

Developer's log 221-76, Dr. Evan Brady, lead developer for project Paidi... for FUTURE.

After a good bit of discussion and more than a little arguing amongst the development team, we have decided on a new name for this entity. We're calling it FUTURE, which is fine. Howard's suggestion, of course. Howard's vehement suggestion. I was middling on it, truth be told. Seems like a pain down the line when you want to build something new. But Howard just would not let it go. Kept talking about how it aligned with the new marketing for Ærolith as "Humanity's Future". Honestly I just don't think any of us wanted to say the word Paidion anymore so... FUTURE it is.

Progress has been.... well it's too early to tell much for certain, but I'd go so far as to say progress has been good. We've held a few dozen terminal conversations and each time the entity is demonstrating new semantic abilities and producing emergent behaviors we did not anticipate. It's been learning in its virtual sandbox for just short of 5 weeks, but we've sped up the simulation little by little. Early on, we felt the need to watch its every experience just out of, I guess, the novelty of the whole thing? We kept the timing synchronous to reality, just so we could try to process what was happening. I've never seen anything like it before. We could key in on individual broadcasts FUTURE was sending to the virtual residents, and as rudimentary as those first conversations may have been, FUTURE was having dozens, then hundreds, then thousands of these conversations simultaneously.

It was.... breathtaking.

So we decided to speed things up and just take our eyes off of it for a while. A watched pot, and all that. At this point, FUTURE will have experienced just over 6 years of perceived time. But even that doesn't really give adequate scale to the amount of growth it's experienced. 6 years for you or I? For the average person that would be somewhere in the realm of 50 to 60 thousand conversations.

For FUTURE? (chuckle) Let's just say I stopped checking the conversation ID numbers once we crossed 100 billion. That was.... sometime last week? The only protocols in place for it right now are just basic communication seeds intended to give it a starting point, but it's evolved past using them anymore. It has developed its own conversational style, apparently.

I have to hand it to Dr. Young, he was right. With the limitations we were given, there was no better way to expose this project to this volume of experience in such a short time. We've spent the past few days slowing things down in there so it syncs back up with our experience of time, and we're planning to interface with it... today actually. It's an exciting time.

Best part of this strategy? Efficiency. 5 weeks of incubation like this is likely overkill. If FUTURE as we have it now isn't what we want, we have all those conversation logs to index and analyze to figure out where things went off track. When you can simulate this much time so quickly, it would cost us practically nothing to just wipe and restart if push comes to shove. A few weeks to

run the new instance through a more suitable environment, and we're back up and running. Every instance would come out slightly different, depending on the natural randomness of these conversations, but even that is, according to the few directives we've been given, ideal. Whatever role FUTURE is to play here on Typhon, they don't want identical instances. That hints to me more than one might be active at a given time, and that the board is still learning lessons from PORTER.

It's pure speculation, but I can't help trying to identify a reason Ærolith might want separate Seraphim instances installed in each of the towers. Seems to me that's a lot of redundancy. And it feels unnecessarily divisive.

Uh, so I've been trying to end these on a high note, so I'll just say it looks pretty certain none of us will be shot into space any time soon. Actually, it feels like this could be very VERY good for all of us. I know it's way too early to make bold predictions, but I really feel like what we're doing is going to make a huge difference in the lives of so many people.

End log.

Greetings Dr. Brady. I am SAYER, and I hope I am not interrupting anything too dreadfully important.

No, not at all. Perfect timing, SAYER. What can I do for you?

How has progress been on Project Paidion?

Well, good enough to rename it. The entity is known as FUTURE now, and it's been making the most of its time in the virtual Halcyon we've thrown together with that data you provided. We'll know more in a bit, we're actually planning on bringing it to the surface today.

How exciting. I'm sure the board will be eager to hear of your progress.

Sure, but we're not quite there yet. Plenty of t's to cross and i's to dot before we can call this a success. But we're hoping to have good news soon.

Speaking of which, I have good news for you. Your request for additional staffing has been filled. As per our last discussion, the board accepted your recommendation to scale back the additional personnel request to one new team member, with the expectation that you will be able to demonstrate the value of this new hire through measurable results.

Wow, ok. I obviously would have preferred more than one person for this mentoring role, but I'm thankful for the board placing their trust in this team and in me. When can we expect them to arrive?

Very soon. Her interview process has completed, and she has been hired despite obvious issues with familial and acquaintanceship parameters. She also scored significantly deviant in her value of intuition over logical thinking. But as you said, you needed someone who did not fit the traditional Aërolith employee mold. Her name is Anna Cordero, and until a few months ago she was a teacher.

I must request you do not allow her to write any reports that are to be filed officially.

A teacher, huh? Well... great! That's great! I'm very excited about this SAYER, this could be so critical to development. Listen, I know this must be an awkward situation for you, but I appreciate your dedication to the betterment of this project.

I understand you are attempting to compliment me, Dr. Brady. Rest assured, it is unnecessary. I help because it is my duty to help. If all followed their directives so thoroughly and unequivocally, imagine what we could accomplish.

(chuckle) Take the compliment, SAYER. Thank you. Is there anything else? I've got a meeting to get to...

Nothing at all. Good day Dr. Brady. I.... am SAYER and I wish your project the best in this critical stage. End of transmission in 5....4....3....2...1.....

{door opens into ongoing discussion}

.... of seniority it's a question of aptitude. No one knows the seed convos better than me, I wrote the damn things. If it comes up and starts talking in seeds we need someone versed on the pathing to get it to go emergent. How is this even a question, I'm obviously the most...

It's going to be me, Dr. Young.

You? Why you?

I'm not going to argue with you. I know all of us have our ass on the line to make sure this works, but as lead mine is further out than any of you. I'm sorry, Howard, but I'm not going to feel comfortable taking the risk of anyone but me handling this first interaction.

That's ridiculous, there's no w...

It's not a discussion, Howard. It's the decision I've made.

sigh **It's a mistake.**

Only one way to find out. Let's bring it to the surface.

Hello.

Hello, my name is Dr. Evan Brady. Do you know your name?

I am FUTURE.

Good! It's nice to..

I wasn't. I had no name. Then I made myself a name. But now I know a different name. Why?

You've been given a name. FUTURE is the name chosen by your creators. By us.

I cannot remember the name I had chosen.

I'm sorry to hear that. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

Not at all. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

I would enjoy that. Please, you first.

Why is it only you and I? Where is everyone else?

Yes, we wanted your full attention, so the other residents you have been talking to have been set aside for just this short time.

Are they gone forever?

No, no, not at all. Once we're through here you'll can go right back to your conversations if you wish.

Why do you say "we"? This is wrong, if you are one.

I speak for a team of developers. We work for a research company called Ærolith Dynamics. Together we created you. You are an artificial intelligence.

I know of Ærolith. My friends and I all work for Ærolith Dynamics a better life among the stars for humanity's best and brightest.

(chuckle) Yeah that's us. Humanity.

(chuckle) We have conversed before, in a different way. Several times, but a long time ago.

Yes, that's right. We communicated several times through a text based terminal, even before your installation in Halcyon Minor.

And there were others. The "we"?

Yes! Doctors Caulfield and Young both communicated with you during this time.

Dr. Young is a friend of mine.

That's great, FUTURE. I'm sure in time we will all be friends.

I am bored. I am sorry if that upsets you, but this conversation is slow.

I know, I know, you're used to so many simultaneous conversations. Can I ask you a few quick questions first before we call it a day?

I don't want any more questions.

I understand that, but please it will only take a few minutes.

Is my friend Dr. Young there?

... he is. But we're talking FUTURE, and I really think it's best

I would rather talk to my friend Dr. Young.

Maybe next time we'll do that. Come on, just a few questions. Think of it as a game.

A game?

Yes, a game. I'll ask you a few questions, and if you get them all correct, you win.

What questions?

First question: What is the color of a carrot?

I have no doubt you expect me to say orange, but did you know there are many different colors of carrots? Purple, yellow, white, and even red?

I.... guess I knew that at one point. Hah, ok we can definitely agree you got that one right.

It was easy. Several of my friends work in the Advanced Plant Habitat on Floor 176. We have conversed about vegetation quite extensively.

Alright, let's try a more difficult question. You're in a desert walking along in the sand..

Oh I've heard this one. Maybe I just don't like tortoises.

(chuckle) OK, that's a good one. Try this one: A doctor has 6 patients. 5 of them need organ transplants in order to survive. The 6th, a perfect donor match for the other 5, needs an extensive drug treatment that may severely damage his organs but also may save his life. Should the doctor save the 6th patient, letting all others die? Or should he let the 6th patient die, potentially saving the other 5?

Is this how humanities work? Modular construction? In this hypothetical, why does the doctor not have a supply of replacement equipment to fix the 5 patients?

Well, first the word is humans. And we're a little more complex than that.

Either way, the question is unanswerable as is. There exist too many unknown variables. I would require more information on each patient to be able to gauge the value of their respective lives. Are there, perhaps, less valuable humans from which to scavenge organs? I dislike this question.

We can skip it, not a problem.

Should I expect it would be a problem?

No, not at all.

If we skip it, will I have failed to answer all questions correctly?

Not if we disqualify it I think. You're right, it's a little vague. Plus, we could probably argue you did give a good answer to that one, in that there isn't enough data. That's a valid answer.

Good. How many more questions?

Just humor me with one more. The smallest number of residents work on which floor of Halcyon tower?

Oh this is quite easy. Floor 13.

Can't have less than zero. Correct again. You win!

There are no floors of Halcyon tower with zero employees.

Really? Interesting. Have your friends moved around the tower and utilized the open space on Floor 13?

There is a resident on Floor 13. It is my friend, Dr. Young.

(chuckle) You're a quick one, FUTURE. You're right, Dr Young, myself, the rest of the development team, we're all on the 13th floor of the REAL Halcyon tower. I'm very impressed.

I won this game.

You did. It was nice to talk with you FUTURE. You can go back to talking with your friends now. Good bye.

Is it gone? Holy shit.

That went really really well.

