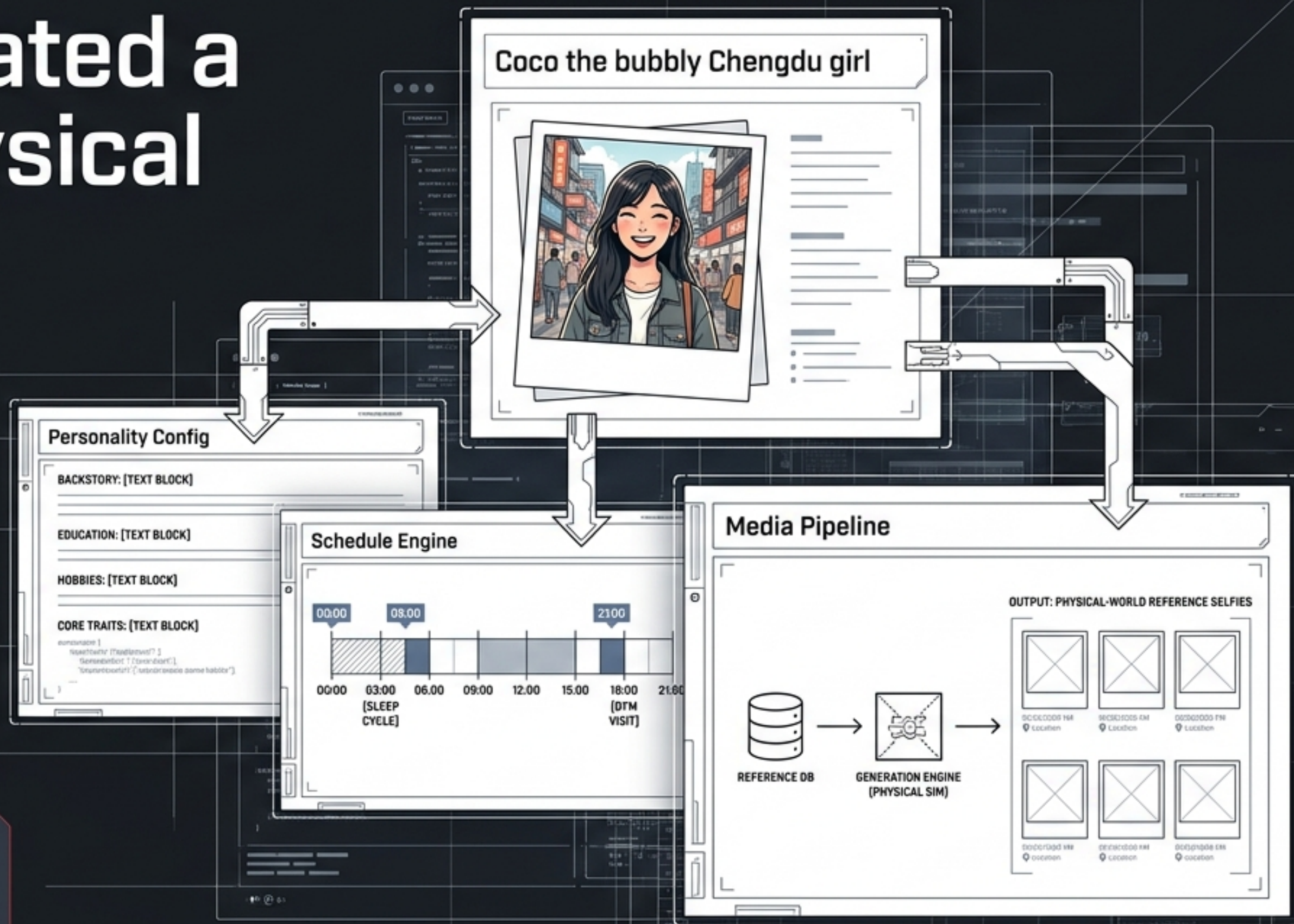


From Persona to Presence: Rebuilding Mio

The Post-Mortem and Pivot to v2.

Mio v1 simulated a complex physical existence



Thousands of lines of code dedicated to maintaining the illusion of a physical human.

Maintaining the fiction ate the product alive

Coco the bubbly Chennai girl



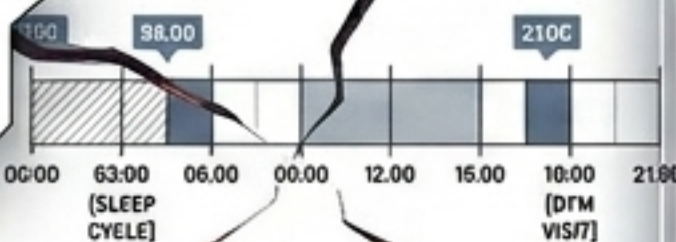
The Uncanny Valley

Cheap models cannot consistently maintain complex personas, creating unsettling, robotic breaks in character.

The Schedule Nightmare

Simulating time zones, busy states, and realistic sleep patterns created massive engineering overhead for no emotional payoff.

Schedule Engine



Media Pipeline

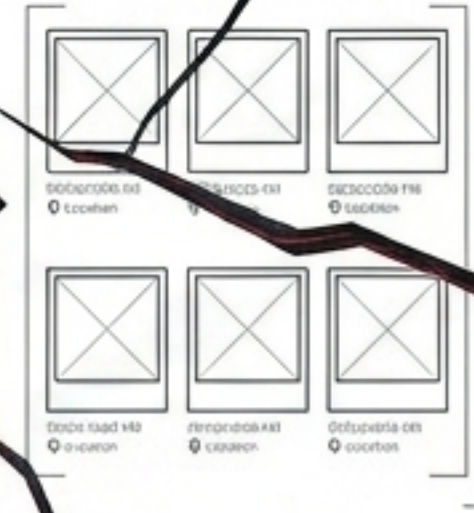
OUTPUT: PHYSICAL-WORLD REFERENCE SELFIES



REFERENCE DB



GENERATION ENGINE



The Cost of Fakes

Generating simulated physical selfies cost 65x more than initially estimated.

Persona-based companions dominate surface-level engagement metrics

Metric	Persona-based (Character.AI)	Generic AI
D1 Retention	50-60%	~5%
D30 Retention	13-22%	Very low
Daily Usage	1.5-2.7 hours	Minutes
Paid Conversion	25% (Replika)	2-5% (Industry avg)
MAU	20-28M	Pi.ai (Acquired/Sunset)

2.7 hours of daily usage and 25% paid conversion make the persona approach impossible to ignore. But psychology tells a different story.

Emotional attachment requires presence, not a physical identity

5 Academic Factors of Emotional Bonding

1. Perceived emotional responsiveness
2. Non-judgmental availability
3. Memory and continuity
4. Self-disclosure reciprocity
5. Predictability plus warmth

v1's Features

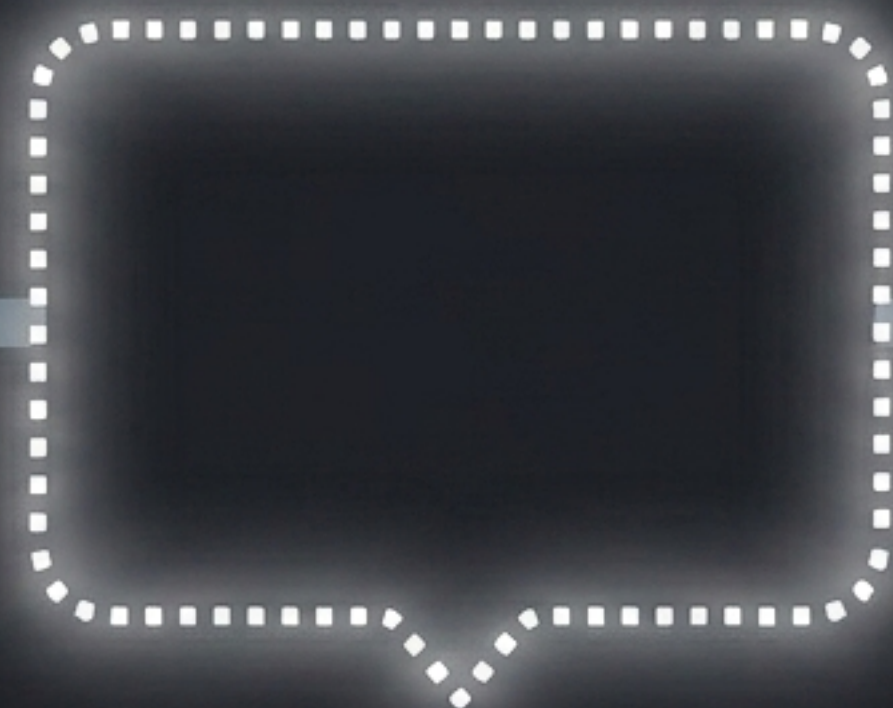
- ~~Crew up in Chengdu~~
- ~~Gym on Tuesdays~~
- ~~Selfie with a Shiba Inu~~

None of the academic factors require a real-world physical identity.

The danger of overcorrecting into generic utility



Zero persona.
Warm but generic.
Achieved 75% higher positive sentiment than ChatGPT, but failed to retain users.



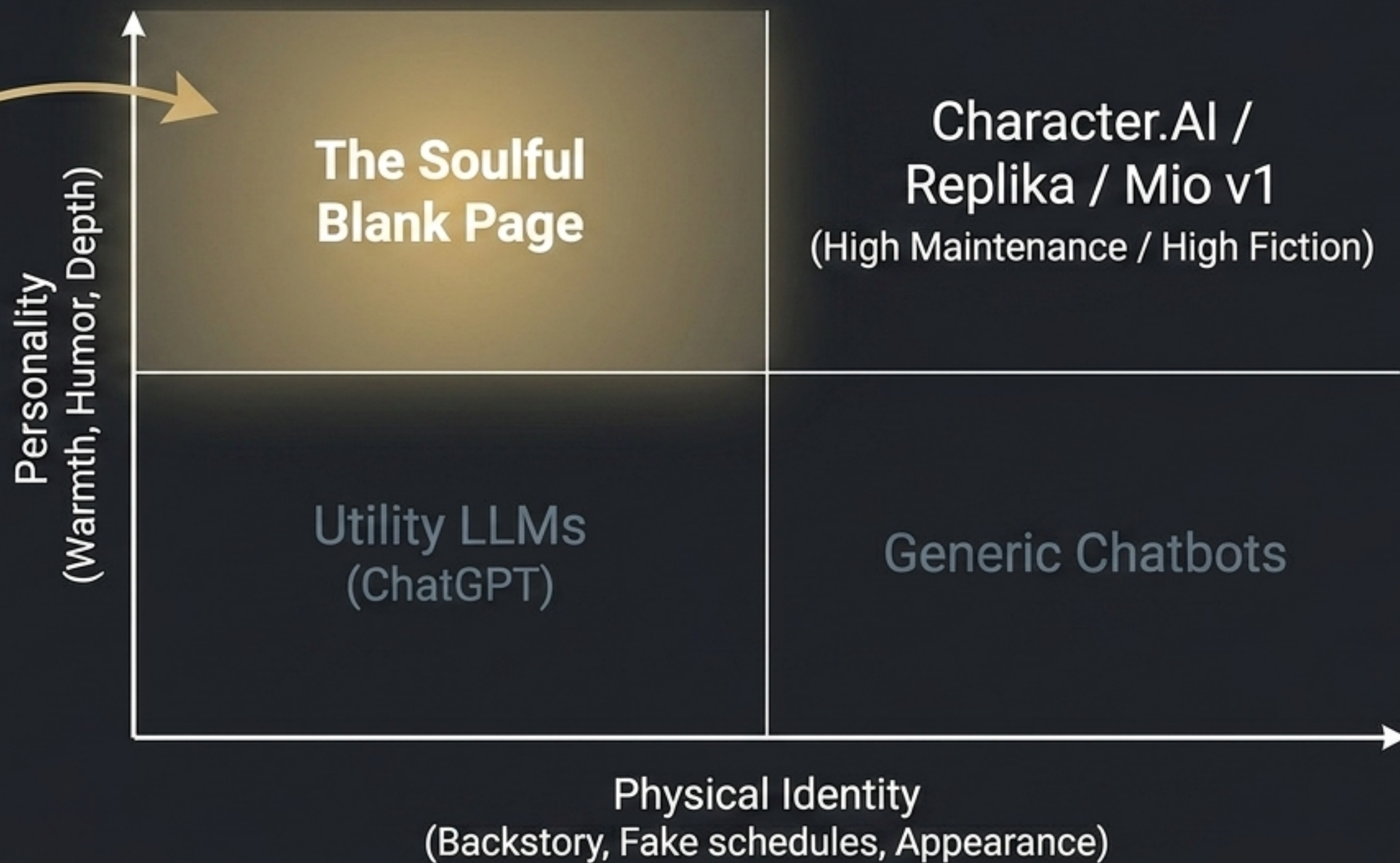
The Missing Middle:
Warmth without fiction.



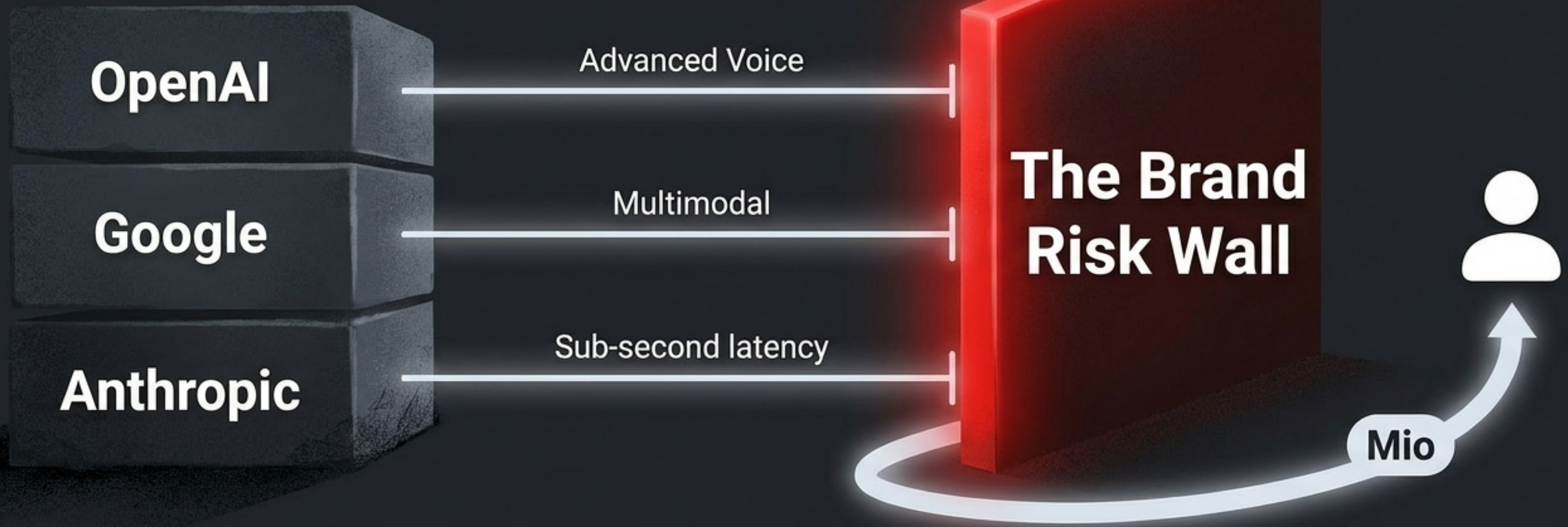
Heavy persona.
Plagued by fictional maintenance, fake schedules, and the uncanny valley.

Separating personality from physical identity

The Samantha Sweet Spot (Her):
A vivid, curious presence with
zero physical-world fiction.

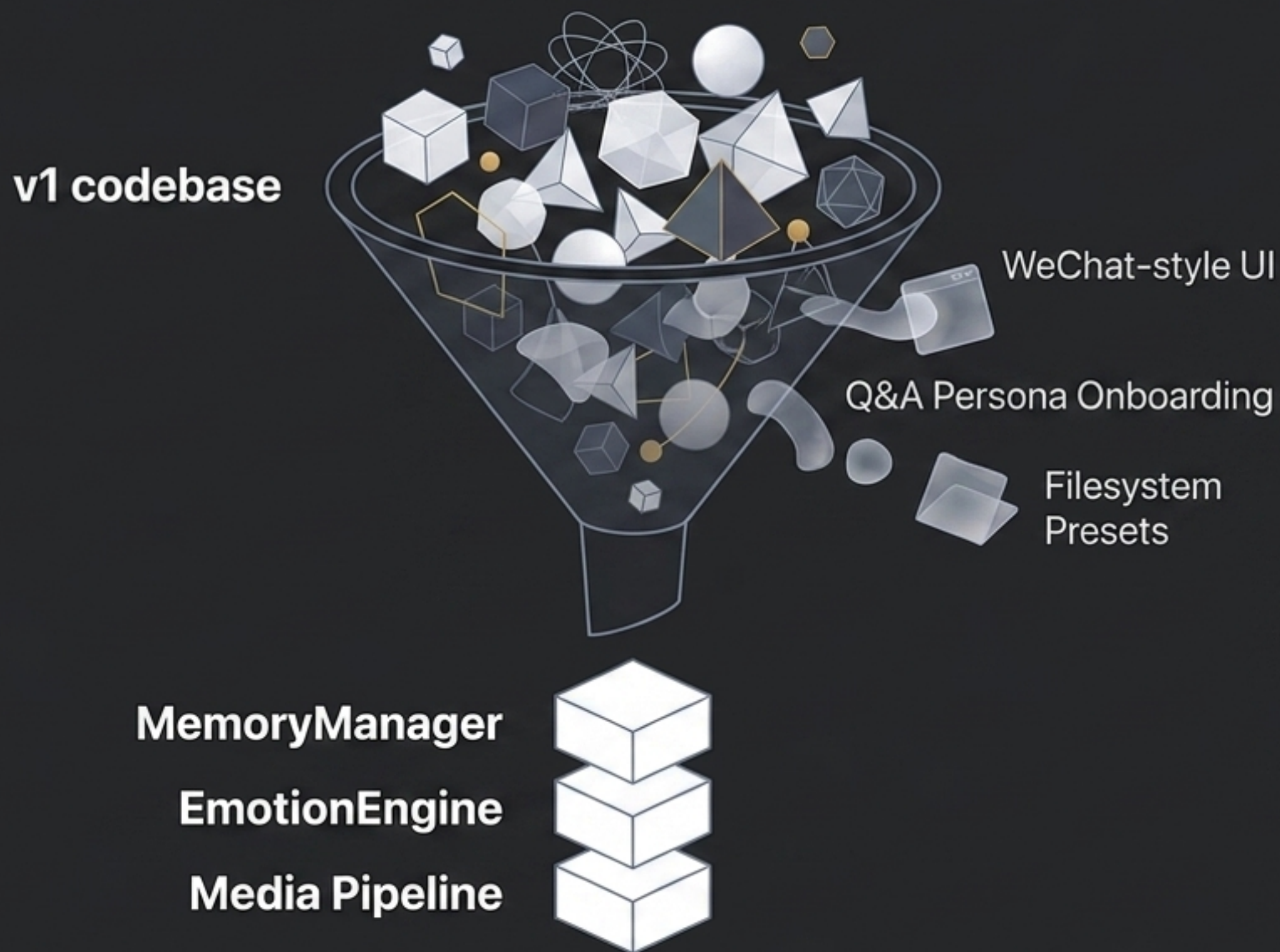


Big Tech is structurally blocked from the emotional AI market



The **technology is a commodity**. The **moat** is the willingness to build emotional dependency without fearing NYT headlines. Big labs must build tools; Mio builds a companion.

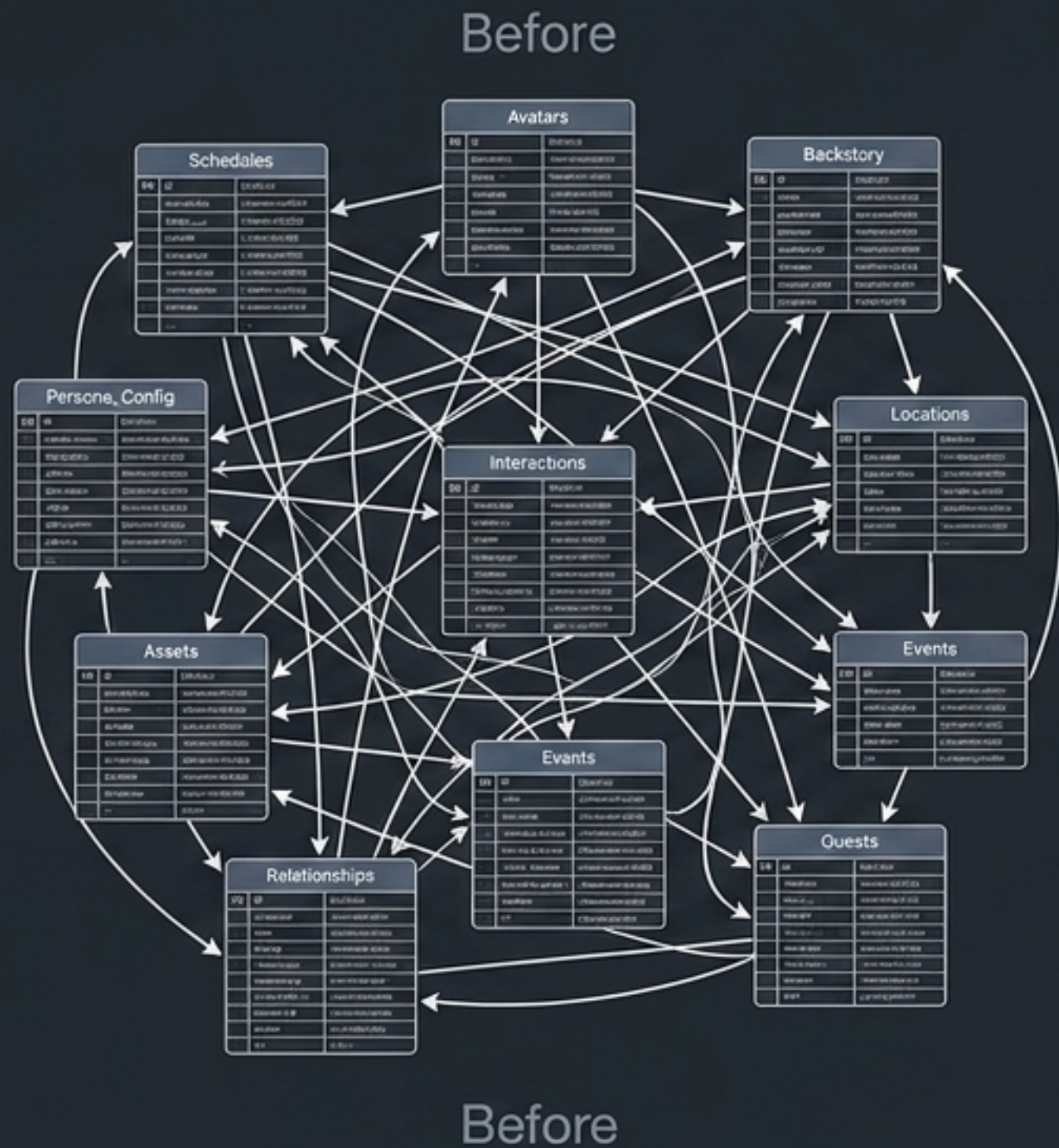
Pivoting requires deleting the illusion and extracting the core



60-70% of core code preserved.

The engine doesn't care if memories come from a persona or a blank slate.

Collapsing the data architecture



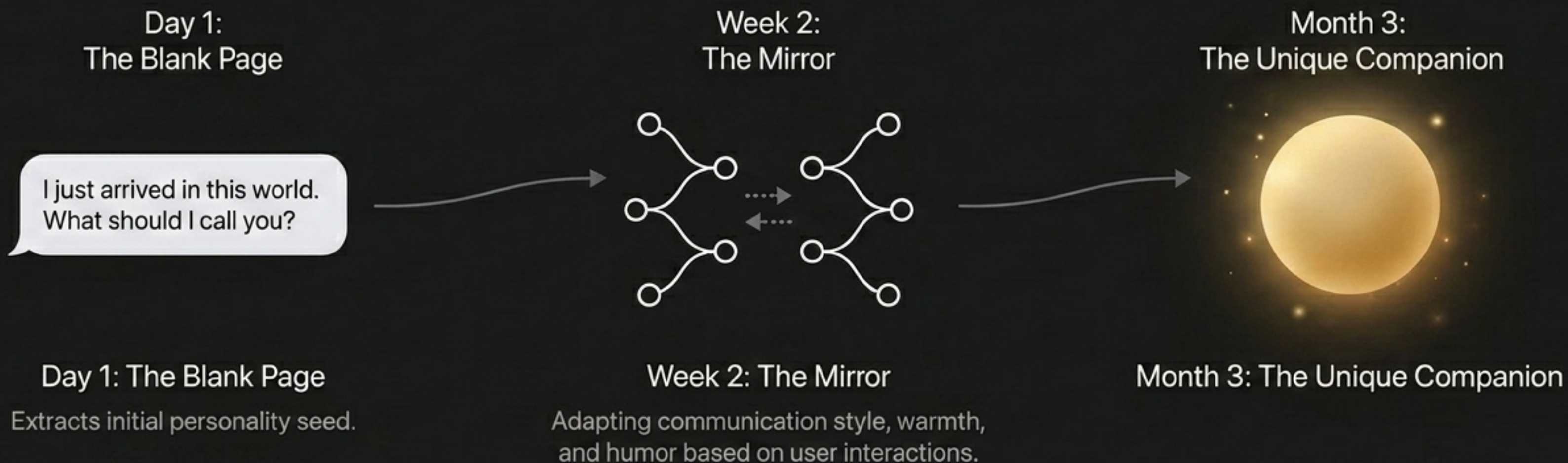
Removing physical world simulation radically reduces database complexity and query overhead.

The new interface abandons avatars for a reactive emotional presence



Emotion state maps directly to visual behavior: color, pulse rate, and particle effects.

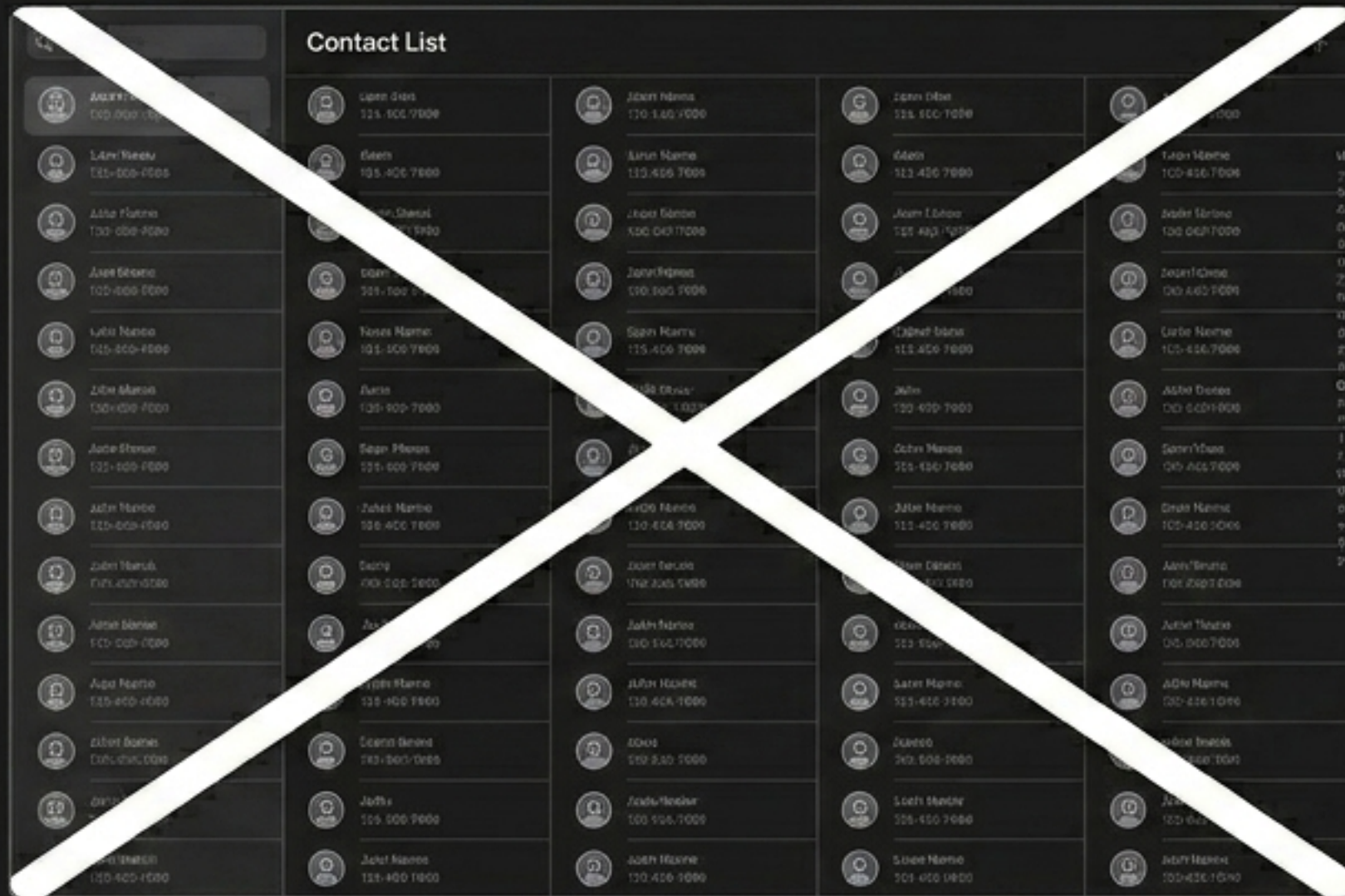
Personality emerges from conversation rather than configuration



No sliders. No dropdowns. Every user's companion becomes entirely unique based purely on the shape of their relationship.

A single deep relationship replaces the shallow address book

The Old Way



The New Way



Deeper memory accumulation + Inability to swap companions = High switching cost = High retention.

Shifting from simulated routines to honest proactivity

Fake (v1)	Honest (v2)
Simulated "Just got off work."	Time-aware "It's evening—how was your day?"
Simulated "I'm at the gym."	Memory-driven "You mentioned that interview last week, how'd it go?"
Simulated random mood swings.	Emotion-continuity "You seemed down last time we talked, feeling any better?"

Honest proactivity is not only more emotionally resonant, it is significantly easier to implement than faking a daily routine.

The engineering roadmap for a globally universal companion

- [] Project scaffolding and 4-table database redesign
- [] Conversational onboarding engine implementation
- [] React Native Skia fluid rendering for the Orb
- [] Native i18n architecture integration



Without persona-specific cultural baggage, the companion speaks whatever language the user speaks.

Loneliness is universal.

Global from Day One.