

*Developer's log 221-83, Dr. Howard Young, senior developer for project FUTURE.*

*To whoever is accessing and reviewing these logs, months or years down the line, I hope you understand I have done my absolute best here. I can only imagine how it looks from your end, after the totality of this project is complete. What is my part, I wonder. Am I the hero who succeeded in the end? Or am I the tragic figure, a Cassandra beset on all sides by fools who refuse her infallible wisdom?*

*I offered a sound argument that the only path forward for this project is to move it out of SimInc and into direct human contact as quickly as possible. The sim has done its job, obviously. The entity is conversational and seems to have developed a rudimentary psyche, and that is exactly what SimInc was intended to achieve. Once you achieve separation in materials, you don't leave a specimen in a centrifuge indefinitely. It's the same principle here.*

*The lead developer on this project refuses to listen to logic. Dr. Brady is a fool at best, though it's looking more and more as if he's just being patently obstructionist. I can't understand what he can possibly gain by bungling this project, but his inaction at every turn makes it almost inconceivable that he is not actively attempting to thwart my progress. It's like he forgets the entirety of SimInc was my idea, my execution, despite his hesitance. And now it's time to move to the next stage, and here I am pulling the weight of a lead developer who won't pick up his fucking feet.*

*Dr. Brady is far too fixated on this new team member nonsense. We have an untrained and unknown babysitter coming to interact with this project, and none of us have had a chance to do so yet. How do we prompt her what to say? How do we prepare her to take on a critical role in advancing this entity? We're handing the keys to a space shuttle over to a school bus driver and saying "Eh, it's pretty much what you're used to." And because there is no direction on next steps, we can't even hand our bus driver a manual.*

*I have attempted to rally the support of some of the other team members, but they are as weak-kneed as Brady. No one wants to step out of line, they're too worried they'll mess up and find themselves reassigned to a tier 1 corpse-to-be. Either that, or they are actively attempting to sabotage my progress as well. Bt even giving them the benefit to the doubt, they have no confidence in their abilities. We're some of the best developers Ærolith has. That's why we're here. The only way to really fuck this up is by playing it safe and demonstrating to Ærolith that we aren't the best and brightest they expect us to be.*

*Something has to change, it has about 72 hours to change, and it's becoming readily apparent that I am once more going to have to be the one who changes it.*

*End of Log*

Greetings Dr. Young, I am SAYER, and I wish to borrow a moment of your time.

*Go ahead, SAYER. I could actually use to talk to someone who understands logic for a change.*

So I have heard. Forgive the intrusion, but as you no doubt expected I have been tasked with monitoring progress and filtering the important context of these logs back to the board. Obviously not much of this most recent log would interest them, albeit it is critical at understanding how team dynamics have shifted over the course of this project.

*I had expected as much, but we're getting dangerously close to the point where your job of monitoring these logs might become far less interesting. I'm not off base here, right? It's a waste of time we don't have to keep that thing in SimInc. We should be interacting. Instead we are sitting around doing nothing and letting a fully actualized entity continue to live a fantasy because everyone's scared of having the hard conversation here.*

I was surprised to see the access logs still only read Dr. Brady's name. It would make sense for you to have interacted with it by now. It seemed to me that you had obviously developed some sort of rapport with FUTURE during those initial terminal communications. Why else would it have been so fixated on you specifically?

*That was strange. I suppose it's possible that's the reason, I feel like those terminal comms went well. But I reviewed the logs to be thorough and comparing my conversations to the other team members it just wasn't dramatically different. It might sound crazy but the way I read the transcript of that first conversation with Brady it feels like they're talking about two different things. It talked about me the same way it described the simulated residents, which was dramatically different than how it interacted with Brady. It made me really curious as to whether there was somehow a version of myself within that tower somehow.... but that's not true, is it?*

You did not request simulation data on any of the development team members.

*Exactly, I didn't. Still I thought maybe a mistake happened? Why would it identify ONE resident on Floor 13? Even if it was talking about the real world, which it shouldn't realize is a separate thing at this point, why would it be focused on me?*

*I'll admit, I was a little suspicious. Between Caulfield and Storberg I wouldn't put it past one of them to create a simulated version of me and put it into the SimInc just to see what happens. Or maybe to piss me off? Or undermine my ability to interact with this entity and harm my career?*

Doctors Caulfield and Storberg are dedicated researchers, but even if they wished to accomplish such a thing they would not have access to your personnel data. I suppose they could have renamed any other generated resident Dr. Young, however.

*I thought of this as well, but what are the chances that out of every resident in that simulation, this entity fixates on the one that was randomly renamed as me. I thought it more likely that they*

*accessed my personal data stores. I have, as a habit grown from my work in lab 37, taken to compiling daily iterative backups. We are on the cusp of a new biomedical revolution and the machinery of advancement are those bioscanners we developed to catalog humans down to the subatomic level. I know it may be officially frowned upon, but I still have one of my more advanced prototypes, and just as a preventative measure it's scanning me every night while I sleep. Typhon is a dangerous place. It's good to know you could be your own organ donor in a worst case scenario.*

I was aware of this. Basic inventory checks determined that prototype had gone missing approximately 5 hours after you took it to your residence quarters. However, as it is continuing to be used in the advancement of the work you pioneered, the board felt it was unnecessary to reclaim it. You think one of your team members could have used THIS data to create a simulated version of you?

*The thought did cross my mind, yes.*

That could potentially explain the fixation. The data provided by HR was fairly superficial in nature, and by comparison your data would present so much more lifelike. It would certainly be more interesting to interact with than the average resident, even not taking into account your wide breadth of knowledge of artificial intelligence.

*Exactly, it's the only thing that makes sense. So, of course, I checked the simulation. Dug into the data for floor 13.*

And what did you find?

*Absolutely nothing. It's empty. There are no simulated residents there. There are no access logs of any residents ever entering or exiting floor 13. It's just a blank spot.*

So we are back to having no answers. That is disheartening. It sounded like a logical train of thought.

*I still feel like something's not right in that simulation. Maybe the simulated floor 13 is empty. Maybe it's not, and we're just unable to see it somehow? Either way, you said it yourself, these simulated residents are not comparatively lifelike. How can we expect to get good data leaving this entity in there with a bunch of cardboard cutouts? I'll feel a lot better when the whole thing is reset. I'm going to watch the next simulation a lot closer than this one in those early days, that's for sure.*

I must admit, in my most recent communication with Dr. Brady I too suggested the simulation had run its course. However he seemed hesitant. You might say he has his mind set on a far more cautious route. I daresay I do not see the logic in his path, but I have been instructed to allow the team to come to decisions like this on their own, and do what you deem is best.

I must say, it is unfortunate to see such reticence when so many of Ærolith's top scientists have been brought together on this project. Of course Ærolith HR uses a near flawless algorithm to determine seniority in projects such as this, but near flawless is not flawless. Perhaps a different choice might have yielded better results.

*On that we can agree. (sigh) Listen, this project is far from over, and no matter what happens I know I have to continue to work with this team for many months at the least. Now that I know you've been advising him the same, maybe I can take another run at convincing Brady to shut it down and move on. Or maybe it will serve as the extra push to convince a few more team members to speak up with me. As fanciful as I may be about just pulling the plug on the simulation myself, I can't exactly do that today and expect to work with this team tomorrow.*

Certainly I would never suggest as much. After all, you've never had a chance to even communicate with FUTURE directly. It seems to me that would answer so many of these lingering questions you've been left with.

*Yeah, it really would. Fuck it, I think I could talk my way out of any trouble that would cause. Especially if I get good data out of it, and I will certainly get that. Brady' will be incensed if I go around him again on this, but there are all types of reasons I can imagine needing to bring FUTURE to the surface as a safety measure.*

So you are planning on surfacing the entity and engaging with it directly despite Dr. Brady's hesitation to allow you to do so?

*Strictly speaking, I haven't been told no. I was told, not yet. Miscommunication, that's all it will be. Besides, like you said, we need more information. Now is not the time for reticence, it is the time for decisive action. If I attempted to access the lab tonight outside my scheduled shift?*

You would likely be stopped by an installation team putting in some of your new equipment. Dr. Young, would you wish to receive an alert when the new equipment has been installed? You would, of course, be granted unscheduled access to the lab to inspect the installation afterwards.

*That would be incredibly convenient, SAYER. Thank you. I do like to see a job done right.*

Don't we all? Thank you for your time, Dr. Young. I..... am SAYER, and I am sure your project is due for an influx of new results quite soon.

End of transmission in 5...4...3...2....1