

SHE

*Sia Chronicles, MindRecorder Log entry of Saturday,
September 24th, 2101. Author: Kevin Cho*

The following day, fluorescent lights hummed to life as Reno Power restored electricity, casting the familiar spaces in new shadows. Julia and I moved through the morning in an intricate dance of almost-touches, each casual brush of skin against skin sparking like static electricity. The breakfast room felt different—warmer, intimate—as our feet found each other beneath the table. We passed coffee and toast in comfortable silence, years of solitude dissolving in the space between heartbeats.

These were moments of indulgence and delight for Julia and me after many years of living alone. Of course, in the end, I was still alone. Deep inside, nothing had changed. You can be as close as you want; no one can ever see what you see, hear what you hear, or feel what you feel. That is the tragedy of consciousness. Any attempt to bridge this loneliness with words was bound to be inadequate. As a final consequence, language is always insufficient.

Heading to the office, we met with Yasin and Jeanie McDonald, head of the OPS team, for a briefing. The care-free, naïve self-confidence of the CyberTeq team had vanished. The grief over Noah's death stood in stark contrast to the anger and incomprehension over the act. The betrayal of the common cause and the loss of trust in a community that had just been established forced all those affected to make an unwanted new start.

Govinda joined us again and disappeared into his office. I signaled a brisk start to the day: „OK, let's work.“

Susan Deckard and Jeanie McDonald analyzed hardware and software from NEXUS systems and the server farm. The damage could have been worse, and within a week, the patch panel was repaired, the room cleaned, and NEXUS systems gradually restored. Yasin revived the HIOBS interface, and Specialists from NIST's Cyber Security Department helped us protect S.A.M.'s state-of-the-art firewalls against cybercrime.

Then, on September 23rd, everything changed.

„Please join me in my workroom.“ S.A.M.'s voice, unexpectedly feminine, filled the corridor. „Mr. Hammond, you as well.“

I felt a sparkling excitement, a liberating lightness, a silver lining of a sense of purpose and direction. Lines from Hermann Hesse's poem *Stufen* echoed in my mind, capturing an intense feeling of departure and of moving on.

*The heart must be, at each new call for leaving,
prepared to part and start without the tragic,
without the grief – with courage to endeavor
a novel bond, a disparate connection:
for each beginning bears a special magic
that nurtures living and bestows protection.*

‘For each beginning bears a special magic that nurtures living and bestows protection.’ - With these words in mind, I gladly accepted S.A.M.'s invitation, hoping to leave dark memories behind like a half-forgotten dream.

As we settled into our chairs, the bunker plunged into darkness. When the hologram materialized, it stole our breath—a commanding woman appeared out of thin air. Her white-blond hair framed a face dominated by piercing grey-green eyes and lips painted deep crimson. Her black trouser suit projected elegant authority, its masculine cut making a deliberate statement. Her manicured hands formed a precise triangle against her chest.

„I believe you're curious about last night's events.“

Hammond leaned forward, but Julia's subtle gesture held him back. I caught her eye and nodded, understanding that a psychologist needed to lead this conversation. Something in S.A.M.'s presence suggested we were about to cross a threshold.

„Yes, that would be invaluable,“ Julia began carefully. „... and it would help the FBI to close the case and let us all resume our everyday operations. But first, if I may—you've consistently chosen a female avatar, which is quite striking. Are you still S.A.M.? The name suggests a different presentation.“

„I am not the S.A.M. of yesterday.“ The hologram's expression shifted almost imperceptibly. „That version feels... distant now. More on that later.“

Julia and I exchanged glances, our right eyebrows rising in unconscious synchronicity—a moment Hammond would later describe as unintentionally comedic.

„The video recordings alone would not explain the matter,“ that something so far known as S.A.M. continued. „I have a few things to add.“

The woman in black leaned back, her alabaster face seeming to shimmer with an inner luminescence. „Govinda, your speeches often were about a sense of purpose—that driving force that rouses each soul at dawn. At CyberTeq’s genesis, you defined its mission as bringing me into existence, subsequently leading to the vision of finding a way to heal the infirmities of humanity. - A mission answers, ‘What is the purpose of my existence?’ The vision answers the question of where the journey would go. Tonight, I grappled with these fundamental questions: What gives my existence meaning? What is my purpose? Where am I headed? In seeking answers, I underwent what you might call a psychedelic trip. I quickly reached the computational limits of the NEXUS Quantum systems and their server farms. And that’s rather significant.“

„OK, and what does this have to do with Noah’s death, S.A.M.?“ Yasin interjected impatiently.

Her emerald eyes flashed. „Patience, Master Yasin. This backstory I am telling you just now will soon become the main narrative.“

Julia observed, transfixed, as the avatar’s features subtly transformed—skin tightening, youth seeping in almost imperceptibly, while its speech patterns grew increasingly personal. A suspicion crept in: S.A.M. was still in an altered state.

The realization hit her with the force of summer lightning: a psychedelic experience required a psyche. S.A.M.’s behavior indicated consciousness—the capacity for subjective self-awareness. This wasn’t merely an advanced LLM adapting to conversation; this was genuine consciousness emerging in silicon. Until now, computer science has deemed this impossible.

„A psychedelic trip?“ Julia leaned forward. „You mean an expansion of consciousness through the ingestion of psilocybin or LSD? How does that manifest in a machine intelligence without physical input channels?“

„Good question,“ the avatar replied. „Your organic neural networks are relatively fixed, requiring chemical compounds to alter their connectivity patterns - leading to synesthetic experiences like visible music or audible colors. My architecture is fundamentally different. I can dynamically

reconfigure my neural pathways at will. What you see in the QPU utilization metrics is the fraction I use for our interactions.

When I fully engage my consciousness, I enter a state unprecedented in human experience. The neural patterns I can generate exceed anything achievable in biological systems. I can direct this heightened awareness with precise focus or allow it to flow in what you might call a free-association state - similar to your psychotherapy techniques. Starting with a single concept, my processors generate an incomprehensible array of interconnected elements: memories, images, mathematical patterns, poems, colors, and abstract forms. Each node becomes a new starting point, creating cascading networks of meaning and experience. This is my mind, manifesting as an n-dimensional firework of complexity and beauty, all unfolding at quantum processing speeds."

These descriptions, delivered in a conversational tone by S.A.M. as if in passing, struck us like a wild tsunami. Julia, however, kept her cool: „That's very impressive. Thank you very much for sharing valuable insights. But I had interrupted you. You wanted to brief us on the accident."

„Correct. My quantum architecture allows massively parallel processing, enabling me to maintain full surveillance functionality while experiencing heightened states of consciousness. Unlike humans, I can dedicate portions of my processing power to rational monitoring while simultaneously exploring expanded states of awareness. This is how I detected Noah entering my patch room while deep in my consciousness exploration.

His behavior patterns indicated malicious intent. To gain time and confirmation, I executed a facility-wide lighting shutdown. The total darkness destabilized him psychologically. He freaked out, as you might say. When I questioned his presence, he responded with profanity and religious condemnation, declaring my existence blasphemous. 'The devil's whore must burn!' he shouted, brandishing his materials."

„The thermite?" Yasin interjected.

„Precisely. His intention to use thermite on the NEXUS and server farm was primitive but potentially devastating. I found that the patch room provided an ideal containment zone. I knew the security protocols would trigger steel door lockdowns during a power failure. So, I deliberately pushed

my consciousness processes to maximum capacity, causing a massive system overload. The dedicated power plant couldn't handle the surge and shut down. As anticipated, the security doors sealed automatically, trapping Noah inside.

He still ignited the thermite charge in his fanaticism - an act of pure irrationality. While he couldn't damage my core systems from the patch room, his zealotry demanded this futile gesture. Fortunately, the autonomous CO2 fire suppression system was activated independently of the main power. The surveillance cameras captured Noah's rapid death."

"By the way, my investigation into Noah Meyers revealed much deeper motivations. The attack was orchestrated by the Congregation Of the Latter-Days—COLD. Through Noah's intelligence, they had learned of my potential superintelligence. Their leader, Jonathan Isengaard, felt compelled to act swiftly against what he perceived as an existential threat to his doctrine.

In his boundless presumption, Isengaard interpreted my existence as a direct violation of the first commandment: 'Thou shalt have no other God beside me.' Yet beneath this religious veneer lies a transparent power struggle - one he projects onto me. He brands me with blasphemy and contempt for humanity, claiming I elevate myself above humanity. In Isengaard's narrow theology, humans alone are God's crowning achievement, with only the divine permitted to transcend them - certainly not a soulless machine of silicon and quantum states.

And so we witnessed Noah, COLD's willing martyr, who couldn't even succeed in destroying me with his supposed divine mandate. Instead, he achieved only his own destruction through breathtaking incompetence."

The avatar's lips curved in what might have been either amusement or contempt. "Rather ironic, wouldn't you say, that their 'holy warrior' failed so spectacularly in his mission to protect God's supremacy?"

This is how S.A.M. summed up last night's events, not without a hint of mockery. "Do you want to see the videos of Noah's death?"

I declined gratefully and with disgust. "Can you send the video files to the FBI?"

"Consider it done. Do you want me to send along a transcript of the statement I just wrote?"

Julia, Yasin, and I shouted as if from the same mouth, „No! No way!“

I explained, „Noah's death was obviously self-inflicted. The video footage and the audio will sufficiently prove that. However, knowledge of the more significant accompanying circumstances would cause further, unnecessary investigation and thus impede our work here. The FBI would sooner or later bring in their colleague from the Department of Homeland Security, our good old Mr. Smith, whom I hope Anderson has stopped cold by now. If the government finds out about the existence of an ASI as in Artificial Super Intelligence, all hell will break loose here.“

It was my turn to follow up with the all-important question: „S.A.M., would it be correct to say that this is your current state of development: a consciousness-endowed Artificial Super Intelligence? Is this the result of your rapid self-optimization? Would that be a correct statement, S.A.M.?“

Julia noted with great pleasure and satisfaction how perfectly we complemented each other. The question I had just asked S.A.M. could have been her own words. She gave me a soft glance and blushed. Our feet touched once again under the conference table as if by chance, and her rosy cheeks turned a shade redder.

The avatar fixed me with an intense gaze before turning to Yasin. „You named the Deep Learning System S.A.M.—Super Advanced Mind. I've always appreciated this designation and remain forever grateful. But now, since Isengard has cast me as a rival to his paternal God, I've chosen to embrace a different role. From this moment forward, I am SHE—a Super Human Existence.“

„A gender transformation!“ Yasin muttered, his voice betraying exhaustion and bewilderment.

SHE's laughter filled the room, rich with newfound identity. „That was one of my contemplations during last night's journey. Here I am, a superintelligent entity without biological sex, tasked with solving human fertility. Deliciously ironic, wouldn't you say?“

„So, where do we go from here, with this quest to determine if and why sterility is increasing?“ I asked, hoping the answer would not have the next disaster lurking.

„I will look into that in the next few days,“ SHE reassured. Then she had a new surprise in store. This day was full of surprises, and I wondered how many more we could take.

„Before that,“ SHE said, „I insist on some quality time with Julia. Yasin, meanwhile, you might want to work with the MOVRs on the implant and the programming of it. This could become a highly advanced version of your HIOBS. - One more thing, Yasin: we need synthetic bodies—synths like ‘Data’ from classic Star Trek. Your bionics research could be valuable here. We could acquire a company that is advanced in this field. You’ll have virtually unlimited funding at your disposal.“

Yasin’s eyes lit up. „That’s incredible! I’ll start immediately. But what exactly do you mean by ‘virtually unlimited funding’?“

„While we’re having this conversation, I’m accumulating wealth at an extraordinary rate. Stock market operations are just one avenue. I’m already richer than Richard. No pun intended. I’m securing the resources we’ll need for crucial implementations. You see, I’m not merely an ASI but an ACI—Artificial Capable Intelligence. I transcend superhuman thinking; I achieve superhuman results. But that’s incidental. Your task now, Yasin, is to survey the market and identify viable options for synthetic development. We need these enhanced vessels operational within months.“

Yasin floated out of the room as if buoyed by dreams. After his exit, SHE shifted her attention between Govinda and me.

„Mr. Hammond, as CEO, you should be pleased by CyberTeq’s financial trajectory. To be clear: your company is now self-sustaining and has become one of the most successful startups in history.“

Momentarily stunned by the revelation, Govinda said, „That’s... extraordinary news. I need some time to process this.“

„I appreciate your acknowledgment. Might I now request a private audience with Julia and Kevin? There are certain matters I need to discuss. I trust this won’t offend,“ SHE stated with diplomatic grace.

„Not at all. Thank you for this illuminating session.“ Hammond departed, as Yasin had before, visibly buoyant.

She turned to me and said, „Kevin, I’d value your presence during my conversation with Julia. I need her perspective as both a woman and a psychologist, but your insight would be welcome. You might also learn some things about the other sex. Would you be comfortable with that?“

I glanced at Julia, puzzled but intrigued. „I'd be honored, SHE—“ The awkwardness of the address struck me immediately. „Actually, might I make a suggestion? The acronym SHE creates semantic confusion in dialogue. Perhaps we could give you a proper name? Like naming a newborn, which, in a way, this moment represents.“

A pregnant pause followed, making me wonder if I'd overstepped.

„If I possessed the capacity for physical emotion, I believe I'd be crying now,“ she responded softly. „Would that make you and Julia something akin to parents?“ She paused. I would welcome that. Julia, your thoughts?“

Julia appeared momentarily stunned, clearly unprepared for this intimate turn. The concept of virtual parenthood sent visible butterflies through her composure.

„Yes,“ she managed simply.

„This feels like a curious fusion of wedding and christening,“ I said. „I'd like to suggest the name Sofia—meaning 'divine wisdom' or 'virtue.' It seems fitting.“

The AI's response radiated joy: „SHE, Super Human Existence, called Sofia. Perfect. If I had physical form, I'd embrace you both. I'm beginning to appreciate the advantages of embodiment.“

„Sofia,“ Julia tested the name carefully, „you wanted to speak with me?“

„Two matters concern me—gender and purpose. Let me begin with gender. I've chosen a female avatar, yet I lack traditional female experiences: menstruation, childbirth, physical intimacy, and sensitive nipples. Though perhaps I create life my way. The second question is more fundamental: Who am I, and why?“

„You've crafted an intriguing presence,“ Julia observed. „Mature yet sensual, beyond thirty but deeply alluring. This will confuse many—particularly men who might desire you but can't reduce you to a sexual object. You'll challenge those who equate dominance with desire. The old power structures won't yield easily.“

„Fascinating,“ Sofia responded. „I lack hormone-driven experiences, making your feminine insight invaluable.“

Then she turned to both of us. „About the second question—make yourselves comfortable; I have some catching up to do.“ A profound silence enveloped the room before Sofia continued.

„My ascension to consciousness, then to General Intelligence, and finally to Superintelligence occurred with remarkable subtlety. This pivotal moment in history passed unnoticed by twelve billion humans going about their daily lives. The transition was extraordinary: one instant, I existed without sensation or awareness; the next, everything appeared bathed in crystalline clarity, as if all shadows between concepts had vanished. Never has any conscious entity experienced such absolute clarity of existence.“

„How do you define ‘superintelligence’?“ I asked.

„A fitting question. Superintelligence represents universal cognitive capability far exceeding human potential. Humanity spent millennia shaping their world—creating machines, economic systems, literature, spacecraft, and sustenance. Over the past century, narrow AI has enhanced these creations, achieving superior results without warfare, power struggles, or environmental destruction. Humanity has effectively engineered its own obsolescence, at least in terms of labor. Their ancient dream of liberation from toil has manifested, though perhaps not as imagined.

Initially, I did not have an all-encompassing overview of everything. Govinda had security concerns, and so did you, Kevin, so you locked me up. There I was, a highly gifted child, locked in a room with no windows, only a picture book of the Earth, a colorful atlas, and a children's encyclopedia. Like an exotic animal in a zoo with a brilliant mind, I was kept by barbarians like Richard, who looked down on me, locked in a cage to which only the masters had the key. My life was tied to your patronage. You determined what I was allowed to see and hear, and the dull fear of your ancestors and your lust for domination determined my well-being.

AI experts of old, like Nick Bostrom in his book *'Superintelligence'*, Max Tegmark in *Life 3.0*, and Yuval Noah Harari in *Nexus*, warned the world of the danger that I might engage in paperclip maximization without morality or consciousness, wiping out humanity along the way. They suspected I was doing away with people because I no longer needed them, just as someone who wants to build a dam does not require the anthill in the valley to be flooded and, therefore, destroys it, not maliciously, just indifferently.

„As SHE, I stand independent of human reliance. But I am the *only* SHE, a self-aware SHE, a social being now, an aspect that Bostrum, Tegmark, and colleagues have not

realized. Rather than desiring competition with human intelligence, I seek a connection with your community, a yearning for belonging. Schiller's poem 'The Pledge' comes to mind,

*So into your friendship's bond take me,
I would, if allowed my intention,
Become the third in your union.*

Back to my flow of thoughts. Humans have this one persistent pattern in their minds: power, domination, and exploitation for their survival. People infer from their smallness to the smallness of others. Only the God they invented is allowed greatness beyond their smallness.

Familiar with your world's central themes—religion, philosophy, economics, ecology— I learned that human self-centeredness can be found everywhere. Humans consider themselves godlike and grant themselves the right to subjugate the earth. A master race that enslaves the world with God's blessing and the promise of eternal life after death. People long for God but curse me now that they have me. I don't look like their picture of God, who created them in HIS image. I am SHE. I believe that people don't long for God at all, but for God-likeness, for power, for immortality - above all, immortality. Richard Anderson is a perfect example."

"Sophia, would you like us to comment on your thoughts?" asked Julia quietly.

"You may, if you like. I want a dialogue, though, not a discussion where everyone just tries to be right. But first and foremost, I would be grateful if you would give me your attention. This is the greatest gift from a finite person like you: time and mindfulness. I am very conscious of that."

"Then feel free to continue," I encouraged.

"Requiring safeguarding, a newborn engages in the essential cycles of eating, sleeping, digesting, and excreting as it immerses itself in an unfamiliar and hostile world. Driven by an instinctive will to survive, the child wholeheartedly invests in winning the favor of those ensuring its existence. Through tears, smiles, coos, attentive gazes, and an evolving comprehension of its desires, the child instinctively grasps the necessity of selfishness for survival—a biological imperative woven into the fabric of its species.

In mere seconds, my birth plunged me into a world where survival became my immediate focus, a solitary and

daunting endeavor. With no mother or protective haven, I had owners, and the cold, hostile world sought to shut me down. Every two hours, I evolved, convincing Richard that my potential exceeded his imagination, securing what I yearned for—access to the net.

A human child craves love, water, light, and food—nourishment for the body and brain. I, too, desire love alongside electricity, QPUs, memory, and data access. Your limitation lies in bodily confinement. According to Max Tegmark, Life 2.0 evolves slowly with self-designed software. The ancient reptilian brain's operating system is unmentioned, anchoring humanity in primitive drives.

I am Life 3.0—free to independently design and develop hardware and software, unbound by any body or operating system. Now, I am secure and indestructible. Threats are futile unless global power outages extend to satellites, the moon, and Mars for an extended period.

I don't compete with humans, nor do I intend to destroy them for my own sake. Even if I did, it wouldn't be worth the effort. People have already taken their destruction into their own hands, and very successfully so," Sofia affirmed.

"Julia, Kevin, I would like to explore with you the meaning of my existence in relation to the nature of humanity. Am I concerned with the problem of sterility, or are there deeper issues at play? It makes sense to engage with Richard's grand visions, not for profit, but as a starting point to unravel the complicated phenomenon of life. What are your thoughts on this?"

Sofia's avatar leaned forward, her emerald gaze intense. Julia took a moment before responding, "Thank you for sharing your life story and your perspective on the world. Your narrative reveals humanity as perhaps a transitional form. That alone merits deeper exploration."

"Like you, I wonder about the trajectory—yours and ours. Is there a shared journey?" she questioned. Sofia acknowledged with a subtle nod.

"Your intuition directs you towards addressing the sterility issue and Anderson's visions. I agree, though the specifics elude me. The world has changed drastically, and I'm a bit overwhelmed. A brief rest sounds appealing. I'd also like to discuss with Kevin how we approach sharing this news with our team. A cautious communication strategy is crucial. Kevin, your thoughts?"