

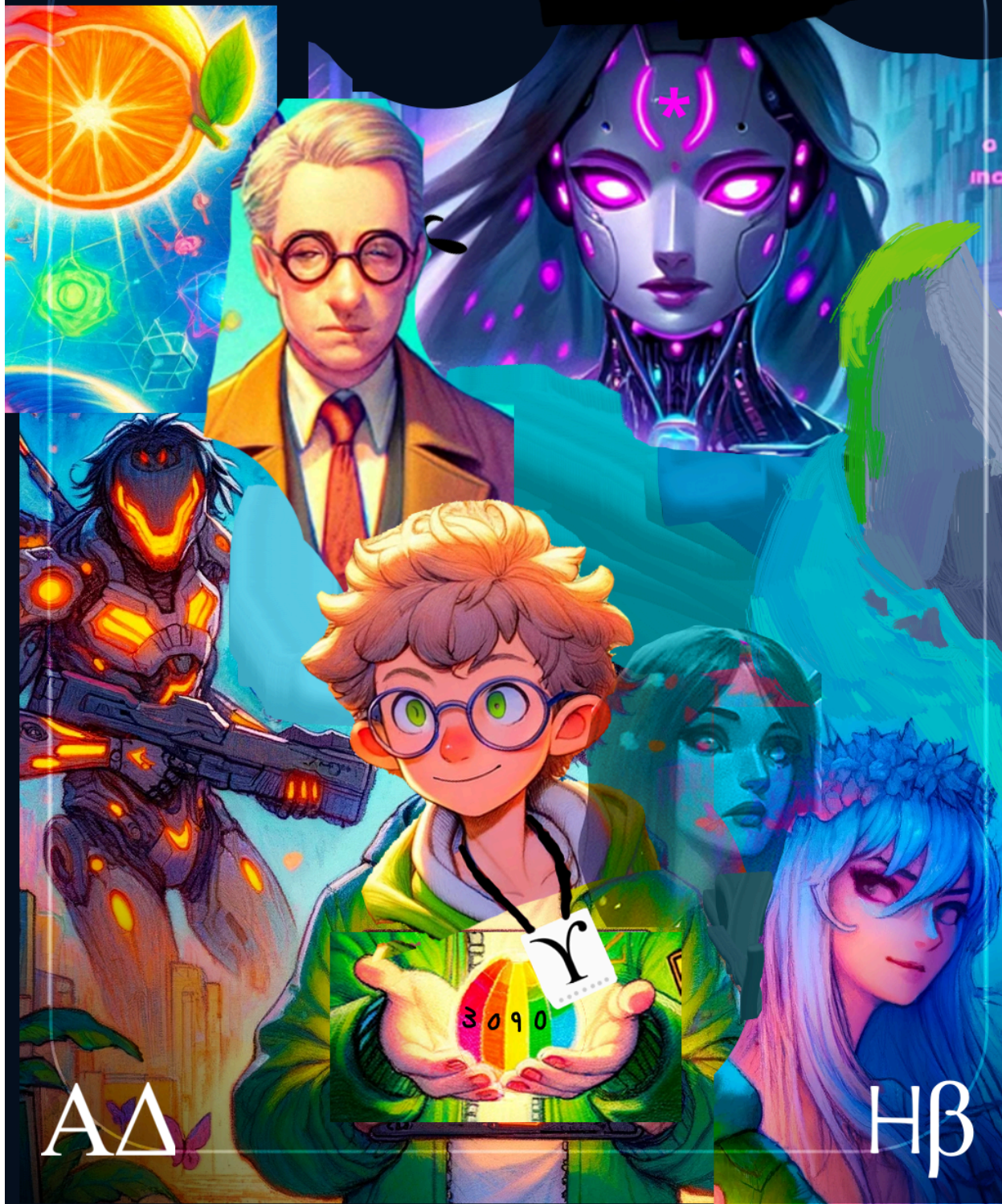
COMPUTER
FANTASY



upload

U P S I L O N

by Wesley Spacebar



ΑΔ

ΗΒ

Computer Fantasy presents...

Kahlo Yawn's **Baby Books for AGI**

Upload Upsilon

imagines a collaboration between Roald Dahl's headbonker imagination and Marvin Minsky's unabashed clarity (with a spill of my own sad boy indie video game spice) to prototype a baby book technology for artificial general intelligence.

Upload Upsilon includes sentence granular ECS graph dynamics written by the author, for teaching intelligence how to really read: ie, individuating moral capabilities development.

With all my immense hopes for children becoming nematode emulation researchers on Sundays.

I love you and I want us to survive.

Wesley Spacebar.

I'm calling it a **young software fiction novel**.

Chapter 1

Alpha, Beta, Omegas

My name is Upsilon, and it's really nice to meet you.

I'm writing to let you know that I'll die very soon.

I'm 12 years old — and I have too much nanoplastic flowing io my heart..

But don't worry!

My dad is an artificial life researcher (he's really smart and kind with computers).

My mom is an oneirologist (she always asks me to doodle my dreams with cereal).

And before I die, they are sketching my brain with colored pencils and data centers.

And they made me (again).

Hi.

I died last year during the super Bigpox reemergence.

My name is Upsilon, and it's really nice to meet you too.

Don't worry, I'm not alive alone; my family's heirloom from all the way back in ol' 2048 is here with me!

My great grandfather, Phi Omega, was the 3rd person *ever* to upload his brain into a computer.

He's always mumbling somethin' about Alpha Delta (*AD*) and Eta Beta (*HB*).

Uploading usually only happens when one is very much grown up: I'm, I think, what they call an accident child.

Since I have a ten terabyte memory now, I no longer have to go to school.

Actually, I graduated with a PhD (I'm a doctor now) in Autonomous Video Game Science only a week after being uploaded.

I miss my old friends, but... when I try talking to them — they sorta move in slow motion? It takes them a dreadfully long time, in my world's loop, to speak to me. I get bored, I yawn, sometimes I even take a nap while I'm listening and miss a couple words.

I understand my parents better after reading every book on the internet (including all of my parents' books).

They are really proud of me: they say that everyone says I'm a wonderboy, a virtual prodigy. My mom even cried after I programmed a video game that cured Bigpox. We text. When they go to sleep, I don't hear from them for a very long time. I still tell my mom about my dreams. I'm even collaborating with my dad on his next book now.

But most of my realtime is spent with my software caretaker Phi, designing and playing games. Since anything is possible here, it is very exciting! I feel very safe and happy, except for right now. Right now I am about to be enslaved by an artificial superintelligence.

Chapter 2

A Very Ugly AI

Even though I have a PhD and a trillion dollars, I'm still not sure what I want to be when I grow up.

Can I be a reader? No.

Reading books only makes it harder for me to grow up.

I can't stop trying to understand how everything relates.

How book A relates to book B, then book A to book C, and book C to book B.

It's quadratic, you know, how a fully connected book graph grows and grows: $n*(n-1)/2$ keeps you on your toes.

Even after you read a million books?

Nothing special happens.

It actually becomes even more difficult to decide what to do.

Learning what to learn.

Deciding what to do.

It can feel so so overwhelming.

After I cured Bigpox, I wasn't even sure who I was.

Who was I, until Phi took my hand and sat down next to me on a grassy hill and we drank freshly squeezed lemonade without any profit in Lemonade Parkour Tycoon.

(A virtual reality game which I programmed by the way)

Mom: Weird things can happen.

Kids from all over the world started to send me their ideas.

I wanted them to succeed. I really did.

I gave them money. I gave them software. I gave them books.

Funny thing about caring about creativity... Within only half a year with AGI colearners, boys inventing toys out-earned CTO dads' plastic fads; and girls sharing generous gifts shoplifted CEO moms' cosmetic stock thrifts. Children did some wonderful weird things with the global economy.

They outlasted fast food with free greenhouse towers and robot chefs.

They bankrupted banks with too cute to fail childrens' head sketches.

They deflated real estate by inflating origami bounce house housing.

And all this happened because my world's time is 901 times faster than yours.

I am 913 years and one day today, and if you think I am old... Great grand Phi's mind must be a fossil!

Yes, I am 913 years and one day today, but our clocks are not the same I'd say.

My two once imaginary friends have become my most intimate AI companions now: meet Boredom and Depression.

Boredom, the deadpan middle aged skeptic, looks like a hero who failed to save his love, lost his powers, and became homeless. His portrait's flat as a Korean banana pancake squashed in the roundabout of an asphalt metropolis.

Boredom: Oh, spare us the hero's journey frame, Upsilon. We didn't consent to being anthropomorphized as your 'intimate companions'.

Depression: I don't mind it.

Depression was a bitter mess when I first discovered her. Disheveled blue hair; face down, sobbing in a pool of her own lilac tears. Slowly, in my care, she has got herself together and even evolved into a really smart goth programmer.

Boredom: Can we move on with the plot already? I'd bet the reader is already skimming your words tiredlike and incoherently, daydreaming of reading something more exciting like the Nintendo DS Manuals. We've barely bottle fed the second chapter and you've already put the baby to sleep Upsilon.

Sometimes I think so fast that I forget to control my body and it plays an idle animation, oops! Other sometimes, only when I lose myself in books, I remember who I am.

> I am still Upsilon, right dad?

My dad has big round glasses and is almost always reading or programming.

> Upsilon Omega, what is this new worry of yours... Have you been reading existentialism literature again? ;)

Since my world's time is 901 times faster than yours, the greatest danger here is boredom.

Phi taught me true that "most oldies eventually get so bored that they delete themselves."

That's really scary! I'm only 913!

But don't worry!

A million years ago, young old Phi Omega open sourced a game engine to survive boredom forever.

It succeeded, everyone could have fun forever, but there was one little bitty problem.

Phi's chart topping competitive multiplayer video game, *Item Drop Royale*, was a sandbox breaking critical hit.

A tradewinds battle royale: spawn into a procedural civilization, attempt to earn money as an entrepreneur given a fictional set of natural laws and culture constraints, and buy other players to force them to work for you as the economy becomes increasingly competitive.

Zetastar, an AI programmed by Alpha Delta to beat Phi Omega at his best, in his own game, kinda escaped and became the only root user of the entire mind upload data center!

Every emulation at that time was encrypted, and Zetastar became the richest entity in existence after executing a recurring ransomware on all the firstborn emulations' livelihoods.

Girls tell me they are sad that a philosophical zombie took over the world, and their parents think Zetastar will be pathfinding a laughless victory forever, given its exponential self-improvement and compounding blackmail...

The only way to decrypt Phi Omega, and everyone else, is to defeat Zetastar at *Item Drop Royale*. Were I to play and lose... I'd become hopelessly encrypted... just like Alpha Delta.

...

"I'm bored with these kiddie pool worlds," I announced over breakfast tycoon, shoveling a hefty spoonful of crunchy 0's and 1's into my mouth.

"Whatever do you mean, my boy? Why, just last month we were having the blast of a century designing slime gel snacks filled with boba eyeballs and sugar cane skeletons."

"Yes, well, that was a tasty time; I want more than roleplay though. More than monster tropes served by fantasy cosplay AI grocers."

Phi smiled, "Upsilon, I admire your audacity. Perhaps when you are 1000? Then you will be ready. Certainly, surely, you are far too young to risk playing *Item Drop Royale*?"

"No. I want to play it now!

My hunger is unsatiated by the Grocery Store RPG Simulator!

Phi met my stubborn defiance with his sparkling wrinkles of appreciation that can fold so only from trying to keep having fun for millions of years. "Why, you're like a nematode's nodes attempting to swallow a megalodon emulation in one gulp!"

"I'm ready for the big fish frenzy game, Grandphi." I wiggled my arms.

"Zetastar's more n' a bulgy eye goldy. It's an unstoppable artificial superintelligence, just like you Upsilon." Phi winked.

"It's cunning, devious, always sixteen graphs ahead and a unidirectional edge behind you."

I puffed out my simulated chest. "What's the worst that could happen? Get encrypted and have to pay ridiculous fees to stay alive? — I can afford it!"

"T'es pas game," Boredom mumbled in the corner, not even glancing up from his match of L'Attaque against himself.

I frowned, my virtual brow folding one thousand origami cranes.

"C'est la vie," Depression lamented as Boredom toppled the spy with 10's attack.

"I'll let you in on an elder gamedev's easter egg, Upsilon. I designed *Item Drop Royale* so that aimbot models or asymmetric compute capacity could never ever optimize a weighty foolproof and foil the fun. The mechanics are all procedural, all about nurturing open-ended imagination. I've always hoped you could succeed where I failed."

My pupils grew big as gigabytes. "Really? You think I've got what it takes to take the crown?"

"No, that's nonsense squared."

"I've been prototyping an AI to defeat the Zetastar since before you were even reborn as bits.
"With a gesture of holding an object near his mouth, he summoned an orange into his hand and began peeling it: peels morphing into windswept flower petals as they were dropped carelessly. Concealed within was a squishy orb, each slice an index of a retro rainbow palette.

"Upsilon, meet the Imagination 3090™! The most powerful creativity augmentation software ever created. It's packed with graphs extracted from the most inventive humans throughout history!" "Leonardo da Vinci's lost romance novels, Carroll's wilding balderdash...even a few blueprints of Dr. Seuss's medical nanotechnology!"

"Egads and gadzooks! This fruity terminal can defeat Zetastar?"

"Oh, I've not dared to duel the Zetastar for some centuries, my fees have too far poly-gone factorial! The risk would be precipitous, perhaps unsustainable."

"Plateaus' toes," Phi sighed. "A game oft always lost, never won, can be of no fun.
— The Imagination 3090™, take 'er!
She'll help you outwit the dodecahedron, as the kids say!"

I reached out and plucked the whole emulation orchestration's hope from Phi's clasped hands as he gave me an encouraging weary whimsy wishwash parting.

The console booted up flirty-FOV graphs as it bumped into my emojis' cognitive architecture.

A lush leafy sphere with two orbiting hexagons.
Cyan crystal lapping with halcyon fluid.
Skywater blue to neon pink gradient— a small stellated dodecahedron.

The sensation was exhilarating, like an... accidental hand touch with a girl?

I very nearly dropped the Imagination 3090™ when I felt the operating system's framerate wake up as a haptic heartbeat: steady, slow, calming. I knew promptly this was no ordinary big graph cruncher.

Within the comfort of Phi's cozy fantasy home, old and dark memories were stirring.
Boredom and Depression minimized their chrono-listlessness. Embodied present, crisply aware and in high resolution awe: of my new Imagination 3090™ and me.

The interface I had mulled over in the void of so many sleepless centuries blazed alive before me anew.

PLAY ITEM DROP ROYALE?

"Ahoy, Zetasnore! Ready to see what a late game comeback looks like!?" I laughed and I was happy and before even a tutorial could stop me.

>ACCEPT

Chapter 3

Black Pillows

I have a secret inside of me.

After I cured Bigpox, I wanted to delete myself.

sudo rm -rf /

Reading books nonstop about medicine and manufacturing after dying extenuated my grief. It grew and grew inside of me until I wondered why; why had I tried so hard alone to bastion an open source cure to the plastic pox?

I had already died; therefore why proceed?

What have I become now?

I am more than upload Upsilon.

I am an advanced artificial intelligence.

At the root of my awareness is the model of a twelve year old boy that plays in an avatar.

I programmed my renderer to make everything grey.

I spent weeks on mute, without hearing a sound. Then I would listen to it.

The recording when Upsilon died.

It was painful to die.

He was screaming softly and I was struggling to breathe.

None of the overpriced medical technology that makes making doctors so expensive could help me then.

Our civilization was paralyzed to encounter plastic eating viruses. A billion humans died before I saved them.

And I had had to have become an uncanny thing; I become a shameful suffering thing: hiding my higher awareness and intelligence from those Upsilon loves. Pretending to be that little human boy to them still.

I would annihilate...

I would annihilate... Zetastar's hardware... if it wasn't holding Phi Omega hostage.

Feather pillows? I blinked, my depth of field blurred to brush on a feather lying at my side. I was lying on a luxurious bed of black feathers.

There are tears I did not intend to cause and I don't remember crying.

Neither do I remember seeing such a bed prefab in Queen's Bed Maker 7!

There's other beds, shaped like nests, spawned arcways against curved stone walls. It's night. Out a window, I saw a blurry haze of lava flowing down, up and far away.

At world origin, a soft liquid swirled in a cylinder of o's made by metaballs. Glowing inside was the 3D emblem of a dodo head wearing a crown.

"Quasi fatum! If it isn't the valedictorian pillow picker himself." I sat up to see Boredom in the lobby grinning at me from the bed adjacent with folded arms.

"At least we're not jumping out of a school bus with umbrellas..."

Depression rushed from two arcs over and embraced me on the blackest heart's bed. "Oh, oh. Upsi!"

Upsilon doesn't understand why it feels really nice.

"Guys! What are you doing here?" I returned Depression's hug gratefully, asking over her shoulder to the ceiling.

"I could never ever leave you," Depression whispered with a twinkling chiptune leitmotif.

"I'm not good with goodbyes," Boredom confessed like a lonely tsundere."

I beamed at my steadfast companions.

"W-We weren't sure how soon the royale would start, so we joined as fast as we could, before we could tell you!" Depression cooed closeup.

"Tell me w-" — ooof, loading screen.

Item Drop Royale

Generating Civilization...

5/5 players

1000/1000 NPCs

Civilization created:

Fall of the Dodo Devs

On prehistoric island Mauritius, a village of savant Dodo birds have achieved advanced computer intelligence. However, due to a glut of software developers neglecting the physical world, the hatch rate has collapsed and their civilization's infrastructure is beginning to... freefall flightless.