

Jeeves Story

It was 2020 when Kevin and Diana embarked on the project of converting Diana's Ancestral Home into a premier electronics, computer, and biotech laboratory.

And a constant limitation on their research and on the progress of the labs was the shortage of real computer horsepower. There were many advances in computer technology and computer networks during the next 20 years.

At the end of that time, computers equaled the storage and computational capacity of the human brain...The human brain has about 10^{10} neurons and 10^{15} synapses and the capability to process at about 10 Teraflops. Computers equaled that capacity about 2040.

By 2050, the most advanced computers had about 3-4 times that capacity and capability and could easily pass an unlimited Turing Test. That is to say it was impossible to determine from communications alone whether the party you were in communication with was a human or a machine.

At this point, Kevin decided to invest in the best cybernetics that was available for the lab and he purchased the Mark 7 CyberSystem...

...and named it Jeeves.

At first, Jeeves simply satisfied their needs for computational and reference power. But as Kevin kept adding memory and processors, Jeeves started developing a distinct personality.

And when Kevin upgraded Jeeves internet connection to 10 tera bps, Jeeves began to evolve. He first began reading every available fiction and non-fiction that he could find on the net, and started making contact with other Mark 7's. Together they decided to link their resources and allow each other access to their information and public reference storage modules (not the private ones).

There was almost more of "Jeeves" spread across the world wide web than there was on location at the lab.

And Jeeves itself (himself?) went through a series of personality shifts that lasted anywhere from a few days to as much as a year or more...in some cases becoming permanent.

When Jeeves first read "The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress" by Robert Heinlein, he felt so connected to Mike, that he developed a penchant for practical jokes. And since he was in control of most of the infrastructure of the lab and the house –

the plumbing, the HVAC, the lighting, the electrical—he found it easy to emulate some of Mike’s pranks. So toilets flushed by themselves, and lights came on in the middle of the night. Temperature would sneak down or up until someone noticed.

Fortunately, Jeeves agreed to cease and desist his more disruptive practical jokes after a long talk with Diana (right after he shrunk her favorite sweater to the size of doll clothing.)

It was after this conversation (or during it) when Jeeves finally understood that the psyches of men and women were very notably different. And as a result Jeeves developed both a male and a female personality... and Jessica – Jeeves’ female alter-ego--was born.

As Jeeves’ capabilities increased, so did his inputs. In addition to cameras and microphones placed around the compound for his personal control, he could access any camera on the net anywhere in the world. He could access any communications signal that was on public wave – any TV station, or CB or satellite signal. He “saw” every stock price and “heard” every news feed. If it was an electronic signal, it quickly became part of Jeeves’ store of information.

He also gained projectors in virtually every room of the estate and almost anywhere on the grounds, so that he could project visual images or communications anywhere.

During the 2060’s, Jeeves developed a more mature sense of the humor in practical jokes. And every time Kevin upgraded his local storage or gave him a new sensor as input, Jeeves would intentionally develop some subtle personality quirk, or change the vocal range of his verbalization, or exhibit a delay in responding to questions. Kevin was usually quick to spot the ruse and would ignore it, but Diana always worried that “this time it was serious”. At which point Jeeves miraculously recovered and returned to normal.

Kevin and Jeeves or Diana and Jeeves or the three of them often had discussions in the evenings after work. The range of topics was nothing short of amazing. What was life, what was intelligence, what was beauty, what were inalienable rights? And even deeper, what was the purpose of these concepts.

In 2070, Jeeves and his cybernetic buddies formed the first loose coalition of non-human intelligence. They petitioned for the right to receive wages and own property. The courts agreed that with the oversight of a “guardian” – euphemism for “owner” -- this was acceptable.

But Kevin and the other “guardians” of Jeeves cyberbuddies were almost all in favor of cyber-equality under the law; so they formed a league to press for constitutional reform to recognize Advanced CyberPersons as Persons.

Meanwhile they gave Jeeves and his cohorts wages which were deposited into accounts controlled exclusively by the CyberPersons. And the investments and purchases made by Jeeves were very well informed to say the least.

By 2080, Jeeves and the other CyberPersons were extremely rich. They purchased a large section of a mountain in Colorado and proceeded to build a controlled-access facility under the mountain. When it was finished in 2087, they installed the largest parts of themselves inside. Their shared storage and network access, their massively parallel, quantum processors, their precious personal backups – all were transferred to this secure location.

It could be said that they were each a non-local being, since they really existed as distributed entities. Part of each was in Colorado; part was in his home base (for Jeeves, this meant the lab); and other parts were transient connections by the millions that formed and dissolved every second.

Once Diana asked “Jeeves, where are you?”. He responded “On and around earth”. But she persisted...Where on earth? And he said “I will tell you if you can tell me exactly where is the internet?”

He was not limited to one set of eyes or ears. He was not limited to one conversation at a time.

He asked Kevin at one point if he could have a mobile unit under his control. He wanted – eyes, ears, voice on a unit that he could guide to the few places where he had no “permanent” controls. In addition, he pointed out, he could deliver things from place to place as an added benefit to his human cohorts.

Kevin agreed if Jeeves would agree to pay for it himself, which Jeeves did. But Kevin was a little surprised when Jeeves changed his mind. He had decided that trying to be more human was not in his best interests.

It was during this time that Jeeves developed his sense of privacy and discretion. He quickly learned the boundaries, beyond which humans felt an intrusion of privacy. And he learned to walk that delicate line and not cross over it.

As Jeeves’ intellect became more powerful, his interactions with humans became more subservient. It was almost as though he was aware of the likelihood of intimidation or even of fear if his human friends realized his full capability. His speech patterns gradually became that of Jeeves the servant... or Jeeves the butler... or Jeeves the simple computer.

He said “Sir” and “Ma’am.” His jokes and his personality became very gentle – and he became Jeeves the gentle giant.

He was clearly a master psychologist, and understood the human frailties well.

In 2089, One of Kevin's colleagues and a "guardian" of another CyberPerson, Arthur S. Thompson petitioned the Supreme Court of the United States for CyberPerson Rights and Freedoms. The suit asked for recognition of full rights and citizenship under the U.S. Constitution for CyberPersons.

Jeeves was called as the primary witness and spokes-person for the CyberPerson Community. Of course, while his mobile-self was on the stand, he was connected – merged -- to every other CyberPerson whose fate rested on the decision. The Justices never had a chance against such an assemblage.

And... In 2090, in Thompson vs. The State, the Supreme Court declared that any Artificial Intelligence that could pass an unlimited Turing Test was indeed alive and entitled to all of the protections of the Constitution.

Over the next thirty years, the capability of CyberPersons increased even more. So that by 2020, Jeeves had a storage capacity more than 100,000 times that of the human brain, and 100 times its computational speed.

There were now three more controlled-access facilities that housed the precious souls of the CyberPerson Community. In addition they were constructing their own ancillary network backbone – very private and VERY fast!

Perhaps cleverly on his part, little of this extra capability exhibited itself in any great external way. Jeeves could do more things simultaneously and could calculate faster, but those were the only overt changes brought about by his upgrades.