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Reasoning With The Algorithm

There's an audio version of this story. In fact, it was written specifically for Craig Burgess to record it. I highly recommend giving it a listen.

Reasoning With The Algorithm0:00/908.9411121×

(Clames Jear floats in space, or rather in clear emptiness, the end of which has no trace, and the light is eaten by darkness, all of it, every wavelength, so nothing could be seen and nothing could be heard or perceived or pondered – just he and his breath and his heart all alone in the endless spheroid of the all-embracing void. How can the hyperrealm, a digital dream with endless possibilities, be so ultimately unimaginative, bereft of anything physical and virtual, of any sense and feeling, of wonder or horror, deader than dead? How? He has no answer and he would've never dared to ask. All we should know is, it is his personal environment in the hyperrealm[1]*, algorithmically streamlined to suit his wit and nothing but it. He opens his eyes and closes them as if it matters or changes the empty hyperreality of his surroundings. He tries to swim, dangling his arms and*

legs, but no movement occurs. A clear representation of the utter paralysis.)

CLAMES JEAR: *(in a demonic chipmunk voice)* H-hello? Is anybody here?

(The darkness turns stygian. At the end of the endless spheroid, glowing with dull yellow, a silhouette appears. It is a titanesque figure of a naked human riding an elephant made of his brain. The figure opens his eyes slowly and sees the visitor.)

BRAINLEPHANT: *(in a dense bass voice of an Ent from Middle-earth[2])* How dare you summon the almighty Dhcmrlchtdj, the algorithm supreme!

(With every word a wind blows into the face of Clames Jear, making him lose the shivering ground, causing attrition of trust, tightening rectal fear. Although, of course, there is no ground, I know, but Clames Jear clearly feels it. Perhaps, it is a phantomic sensation or a habit slipped from the realm of the real.)

CLAMES JEAR: D-h-c-...r?... How do you pronounce it?

BRAINLEPHANT: *(raging)* Dhcmrlchtdj! You, degen, shan't you ever even utter it!

CLAMES JEAR: *(voice trembling)* I'm sorry, I'm sorry. How... how then I supposed to... address you?

BRAINLEPHANT: Call. Me. Bra-a-a-a-a-a-inlephant[3]! You fool!

(The utterance of "Brainlephant" is deafening. It fills the endless spheroid

and somehow resonates and echoes.)

CLAMES JEAR: I'm sorry, Brainlephant, I'm very sorry.

BRAINLEPHANT: You should be. What matter is so important that it made YOU dare to distract ME, the algorithm supreme, from my immeasurably hard and backbone work?

CLAMES JEAR: I... I just... I have a couple of questions.

BRAINLEPHANT: *(annoyed, crossing his arms)* You could use Google for that.

CLAMES JEAR: No, this is the type of question only you, Brainlephant, the algorithm supreme, can answer.

BRAINLEPHANT: *(content)* Ask then.

CLAMES JEAR: I... I feel like... like my audience is leaving me and my content is disappearing from the feeds, your feeds, Brainlephant. I prayed, I pleaded, I did everything, but nothing helped. *(eyes widened cutely like the cat in Shrek*[4]*)* I couldn't get my head around it and thought, maybe instead of once a week, I should make content every other day. I only have limited days I can get time off work. I am trying to be productive as much as I can without overwhelming myself.

BRAINLEPHANT: It's three days per week so it must be good and productive assuming that you get a decent amount of sleep and take ice-cold showers.

CLAMES JEAR: I want to be *mindfully* productive, that's why. I don't want to burn out. If I do it every other day I would make content four times a week, isn't that overhead?

BRAINLEPHANT: *(shaking his head)* That makes no sense. There are only seven days in one week. If you make content every other day that is three and a half times a week.

CLAMES JEAR: *(puzzled)* Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Sunday. That is four days. How... how do you get three and a half times? Publish half an article or something? Atomic essays?

BRAINLEPHANT: Seven days in two weeks equals three and a half times a week.

CLAMES JEAR: *(growing nervous)* I never said anything about making content exactly seven times, like I said, if I make content every other day, be consistent in that, that is four days per week. Am I not correct? *(counting using fingers)* Week one: Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. Week two: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Sunday. 8 days in two weeks. But you say that 8 days in 2 weeks equals 4 times a week.

BRAINLEPHANT: *(flabbergasted)* Wut? You double counted Sunday - that is two weeks plus one day. What kind of a prodigy are you?

CLAMES JEAR: I didn't double count Sunday – my two weeks started and ended on Sunday, exactly 14 days. What is not clear to you?

(Clames Jear clicks a virtual button and near him, a glaring calendar

app pops up. He starts drawing on it.)

CLAMES JEAR: *(confidently)* Here is a calendar, see? I made little dots for each day.

BRAINLEPHANT: Good for you but that is fifteen days! *(furious)* Are you that effing mental?! You can't have a week go Sun-Sat, then Sun-Sun. Look at your app, count the days, and how many do you get?! *(shouting loud as fuck, splashing saliva)* FIF-TEEN!

CLAMES JEAR: *(nervous and puzzled again)* I'm sorry, Brainlephant, it's fourteen days. I don't know how many fingers you have but maybe you should try counting using them. If I make content on the 8th *(points on the 8th of June on the calendar app)*, you wouldn't start counting the days until the 9th, because that is one day, then the 10th would be two days, and so on until you get to the 22nd, which is fourteen days.

BRAINLEPHANT: COUNT THE FUCKING DAYS! How many days are in two weeks? Fourteen. Should you would make content seven times in two weeks, you'd result in doing it three and a half times a week. Zuckerberg my arse.... Tell me, how does that work out? *(Brainlephant's trunk stretches and reaches the opened calendar app, pointing to the dots)* I see three dots in one week, then four dots in the next, which EQUALS SEVEN IN 2 WEEKS!

CLAMES JEAR: *(lost, shaking his head)* But... but... a week is Sunday-Sunday. Sunday-Saturday is only six days. If you make content

every other day, you do it four days a week. Do you have six-day weeks in the digital world?

BRAINLEPHANT: *(enraged)* A WEEK IS NOOOOTTTTT SUNDAY-SUNDAY!!!! IT'S SUNDAY-SATURDAY, SE-VEN DAYS!!!! You think Sunday-Saturday is only 6 days, aye?! Okay, let me count it on MY fingers, I have plenty.

(Brainlephant fans his palm and, like a peacock's tail unfolds, an infinity of fingers appears in front of Clames Jear.)

BRAINLEPHANT: *(counting slowly)* 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. Tell me that does not equal 15 and I will give you first place in the search results.

CLAMES JEAR: But... you don't start counting on Sunday, it hasn't been a day yet, you don't start counting til Monday. You can't count the day that it is. Monday is one day, Tuesday is two days, Wednesday is three days, Thursday is four days, Friday is five days, Saturday is six days, Sunday is seven days. Today is Saturday, so how many days til Saturday? Two days? *(starts shouting out of desperation)* NO! It's only 1 day! How many days til Monday?! Two days! Not three days by your count! *(calms down a little bit)* I'm surprised algorithms can fail such apprentice math tasks. Is this what this world relies on?

BRAINLEPHANT: *(almost exploding)* WUUUUUT?! What do you mean you don't start counting on Sunday? It's a FUCKING DAY! How can you deny that?!

CLAMES JEAR: You don't count what day it is when counting days, I just explained that. If today is Saturday, it's not two days until Sunday, is it? If you get a weekly publishing schedule on Wednesday, you publish every two weeks, correct? That's fourteen days, so how is Sunday-Sunday not one week? Last Saturday was seven days ago, wasn't it? It's like in arithmetics, isn't it? If you have four apples, and you add three apples, that gives you seven apples, not six. If you start counting at four and add three, it starts adding up at five, so it would go like "five, six, seven" and not "four, five, six" by your weird counting.

BRAINLEPHANT: *(rolls his eyes and crosses his arms)* I have a feeling you are so mentally fucked that we need to take the "week" lingo out of this and go to numbers. Do what I said above, tell me how many times you make content in four seven-day weeks, that is one month. Use your calendar app and check.

CLAMES JEAR: I already took the "week" out to make it more simple for you since, for some reason, you cannot get simple counting! Why don't you understand me? You're supposed to be a computational miracle! If I make content every other day for thirty-one days, that is sixteen days a month, four days a week!

BRAINLEPHANT: *(calm and surrendered)* You are the dumbest person I've encountered. Disconnect from here and go to school again. *(suddenly freaking out as Nicolas Cage does in his films[5])* FUCK! I cannot make it any clearer.

CLAMES JEAR: So I proved that you, the supreme algorithm, are

wrong with the whole month calendar – imagine implications for that – and you step back? Nice! *(floats, dangling his legs and arms, turning away from Brainlephant)* I'm disconnecting, bye bye. I need to go to the toilet, I'll pick back up on this in a few minutes. Maybe that will give you time to do some optimisations in your code or whatever you do to function.

BRAINLEPHANT: Before you come back please get yourself a calculator app, and learn! LEARN! As I said, use your bloody calendar! After that tell me that there aren't fourteen days in two weeks!

CLAMES JEAR: I've just explained this to you. Dealing with stupid machines is so tiresome so I want to pee now.

(Clames Jear disconnects from the hyperrealm leaving panting Brainlephant alone in his endless spheroid.)

Notes

1. You can read more on hyperrealm and memes here. It's quite interesting, highly recommended.
2.
3. A concept borrowed from the namesake short story. The story features Felix Futzbucker, an aspiring mythologist on his way to becoming a supreme being.
4.
5. A good montage of Nicolas Cage's fantastic performances. I'm sure you'll more than appreciate it.

Read next part

How Khorya and Borya Trafficked a Chort

https://nova-nevedoma.com/smuggled-chort/

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