

MAX PARADOX

EVERYONE THINKS THEY'RE A GOOD DRIVER

THE ABSURD PSYCHOLOGY OF TRAFFIC,
EGO, AND LOSING YOUR MIND AT 60 MPH



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INTRODUCTION

Driving is not movement.

It is a mood.

INTRODUCTION

Driving is not transportation.

It is exposure.

You don't just move through space.

You reveal yourself.

Not intentionally.

Not proudly.

But consistently.

A car is a small moving room where people behave as if no one is watching, even though everyone is.

A place where manners dissolve the moment the door closes.

Where logic survives only as long as nothing interrupts it.

Driving does not make people worse.

It makes them honest.

On the road, patience is tested without warning.

Rules appear without context.

Other people behave incorrectly on purpose, just to ruin your day.

At least that's how it feels.

You don't enter traffic.

You enter a shared misunderstanding.

Everyone believes the road works a certain way.

Everyone is wrong in a slightly different direction.

Some are wrong confidently.

Some are wrong aggressively.

Some are wrong at 140 km/h while explaining it to themselves very calmly.

- You trust your instincts more than signs.
- You trust habits more than rules.
- You trust your version of reality more than anyone else's brakes.

Driving is the only activity where millions of people participate daily, all convinced they're above average.

Statistically impossible.

Emotionally mandatory.

This book is not about cars.

Cars are just containers.

It's about:

- how people react when they feel delayed,
- how rules change when enforcement disappears,
- how quickly cooperation collapses when anonymity

appears.

It's about the strange transformation that happens when responsibility is divided among strangers moving in the same direction but never agreeing why.

No lessons here.

No tips.

No safe driving campaigns.

Just familiar moments.

Recognitions you've already had.

Thoughts you've already thought - usually out loud, alone, behind glass.

If this feels uncomfortable, that's good.

It means you drive.

CHAPTER 1 - Everyone Thinks They're a Good Driver

No one gets into a car thinking, *"I am part of the problem."*

People get in thinking they are prepared.

Experienced.

Reasonable.

The engine starts.

Self-awareness shuts down.

Being a good driver is not something people question.

It's something they *assume*, the way they assume they're decent people and above-average listeners.

Bad drivers are easy to identify.

They are always nearby.

Usually directly ahead.

You don't judge your driving by outcomes.

You judge it by intention.

If nothing bad happened, you drove well.

If something bad almost happened, it wasn't your fault.

If something bad happened to someone else, they caused it.

- You cut someone off because you misjudged distance.
- They cut you off because they're irresponsible.
- You brake suddenly because you're alert.
- They brake suddenly because they panic.

The difference is perspective.

And ego.

Driving creates a private moral system where your actions are contextual and everyone else's are character flaws.

You forgive yourself instantly.

- You had no choice.
- You were forced.
- The situation demanded it.

Other people are not granted this generosity.

They are simply bad.

There is a special confidence that comes with time.

"I've been driving for years" is not reassurance.

It's a declaration of resistance to change.

Long-term drivers stop learning.

They start remembering.

They remember:

- how the road used to feel,
- where traffic *usually* clears,
- which signs *never mattered before*.

Experience becomes nostalgia with a steering wheel.

You don't read the road anymore.

You recognize it.

Recognition replaces attention.

- You stop checking mirrors fully.
- You stop expecting surprises.
- You assume predictability because you want it.

Confidence creeps in quietly.

Not the useful kind.

The comfortable kind.

Comfort tells you that:

- indicators are optional when intentions are obvious (to you),
- rules are flexible when they slow you down,
- hesitation is more dangerous than decisiveness, even when wrong.

Every driver believes they have a style.

Smooth.

Assertive.

Efficient.

No one describes their style as "slightly distracted and emotionally reactive."

Mistakes are reframed before guilt can form.

- "That lane came out of nowhere."
- "They should've seen me."
- "Anyone would've done the same."

Responsibility dissolves at speed.

You remember every time someone endangered you.
You forget every time you endangered someone else
because nothing happened.

Near-misses don't count as mistakes.

They count as proof of skill.

- You reacted quickly.
- You handled it.
- You're still here.

Survival becomes validation.