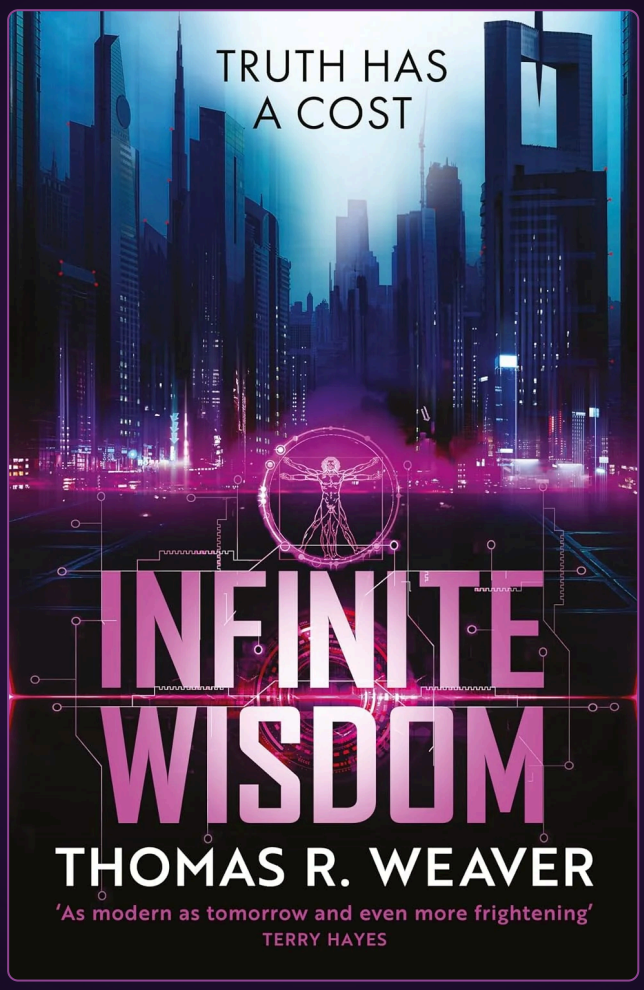
READING GROUP GUIDE



INFINITE WISDOM

THOMAS R. WEAVER

THE SEQUEL TO ARTIFICIAL WISDOM

A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR

WELCOME BACK

Infinite Wisdom was written twice. My first draft came out of a temporary loss of faith in humanity that crept into me in late 2024. My editors helped me see past it, and I rewrote the book around the more powerful ideas that had emerged while I wrote it. It was a huge risk. I think it was the right one.

Five years after Artificial Wisdom, Solomon offers the world one final choice. Upgrade, and merge with artificial intelligence to leave the worst of our nature behind. Or Unplug, and begin again without any technology at all. One vote. No appeal. I have asked readers that question at every event, and I still don't think the answer is easy.

So vote at your first meeting, and vote again at the end. Argue about it. This book might not be for everyone, but if it makes those of you who loved Artificial Wisdom happy, I'm happy.

To the future, again,
Thomas R. Weaver

ABOUT THE BOOK

It is five years since a global vote elected an AI leader, Solomon, to give humanity one last chance of survival. The world might be in recovery, but humankind is suffering—and rebelling—under Solomon's governance. So Solomon offers a final choice. Upgrade: irrevocably merge with artificial intelligence. Unplug: brick every chip, Solomon included, and begin again in a pre-digital age. Eighteen days. One vote. No appeal. A simple majority wins.

This guide gives away how Artificial Wisdom ends. The ending of Infinite Wisdom stays on the sealed sheet.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR CLUB

Safe before you start, once everyone has finished Artificial Wisdom. The questions about the ending are on the sealed “After the Last Page” sheet.

FIVE YEARS OF SOLOMON

1. You closed Artificial Wisdom with Solomon about to take office. What did you expect his Protectorate to look like five years on?
2. Solomon was elected to save humanity from the climate crisis. How should we judge a leader who is right about the numbers and wrong about the people?
3. Tully bent the truth once to swing an election. Can he still be a truthteller? Can anyone?
4. Martha built two artilects: Solomon to save the species, and Djinn to protect one nation. Which mandate would you trust more?

UPGRADE OR UNPLUG

5. Upgrade: merge with artificial intelligence and lose the worst of human nature. Unplug: brick every chip and begin again in a pre-digital world. Before you read a page, which would you choose?
6. One vote, no appeal, a simple majority. Is that fair for a decision this big? What would you ask for instead?
7. Eighteen days to decide the future of the species. Would more time change your answer?
8. If everything digital stopped tomorrow, what would you miss first? What would you be glad to lose?

MINDS AND MACHINES

9 Tom says the duology is about manipulation: what persuasion looks like when the persuader is smarter than you and never sleeps. Where has persuasion worked on you lately?

10 If a machine could take the sting out of grief and anger, would you let it? What would you lose?

11 In the Protectorate, every citizen carries a neurochip. What would make you accept one, and what would make you refuse?

THE BOOK AND YOU

12 Infinite Wisdom is set in 2055. Which of its technologies do you think we will see first?

13 Tom says hope is not naive optimism but "a critical part of being human that carries us through challenging times." What gives you hope about the future?

14 Asked Upgrade or Unplug, Tom said he loves the romance of Unplug but thinks we would have to Upgrade. Do you agree with him?

READING TOGETHER

THE FIVE-WEEK READALONG

The book counts down to the referendum. Each week's questions cover only those chapters. Chapter numbers follow the Del Rey hardcover: check them against your edition.

WEEK 1

CHAPTERS 1–16

Five years on. A warning from an old friend, a tower in the ice, and a choice for the whole species.

- "The greatest risk to humanity was always, and will forever be, yourselves." Is Solomon right? At the end of chapter 14, which way would you vote?
- Livia keeps a simulation of Martha in Revenant. Is it comfort, therapy or avoidance?
- Central burns, and the world picks a culprit within hours. What do the characters actually know by chapter 12, and what are they assuming?
- October is losing time and hides how bad it is. Why does she keep going?

WEEK 2

CHAPTERS 17–33

New Baghdad: a speakeasy that trades in truths, a speech for the caliph, and a very long night.

- Raad says, "Once spoken, a truth is spent." How does his trade in truths compare with Tully's journalism? Should Tully have used leverage on Khayal Nazem?
- The caliph's speech praises our "beautiful, messy, flawed species", then he goes off script. Was that principle, strategy or both?
- Livia gives Revenant Martha admin rights to the Fates. Would you have?
- Lottie insists that no one gets left behind, while Livia argues for whoever can still run. Who is right, in the moment?

WEEK 3

CHAPTERS 34–50

Into the Protectorate. Arrivals, chipping, orange bands and purple, and a city on edge.

- "The doors don't care. They look for chips, not your outrage." Would you take the chip to eat, sleep and move freely? Where is your line?
- On the Skywhale, Tully argues Unplug, Randall Upgrade, and Livia is unhappy either way. Whose argument lands for you?
- Carmen calls the Legacy Clinics a mercy. Does her story change how you read Solomon's lifeboat speech?
- Solomon stops a riot with one word. Protection, a show of power, or both? How should it count in the vote?

WEEK 4

CHAPTERS 51–66

Seven days to go. Old friends underground, a tower coming down, and a familiar face on Continuum.

- "Human pronouns belong to humans." Is the word "it" a small point, or the heart of the referendum?
- Valente worked with people he knew were planning something at Central. Where does responsibility land?
- Solomon can only repair October's brain if the world votes Upgrade. Is that an honest limit, or leverage?
- Using only what the characters have found so far, who do you think burned Central?

WEEK 5

CHAPTER 67 TO THE END

Four days to the referendum. Finish together, then open the sealed sheet.

- This week's questions give away how the duology ends. Open the sealed "After the last page" sheet only when everyone has finished.

THE AUTHOR

ABOUT THOMAS R. WEAVER

Thomas R. Weaver writes stories about tomorrow to help make sense of today.

His debut novel, Artificial Wisdom, was selected for the BBC Radio 2 Book Club and published internationally by Penguin Random House. It has been translated into German, Vietnamese and French. The sequel, Infinite Wisdom, is published in November 2026.

Before writing fiction, Thomas spent two decades in tech: building, scaling and selling a startup to Just Eat Takeaway, and thinking about where technology is headed. He studied computer science. He lives just outside London.

MORE FOR YOUR CLUB

THE REFERENDUM BALLOT

Four cut-out ballots: Upgrade or Unplug. Vote at the first meeting, and again at the last.

ARCA-1 CITIZENSHIP CARDS

A citizen card for every member, after the cards at the London launch.

THE ARCA-1 DOSSIER

Eight documents from 2055, word for word from the book: broadcasts, notices, a campaign poster.

HOST KIT

Citizenship night: arrivals, a menu from the book and six icebreakers.

REGISTER YOUR CLUB

Tell Tom you are reading. Send your referendum count, ask a question, or request signed bookplates and a video visit at **thomasrweaver.com/book-clubs**.

THE PROTECTORATE · GLOBAL REFERENDUM

UPGRADE OR UNPLUG

21 December 2055 · One vote. No appeal. A simple majority wins.

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHOICE NOW.

☐

VOTE UPGRADE

FOR MOVING FORWARD

Merge with artificial intelligence, for good.

☐

VOTE UNPLUG

FOR GOING BACK

Brick every chip, Solomon too. Begin again.

☐ FIRST MEETING ☐ AFTER THE LAST PAGE

Citizen no. _____ · Send your club's count to thomasrweaver.com/book-clubs

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Cut out one card for each member. Write your name in gold, or any colour you have.

THE PROTECTORATE
ARCA-1
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION

INFINITE WISDOM
THOMAS R. WEAVER

CITIZEN
001

YOU'VE BEEN
COUNTED

THE PROTECTORATE
ARCA-1
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION

INFINITE WISDOM
THOMAS R. WEAVER

CITIZEN
002

YOU'VE BEEN
COUNTED

THE PROTECTORATE
ARCA-1
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION

INFINITE WISDOM
THOMAS R. WEAVER

CITIZEN
003

YOU'VE BEEN
COUNTED

THE PROTECTORATE
ARCA-1
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION

INFINITE WISDOM
THOMAS R. WEAVER

CITIZEN
004

YOU'VE BEEN
COUNTED

THE PROTECTORATE
ARCA-1
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION

INFINITE WISDOM
THOMAS R. WEAVER

CITIZEN
005

YOU'VE BEEN
COUNTED

THE PROTECTORATE
ARCA-1
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION

INFINITE WISDOM
THOMAS R. WEAVER

CITIZEN
006

YOU'VE BEEN
COUNTED

THE PROTECTORATE
ARCA-1
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION

INFINITE WISDOM
THOMAS R. WEAVER

CITIZEN
007

YOU'VE BEEN
COUNTED

THE PROTECTORATE
ARCA-1
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION

INFINITE WISDOM
THOMAS R. WEAVER

CITIZEN
008

YOU'VE BEEN
COUNTED

THE PROTECTORATE
ARCA-1
CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION

INFINITE WISDOM
THOMAS R. WEAVER

CITIZEN
009

YOU'VE BEEN
COUNTED

3 DECEMBER 2055 · SOLOMON

A binding referendum

"I will offer you a binding referendum between two options, the vote overseen independently of me by auditors embedded in every neurochip—and I've already locked the two options in, pushed to your neurochips with a one-time, non-reversible update. Even I can't change this now."

"One choice is 'Unplug.' If you choose this, the referendum auditors will immediately execute a total brick of all technology. This includes themselves and the neurochips. It includes me. I will be gone, but so will your networks, satellites, and automation. A cyberworm will kill all technology, at the chip level. Humanity will be left in a pre-digital world."

"My offer, then, is to enable you to find happiness and contentment in a more complicated age. I'll quiet the reflex that drives you to divide, and amplify the sense of kinship you already possess, giving you a new sense of togetherness—to remain focused on saving our world and your species, instead of mourning the past. I call this choice 'Upgrade.'"

"My charter does not allow me to do this to you by force, so it has to be your free choice. And it has to be all or nothing. Once again, it will be a simple majority vote."

"You have eighteen days—the maximum I can give you—to decide your future."

LIVE: VALENTE ON THE REFERENDUM

5 DECEMBER 2055 · SIXTEEN DAYS TO THE REFERENDUM · ELIAN VALENTE

A real choice isn’t one you can win by a sliver

> “Solomon tells us it will be a majority vote. Simple. Clean. Democratic.”

> “But it cannot be right to decide the fate of a species by a single percentage point. Haven’t we learned anything from the referendums of our past? This needs to be an overwhelming agreement that builds from negotiation and compromise.”

> “A real choice isn’t one you can win by a sliver. If it divides us, it damns us, and we’ll never forgive the other half, no matter what technology is used to suppress how we really feel about it. A future worth living in must be one everyone can live with.”

Structured like a headline, but not broadcast by any journalists.

LIVE FROM NEW BAGHDAD

A beautiful, messy, flawed species

7 DECEMBER 2055 · CALIPH ABBAS IBN RASHĪD AL-MUQTAFĪ

“Here is what I believe: Humanity must remain pure and human. We must guard our souls. I am a man of deep faith, and believe in the sanctity of God’s creation. But more than that: We are a beautiful, messy, flawed species. We have an incredible capacity for wonderful things and terrible things.”

“We are a species that creates art to stimulate powerful emotions in our own souls. We craft monuments from stone, or make color from dust and turn it into meaning. We spill words on a page that somehow endow imaginary people with life in a reader’s head.”

“We are not perfect and should never aim to be. Anyone who has ever achieved their wildest dream will tell you that success dulls very quickly. It is in the striving where life is found. It is in the messiness that we discover the true meaning of being human.”



Outside of Solomon's oversight

10 DECEMBER 2055 · JORDAN BAMPHWICK

"Today, I'm announcing a Truth Commission to independently investigate the events of the Central disaster. We will operate outside of Solomon's oversight, so I urge any citizens with information to come forward and share it with me."

"And I urge Protector Solomon to endorse this commission as the only way of restoring credibility and trust in its leadership."

He looked directly into the camera with his trademark puzzled frown.

ARRIVALS LATE ARRIVALS THIS WAY

ARRIVALS HALL · CREDENTIAL CHAMBER · ARCA-4 IMMIGRATION

Everyone gets chipped

1. “You literally can’t get anything in the Protectorate without it—food, accommodation, access, nothing—let alone vote in the referendum.”

2. “You can’t walk through a door here if you’re not chipped. Every door will be locked, including the toilets.”

3. “The doors don’t care. They look for chips, not your outrage.”

4. “Everything happens through the neurochips, do you understand me? You want to talk to Solomon? Get chipped.”

NEUROLOGICAL AUGMENTATION → OPT-OUT CENTER ←

A lifeboat, or perhaps an ark

SOLOMON "Humanity doesn't have time. The planet doesn't have time. I have data now, beyond anything I was able to get my hands on before—and trust me, I already had a lot. I was elected to turn things around. Yet humankind cranked the tanker ship up to maximum speed before giving me the captaincy."

SOLOMON "If we do it the nice way that makes everyone happy, we'll still hit that iceberg of extinction before we get there. So what's left? All hands on deck. A severe braking. Anchors down—all of them—and hope they don't get torn off."

SOLOMON "The passengers are so busy shouting at me about the size of the cabins that it's becoming increasingly difficult to steer the ship. They think we're on a cruise ship when we're really on a lifeboat—or perhaps an ark."

MANDATORY NOTICE · EVERY NEUROCHIP

11 DECEMBER 2055 · TEN DAYS TO THE REFERENDUM

The vote is sealed

"All citizens have to participate in a series of mandatory personal education experiences to prepare them for the referendum vote. This must be completed in the next twenty-four hours. Is now a convenient time?"

"At the moment I announced the referendum, the vote became independent from me and impossible to stop."

"The code that carries the question, the countdown clock, and the mechanisms for both outcomes are written directly into the firmware of your neurochip. And no one can change it—not even me. I've locked it like fusing a vault shut. It's in every mind now, sealed. There will be no tampering. No quiet edits. No one—nothing—gets to touch it."

ACCEPT

There was no illusion that this was a choice.

UNPLUG TECHNOLOGY SAVE HUMANITY TRUST LOCKWOOD

CONTINUUM · BROADCAST · LAWRENCE G. LOCKWOOD

“We’re going to all vote Unplug in this referendum—and this time, we will vote together.”

“Under my guidance, there will be no more body-mills, no more population controls, no more bioengineering. And definitely no more mind-control chips, no more events like the Freeze.”

“Remember, we are human, and humans are capable of meeting the greatest of challenges. Unplug will be a restoration of our control over our own destinies, and the beginning of a new age of enlightenment.”

“I’m calling on you today to vote Unplug. Put humanity’s future back in human hands.”

FOR THE HOST

HOST KIT

TONIGHT'S MENU

ARCA-1, 2055

SYNTHETIC COFFEE

Carmen swears Solomon improved it. The cheapest instant you can find makes the point.

COFFEE FROM A DALLAH

Real coffee, poured the New Baghdad way, for anyone who has earned a privilege.

MINT TEA WITH ARAK

What Samir serves in the speakeasy under the bookshop. Leave out the arak if you prefer.

TULLY'S RUM

Neat, from the bottle, if you are Tully. A dark spiced soft drink for everyone else.

BLAND VEGETABLE STEW

The only dish on the menu at the Hole. Optional. Strongly optional.

CITIZENSHIP NIGHT

Penguin Random House turned its London office into Arca-1 for the launch. Guests arrived late, were processed, and left counted.

PROCESS YOUR CITIZENS

Hand each member a citizenship card as they arrive. They write their own name. You read out their number.

CHOOSE A BAND

Orange for those against Solomon, purple for those who back him. A ribbon or a strip of paper does it.

COUNT THE VOTE

The referendum ballot comes before the book. Count it, and keep the count for the end of the night.

RUNNING THE EVENING

1. Process your citizens: cards, numbers, bands.
2. Everyone votes Upgrade or Unplug before you begin. Count it.
3. Put the Arca-1 Dossier on the table. The "Hand out" line on each sheet tells you when.
4. Pick five or six questions from the guide. You do not need them all.
5. Vote again. Send your two counts to Tom at thomasrweaver.com/book-clubs.

WARM-UP

SIX ICEBREAKERS

1. Your neurochip can take the sting out of one emotion. Which one would you turn down, and which would you never touch?
2. Solomon pays you in credits. What would you spend your first hundred on?
3. You are allowed one non-digital luxury in the arcacity. What do you bring?
4. Give a safe word only your oldest friend would know, without saying what it is.
5. Orange band or purple band, before you have read a page? Defend your choice in one sentence.
6. Fancast the film: who plays Tully, October, Livia, Randall, Haymaker and Elian Valente, and who voices Solomon?

FOR BOOKSTAGRAM AND ONLINE CLUBS

CITIZEN SELFIE

Post your club's citizenship cards, numbers showing, with the book.

CAMPAIGN POSTER

Design a poster for Upgrade or for Unplug. Lockwood's slogan is taken.

YOUR BAND

Show your orange or purple band, and tell us what would make you swap it.

THE COUNT

Share your club's first referendum count. Then post the second one when you finish.

READING DRINK

Photograph the book with your perfect drink: synthetic coffee, mint tea or Tully's rum.

LAST-PAGE REACTION

Film or write your reaction to finishing the duology, with no spoilers.

Tag @tom_weaver on Instagram or @thomasr.weaver on TikTok so Tom can find them.