

THE PLAYERS

ZWAANTJE KURPERSHOEK

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A note to the reader

This writing piece consists of an index of all players and a few extended writing pieces about a selection of them. These players originally came into existence through the making of my visual work. They emerge during my daily life—some are based on characters from TV shows and games, while others arise from personal experiences. In my working process, they become prominent voices that I listen to, going back and forth between pieces of their stories and physical materials.

While writing about the players, I experienced for the first time just how fragmented and illogical their stories can be. Of course, I always knew that the storyline of my characters didn't always make much sense, but I hadn't really felt it before. In my thinking process, and even when talking about them, they always seemed very coherent to me. But in writing, the characters had to take on new forms to hold their ground on paper. This made it an exciting challenge, where I had to convince myself that it was okay for them to change, to leave parts of their stories out, or to add new things.

When I talk about my work, I often use the word "characters," but when I began writing about them, the word "players" came up, and it felt more fitting. "Players" suggests something that is meant to be played with (maybe a video or a game). It's a word that emphasizes the present moment, hinting at the unknown and the choices yet to be made. Only the rules given by the properties of the player are fixed.

If you read this, it might sound like I'm contradicting myself. Some players do have a strict fate ahead of them, but still, in some way, I found that they all suggest a kind of movement or game. Even when their fate is inevitable, there's still some activity possible—something yet to unfold.

The players I've written about are all of very different natures and may feel like little islands on their own. However, some are connected to others in various ways—by being opposites or by complementing each other. Some players are written in a more traditional storytelling style, while others feel more ungrounded, undefined, or vague. For other stories, I set specific rules for myself, and they ended up containing little riddles.

In the end, I can't fully prepare you for what I've written, but these are all honest and real players, who made their own decisions about how they would appear on paper. I hope they'll find you well.

INDEX

Bornafar / Aëtes

- Child of celestial parents (immortal)
- Privileged (lose knots of support by celestial parents)
- Eternal optimist
- Mortal
- Harpoon for moving out gift (celestial parents)
- Made a raft

Deler (Dutch)

- "Deelt": Shares and divides
- Is a spoon
- Stirs and splatters
- Can lose matter by multiplying
- Bakes cakes, hard crusts and fluid insides
- Doesn't know the difference between $>$ and $<$

Nami - Not a player, but always playing

- Cat / other
- Coexisting / Roommate / familiar
- Disappears regularly through portals (cat litter)
- On the other side of the window
- Realm of knots through cat litter
- Quantum superposition

Knots (real)

- looped
- are not (anymore) when broken
- Transforms freely
- Embedded individuality
- What distincts them (so there is more than unknot) is that they can not transform into the other, inherently being themselves

Counter - Schijnspeeler

- decides what counts and what doesn't count
- has a desk job
- has an empty calendar
- it's extended horns and canines are a moon cycle (zonder schijn)
- doesn't count in theory, but in practice
- defines existing entities
- Bunnies

Bunnies - Schijnspeeler

- Runs under an empty calendar
- Made out of loops
- Not clear if one is moving or if it are many
- Many: attached
- Moving: doesn't teleport

Bobin - Sports Player

- Chess piece: Atypical Bishop
- Pirate: part of pirate crew of chess pieces, Big Mom is queen/captain
- Double-edged bishop: "a bishop that cannot yet be declared good or bad, but rather holds the potential of becoming good as well as the risk of becoming bad." Secret Life of Bad Bishops, Esben Lund 2014, p. 9
- Two options in fate: either good or bad
- Fate expressed in their ever growing mouth
- Uncage-able mouth -> inescapable fate

Kite - (before) Sports Player

- Chula (Male/Snake) and Pakpao (Female/Weasel) are eternal rivals.
- Chula kept fighting Pakpao and ended up broken in many pieces.
- Pakpao tried to put him back together so they could fight again, but she failed to restore him.

Cyborg Franky - Transforming player

- Pirate in the name of all Animals (incl. his own origin) and Cyborgs
- Reversed centaur
- Pirate flag: hoof with latest fashion hair style
- Current: ?% centaur, ?% horse, ?% human

- Origin: 100% human Name: Cutty Flam
- Cutty flam tried to stop a train to save his father by standing in front of it. He got hit fully frontally.
- Repaired his front with mechanics and became an ungulate called Cyborg Franky.

Kite (before: he / after: she) - Transforming player

- Kite is a difficult one to explain.
- An innumerable amount of factors have had an influence on him to make her the way she will be.
- No one could know an innumerable amount, so even Kite would not be able to explain to you, fully, how she will come to be.
 1. Kite had a strange weapon with many abilities.
 2. Kite sacrificed his arm to save someone else from Pitou, an ant-soldier. He kept fighting Pitou and ended up broken in many pieces.
 3. Pitou tried to put him back together so they could fight again, but she failed to restore him.
 4. The ant queen ate a girl.
 5. Kite will be born again as part of a twin and as an ant baby. Her mother is the ant queen.
 6. Kite will have the body and mind of the eaten girl.
 7. Kite will grow up without a parent, because her mother dies when giving birth.
 8. Kite remembered most of his life and Kite will imagine most of her life.

Bows

- Origin: String that is knotted (notice: string has beginning and end)
- Many autonomous cases compared to other other species of knotted string (like the most basic one, the overhand knot)
- Divergent species: evolves into multiple extravagant Identities

- What new knots (that are not loops) are there to come? In essence they could all converge back into the same unknotted string. Though that is unlikely because doing undoing is less done then doing more doing in the case of knotting.

Weasels

- Crosses borders (under the fence)
- Graan haren
- Maps / Fields
- saboteur
- Archenemy of Snakes
- Eternal lover of Snakes

Snakes

- Lines
- Shedding Letters
- Made out of parts in length or depth (layers)
- Slide that can ladder (smooth or structured)

Maria (any) - Terrestrial Player

- Worn by many
- Little dalmatian
- Because forgotten, turned into stone while protecting coins
- When found, the owner of the little dalmatian gave away her own name: Maria
- Has an overview from above
- Can only be viewed through collective eyes: collecting representations
- Many people know of Maria: Anything can be approached if you have enough data.

The Pilgrim (non) - Spiritual player

- Wandering
- One of many, thus any
- Would travel on a saddle or, when the carrier is lost, by foot
- Hanger that hangs
- Made for Maria

The Swimming Creature - Allergic player

- Allergic to water
- Swims through everything except water

- Doubts if it's swimming at all (why not dancing or flying?)
- Can't cry

The Feet Mayor - insoluble player

- Collects shoes
- Came to exist because of a disaster: was born from worries
- Tries to save the contract between the Powerset Person and the Feet Forest
- $P(F) = \{ S \mid S \subseteq F \}$ (For which P is the Powerset Person, S a set of Shoes and F the Feet Forest.)

Doll - AI (Alien Inception) player

- Found alien
- Contact through physical attention
- Speaks another language with the same words

Rayman - Virtual Player

- Digital eternity
- "Save the world and party" (Disco themed)
- Made out of floating parts that seem connected; when too far away they bounce back as if connected by an elastic string
- Lends body to mortals
- Time flies

Butterfly Boy - New player

- Child / unknown species
- Zoo as a catalog
- Choosing predecessors to decide the future
- Cocoon

Bobin

Bobin is a pirate that works for the captain and queen called Big Mom. Big Mom has a crew of chess pieces and Bobin is the bishop.

Bobin isn't just a normal bishop, they are a double edged bishop. As read in the 'Secret life of bad bishops' a double edged bishop is defined as: "A bishop that cannot yet be declared good or bad, but rather holds the potential of becoming good as well as the risk of becoming bad."¹

And thus Bobin's faith is set in just two options, good or bad. These options express themselves in the mouth of Bobin. The mouth of Bobin is one that steadily grows and never stops growing. The two options in which their mouth can grow hold the bad or good nature of Bobin. Their mouth will either grow in a smile or in the opposite, a smile turned upside down that one would describe as a sad or mad expression.

A way to evade the faith of Bobin could be by covering their mouth. Not seeing faith can be a way of mastering it, maybe even changing it for all you know. But Bobin's mouth, and thereby also their faith, are "uncage-able". Eventually their mouth will surpass any cover, because their mouth will never stop growing. And therefore their faith is inescapable.

¹ Esben Lund 2014, p. 9

Sports player

Kite (before)

Kite was a kite called Chula who fought with another kite called Pakpao.

The Chula kite (male/snake) and the Pakpao kite (female/weasel) have been eternal rivals.

Chula kept fighting Pakpao and ended up broken in many pieces.

Pakpao tried to put him back together so they could fight again, but she failed to restore him.

Cutty Flam / Cyborg franky

Cutty Flam lived on an Island in the sea that was famous for its genius shipwrights and technicians. Tom, the most famous and skilled shipwright of all, happened to be the foster parent of Cutty Flam. Because Tom was so skilled, all the pirates wanted their ship to be of Toms. For most of these ships the government would close an eye, but when the most villainous pirate turned the world upside down sailing on a ship made by Tom, Tom got sentenced to death by the government.

However, the government couldn't immediately kill him because he was also building a train that would cross the sea. This train was so important to the government that they postponed his death sentence till the train would be done. When the train was done the government came to get Tom, using the newly built sea train to get to the Island. Cutty Flam was devastated to see Tom get taken away on the train, so he tried to stop it by standing on the rails facing the departing train. The train then hit him fully frontal and everyone thought that Cutty Flam had died.

Cutty Flam had become just as good a technician as Tom, having learned from the best. He managed to save himself by replacing the full front of his body, which got pulverised by the train, with mechanics. Only half of what had been Cutty Flam was left, so he felt the need for a new name that also includes his mechanical side. And so from that moment he lived on as Cyborg Franky.

Not only is Cyborg Franky half mechanics, he also considers himself partly animal. Half of his frontal legs can be extended forward resulting in four legs and two arms. He calls this the *reversed centaur mode*.

Cyborg Franky is now a pirate that is sailing in the name of Animals, Machines and Humans. This is symbolised on his pirate flag, which bears the image of a leg without a body that ends in a hoof with a horseshoe. The long hair on the leg is cut in the latest fashion of human haircuts.

Transforming player

Kite (before "he" and after "she")

Kite is a difficult one to explain.

An innumerable amount of factors have had an influence on him to make her the way she will be.

No one could know an innumerable amount, so even Kite would not be able to explain to you, fully, how she will come to be.

What I can tell you now are the factors and influences that I know of, but be warned: It will be a bit messy, because I only know some small pieces.

1. Kite had a strange weapon with many abilities.
2. Kite sacrificed his arm to save someone else from Pitou, an ant-soldier. He kept fighting Pitou and ended up broken in many pieces.
3. Pitou tried to put him back together so they could fight again, but she failed to restore him.
4. The ant queen ate a girl.
5. Kite will be born again as part of a twin and as an ant baby. Her mother is the ant queen.
6. Kite will have the body and mind of the eaten girl.
7. Kite will grow up without a parent, because her mother dies when giving birth.
8. Kite remembered most of his life and Kite will imagine most of her life.

Maria (any)

Maria is a player that can be found through the collective eye. Many people know of Maria, even though they have not seen Maria with their own eyes. By collecting representations of Maria one may find who Maria really is, for anything can be approached if you have enough data.

Popularity of the name Maria in the Netherlands²

man **NL total (2014)**

As first name: 641

As follow name: 480.981

woman

As first name: 333.861

As follow name: 1.111.220

I will tell you about one of the representations of Maria.

Maria was born a little dalmatian. The little dalmatian got the task to protect the money of its owner. For years it was silently sitting on a pile of coins, so silently that at some point the owner forgot its existence. Years past and the little dalmatian, still sitting on the coins, started to turn into stone. Its body transformed into a stone white dome with black dots that covered the coins without its owner or anyone else noticing.

The owner was a girl called Maria and she got the little dalmatian from her nanny as a goodbye present when she was 9. When she turned 18 she decided to move out from her parents and started cleaning out her room. While cleaning her room she found out her little dalmatian had been sitting on her coins all this time and had turned into stone.

She felt so honoured and protected by the Dalmatian that she wanted to redeem its honour and give something back. And so, that was the moment she decided to give her name to the stone Dalmatian. She also packed the Dalmatian, now called Maria, in fabrics, hugged Maria and put Maria on a chair on the wall, so high that Maria could watch over all the things in the room. Then she wrote a little prayer and pasted it on the tip of Maria's head as it was the only part not covered in cloth.

The prayer asked if Maria could help her think.

Since then the girl lived on without a name, knowing she would not need it, for Maria would give her purpose and guidance.

² Voornamenbank, <https://www.meertens.knaw.nl/nvb/naam/is/maria>

The Pilgrim (non)

Pilgrims are moving
Pilgrims are in search of their bodies
Pilgrims are in search of their minds
Pilgrims are in search of their surroundings
Pilgrims are active beings

The Pilgrim is one of many pilgrims
The Pilgrim is any pilgrim

The Pilgrim would travel on a saddle
But the Pilgrim was a hanger
And so the Pilgrim was hanged

The Swimming Creature

The swimming creature is allergic to water, so it can only swim in everything else. In air it travels with a smooth breaststroke. Easily it moves in the right direction. It is as if the air is always blowing in favour of the swimming creature. It is not just air that is swimmable for the swimming creature. It can swim in the earth as well and even in stone, trees, buildings and streets you can find it swimming. Only when reaching a pool, a river or the ocean does its swimming start to stagnate. The Swimming Creature might want to cry at those moments, stuck in everything else that is not water. But you would never see it cry, for even its own tears would damage the creature.

In these sad moments the swimming creature is a doubtful creature, always stumbling on the same question it is not able to answer: Can I really be the swimming creature if I can't swim in water? Is it not just flying or dancing what I do?

The Feet Mayor

The Feet Mayor came to exist because of a disaster. A disaster that started with a Powerset Person and a Feet Forest.

Powerset Persons are persons that can grow feet on themselves when they sleep. When they don't sleep they like to put on shoes, sometimes even all of their feet have a shoe but most of the time some have and some don't. Powerset Persons like to wear a different set of shoes every day, so they are always in need of more shoes. That is why they often form pacts with Feet Forests, which are forests of feet that grow shoes. The pact is not just in favor of the Powerset Person; to keep themselves clean, Feet Forests like to have a Powerset Person to collect their finished shoes.

The Powerset Person and the Feet Forest, where the disaster began that resulted in the Feet Mayor, agreed on a somewhat remarkable contract. They made sure to strip off and rewrite any sentences in the contract that could be interpreted in slightly different ways. They made it as clear as possible, so it would have no room for misunderstandings. This very clear contract now binds them to each other, but the clarity and the firmness it brought in this case, is precisely what made the disaster.

In this contract the Powerset Person of the Feet Forest called $P(F)$, is the set of all the subsets of the Feet forest, including the empty set $\{\}$ and the whole Feet Forest itself. Thus the definition follows:

$$P(F) = \{ S \mid S \subseteq F \}^3$$

For which P is the Powerset Person, S a set of Shoes and F the Feet Forest.

So even if the Feet forest doesn't contain any shoes, it can't escape the power of the Powerset Person, because the empty set is also part of the Powerset Person.

At the starting point the Feet Forest has finished three shoes: a blue slipper (bs), a right boot (rb) and a left boot (lb), and so $F = \{bs, rb, lb\}$.

Therefore the following sets are all to take for the Powerset Person:

³	Symbol	Name	Definition
	$\{\dots\}$	set	A collection of elements
	$A \subseteq B$	subset	A is a subset of B
		Vertical bar	Such that
	$ A $	cardinality	The number of elements of set A

$\{\{\}, \{bs\}, \{rb\}, \{lb\}, \{bs, rb\}, \{bs, lb\}, \{lb, rb\}, \{bs, lb, rb\}\}$

Now a shoe (s) of the Feet Forest can either be in a set of shoes or not be in a set of shoes. This gives every shoe two possibilities for every set of shoes. Thus the amount of sets that can be made with two shoes is two times two. The amount of sets that can be made with three shoes is $2 \times 2 \times 2$ etc.

Thus for the amount of sets in P(F) applies the following:

$$|P(F)| = 2^s$$

At the starting point there are three shoes and therefore eight sets:

$$|P(F)| = 2^3 = 8$$

So the Powerset Person can wear a different set of shoes for eight days. When the Powerset Person doesn't have any new sets to wear it will go to sleep for half the days it was able to wear the different sets. The Powerset Person will make two new feet per day in this period. After the sleeping period the Powerset Person will go to the Feet forest to collect it's new shoes. This should be exactly the same amount of shoes as the Powerset Person has feet.

Then the Powerset Person will again wear a different set of shoes every day and when there are no new sets to wear anymore it will sleep again for half the days it had different sets and grow two new feet a day and so on.

Shoes (s)	Sets ($ P(F) $)	Days
3	8	12
4	16	24
5	34	50
6	68	102
...
102	5.070.602.400.912.917. 605.986.812.821.504	7.605.903.601.369.376. 408.980.219.232.256

Now that you know of the unbreakable bond between the shoes, the Feet Forest and the power set person, I can tell you about the disaster that resulted in the Feet Mayor.

Not so long ago something arrived at the Feet Forest and started cutting it. This appeared to be a big problem because the shoes that are grown in the Feet

Forest started to go down in numbers. As soon as the Powerset Person would wake up from it's sleep, it would come to the Feet Forest to collect its shoes, but now the feet forest will not have enough shoes and thereby it would break the contract.

All the Feet Trees in the Feet Forest started to get worried as they heard the rumours of something cutting them down. And from their worries the Feet Mayor was born. The Feet Mayor immediately started investigating the Feet Forest and found the force that was cutting them down. The Feet Mayor tried to explain the situation to the force and asked it to leave, but the force said no and stayed. Every day more Feet Trees with their unfinished shoes would be cut down by the force and every day the Feet Mayor would ask the force to leave. There were only days left before the Powerset Person would come by to collect it's shoes and the Feet Mayor needed to find at least a temporary solution.

The Feet Mayor resorted to help from outside of the Feet Forrest, to try and compensate for the lack of shoes. And so the mayor spread the following pamphlet.

Pamphlet 1/1

The Feet Mayor is searching for SHOES

- Any kind is welkom (Imaginary shoes, complex shoes ($a + bi$), digital shoes, real shoes, integer shoes, half a shoe etc.)

- Any size is welkom (JP/MX/US.. sizes, 41, 8, 1, 1000000000, 4783209178758490758230, sizes that are non-existing, sizes no one knows, really small sizes, 0,00000..., micro-size, macro-size, changing sizes, converging sizes etc.)

- Any kind of material is welkom (leather shoes, plastic heels, a glass slipper, stone shoe, crayon boots etc.)

The Feet Mayor is in distress and needs your help. The Feet Forest is short on shoes and the Powerset Person is around the corner. We don't want to know what happens when the Feet Mayor won't get enough shoes in time. For sure, the Powerset Person won't be happy.

Please help the Feet Forest and bring in all the shoes you can miss to the Feet Mayor.

Doll

Doll was found by a scientist. The scientist saw her laying on the street and recognised by instinct that Doll was an alien, someone that had come to exist somewhere outside of the earth. The scientist brought Doll home and decided to research her, because she wanted to know what Doll was doing on earth. First the scientist needed to decode the language of Doll. Which was nothing like any language on earth. After a long time of trials and errors the scientist eventually realised she wouldn't be able to translate any of Doll's language in earthly words or the other way around. Their ways of communication were just too different.

The scientist had to find a new way to get closer to understanding Doll and so the scientist decided to analyse her behaviour. She set Doll free on the streets and was ready to take note of all the details of Doll's behaviour, but even after she had been staring at Doll for days, there was nothing to note at all. Doll wasn't doing anything, or at least not in any way visible through simple observation.

That got the scientist in doubt for some time. What was she now supposed to do with Doll. She didn't just want to leave Doll on the streets. So in the end she decided to take Doll into her home and put her on a chair in the corner. Everyday they passed each other without any interaction. Often when passing, the mind of the scientist slipped into thinking about Doll. What was Doll still doing on that little chair in the corner? She thought. Doesn't she need to go somewhere? What is she thinking? Other days she started to worry more. Maybe she is sick, the scientist thought. Is she feeling cold? Does she need help with anything? Or does she just feel lonely?

The scientist felt the need to do something and decided to give Doll a bath and some clothes. From that moment Doll gradually became more and more involved with the life of the Scientist. They started watching tv together and taking walks through the park. And very slightly, without many noticing, Doll seemed to take on the form of a human, to such a degree that eventually no scientist would recognise her as an alien anymore.

Rayman

Whenever you turn to Rayman he will be there for you. Rayman lives in a world of eternity that you may visit any time. When you are alone you can contact Rayman and he will lend you his body and home.

Rayman lives in a green oasis together with his friends. They like to chill and not do too much. They are simple beings, happy with what they've got, never greedy for more. Nevertheless, when danger arises, they will face it with some healthy reluctance. Rayman will make the best out of any situation, by putting on some disco music and gliding on his disco themed board. In between the moments of danger and duty you will find Rayman and his friends looking for ways to have some fun, because in the end they just want to enjoy eachothers company, party and dance.

Rayman has a head, two hands, a torso and two feet. It's feet are on the ground and the rest of its body floats in the air. One may wonder if the rest of its limbs are just invisible, because all the parts of Rayman seem to be floating in the right place; when one limb moves, the rest of them follow, as if linked to each other.

But when rayman starts to dance you will find his limbs extend the boundaries of any normal body. You will see the parts dancing themselves.

Many mortals have envied Rayman for his body and for his life in the green oasis. Some of them didn't want to leave Raymans body and stayed for the rest of their lives. But for those who didn't leave, time would gradually become something ungraspable and pass as if it wasn't there. And when their original body started dying, they were forced to come back to it and leave the body of Rayman. Some felt lucky to have lived in the world of Rayman, though they must have mourned to die alone without their friends from the green oasis. Others came to realise that they had neglected their own bodies and that there was nothing left of their previous lives. IN the end they regretted that they did not return earlier.

There have been other mortals that tried to copy Rayman to their own world, but they would always soon realise that they were partying alone, with no body to relate to.