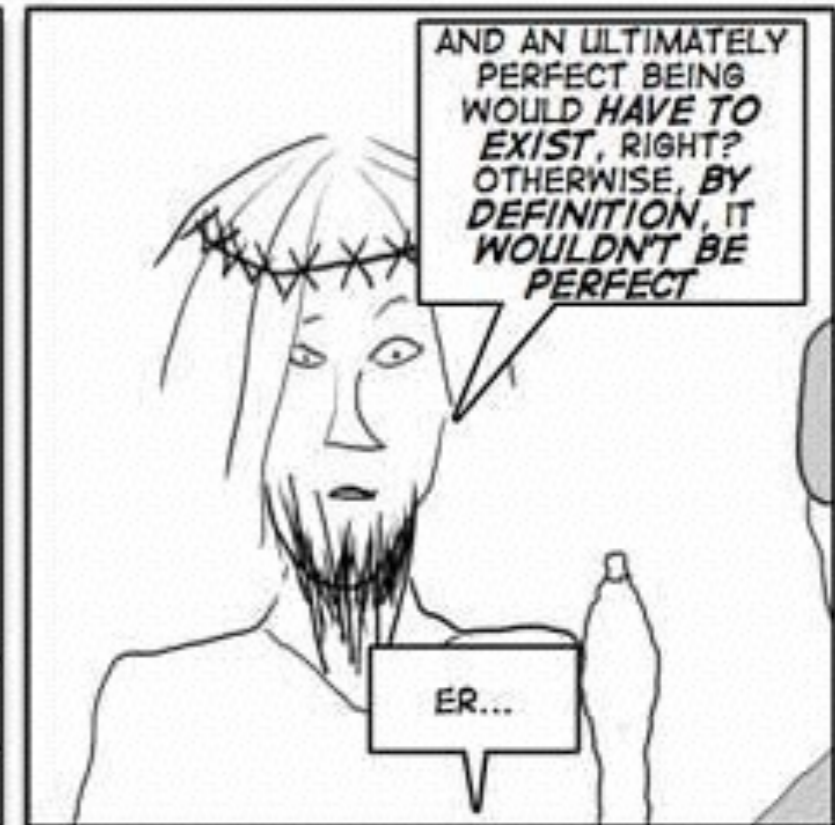


*God as the
Being Than
Which No
Greater Can
Be Conceived*

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Reconstructing Anselm's Argument

Define God as the being than which no greater can be conceived (=BNGCBC).

1. By definition, nothing greater than God can be conceived

2. Suppose God (=BNGCBC) does not exist.

A. If God does not exist, something greater than it can be conceived.

B. So, something greater than God (=BNGCBC) can be conceived.

3. But nothing greater than God can be conceived because, by definition, God is BNGCBC. So, we cannot suppose that God does not exist.

NOTA BENE:

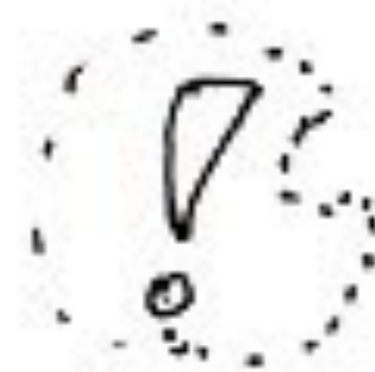
Step 2 assumes that an **existent being** is *greater than* (more perfect than) a **non-existent being**. That is, if you conceive of *God-as-non-existent*, you can conceive of something greater than it, namely you can conceive of *God-as-existent*.



Think of the greatest
concept ever



Now imagine that
it doesn't exist

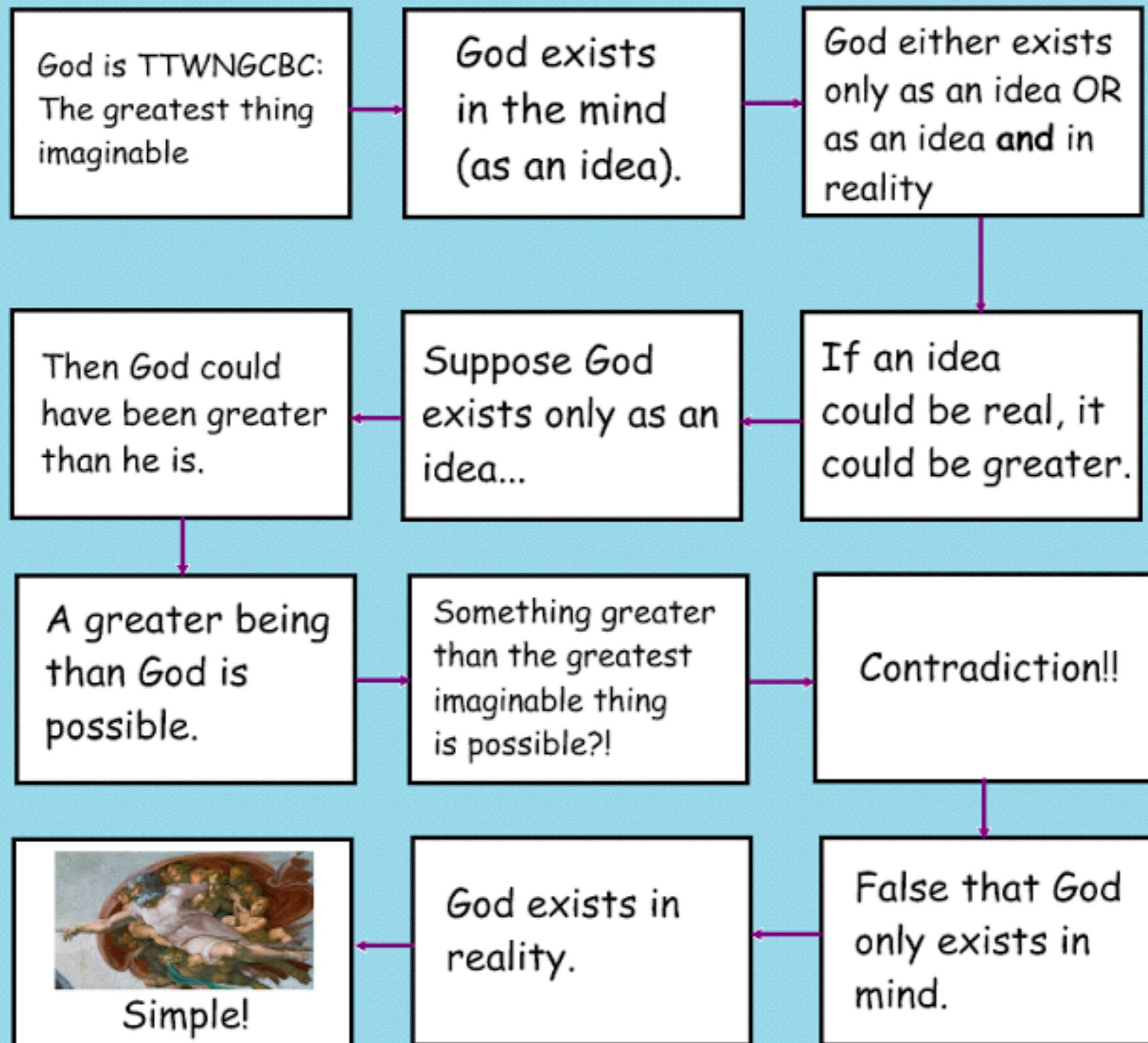


Not so great
now, is it?



So if what you're thinking of is
really so great, it must exist!

Anselm's Ontological Argument Made Simple



The Abstract Form of Anselm's Argument

1. By definition, nothing greater than God can be conceived.
2. Suppose God does not exist.
 - A. If God does not exist, something greater than it can be conceived.
 - B. So, something greater than God can be conceived.
3. But, by definition, nothing greater than God can be conceived, so we cannot suppose God does not exist.

1. By definition, X is true
2. Suppose Y is true
 - A. If Y is true, then X is false
 - B. So, X is false
3. But X cannot be false, because by definition, X is true. So, Y must be false.