

# AI and the Hidden Price of Comfort

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## 1. THE PERFECT WORLD

Imagine waking up in the year 2050.

You stretch lazily, and your bed gently lifts you upright. The room senses your presence, adjusting the temperature and softly illuminating the walls. Doors slide open, and a shiny white robot enters the room with your breakfast already prepared—exactly what you wanted, even before you knew it.

You don't know what day it is—because it doesn't matter anymore.

No morning alarms. No emails. No meetings.

AI orchestrates it all.

The world bends around you to eliminate every inconvenience.

It feels like paradise. And maybe it is. And we built it. Relentlessly. Brilliantly.

## 2. THE TWIST – HANDS OFF THE WHEEL

But what if—while building this paradise—we are quietly changing the rules of the game?

The very structure of life itself. What if, while seeking a world of comfort, we start losing the will to be human?

We are not just building a better world. We are trying to build one without struggle at all.

That's the ultimate goal: to make life effortless.

And maybe... that's a problem.

Because for most of human history, life followed a well-working pattern: Struggle, Action, Growth—it's how we built knowledge, character, and everything we now call progress.

Life was tough — but we dealt with it.  
When something hurt, we fixed it.  
When things got hard, we found a way through.

And through that effort, we became stronger. That was our rhythm of life.

But a fundamental shift is happening. We're not just solving problems.  
We're handing them over. To systems that think, decide, even anticipate for us— the AI revolution unfolding right now.

At some point, we set the car to self-drive — and suddenly realized our hands were off the wheel. (gesture) The car isn't crashing. It's staying in lane. Smooth. Precise. It feels right.

But we're no longer steering.

And when we stop steering—when we let go of struggle—the rhythm starts to fade. Without effort, there will be no action and no growth.

We didn't plan to give up control. We just kept choosing what felt easier — again and again.

### 3. EDITED OUT

In the past few years, there's been a lot of concern raised around AI. And one word keeps coming up: displacement. And when most people hear that they think about losing their jobs. And yes, that's a valid concern, but displacement goes deeper than that.

Let's spend a moment and see what this looks like in real life — not in the future, but right now, with the technology we already have.

Roomba vacuums? Great. No more cleaning.  
Smart lights? They turn on when you enter the room.  
Amazon delivery? You get the notification, but you didn't even hear the garage door open.

Feels convenient — and it is.  
But if you zoom out just a bit... you can see how strange this is.  
It's a kind of displacement — from the everyday things we used to do ourselves.

Sure, those day-to-day chores are small and easy to give up—yes, nobody really wants to clean floors? But let me give you another example, that feels different.

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In colleges today, it is common to see students using AI to write assignments. That's no longer surprising. Actually, it would be a surprise if they didn't. However, what is also becoming common is teachers using AI to grade those assignments. It is faster. More consistent. Less biased.

But wait a second here! An AI is writing assignments, and some other AI, or maybe the same one is grading them. Who's learning? Who's teaching?

The process still happens, right in front of us—but we, the humans, are no longer in it.

You can already see how absurd this is... and how much stranger it can still become.

This is a displacement FROM the process of teaching and studying.

Humans solve problems. That's what we do.

And to us, labor — physical or mental — looks like a problem. An obstacle to overcome. In our technological age, automation is what we turn to.

So, anything that can be automated... will be automated.

Every process. Every profession. Every choice.

I call this: Automation +1.

One more task. One more decision. One more layer of life... quietly handed over. Until it's all been handed over.

So, what's the harm in that? Everything still gets done — even if we're no longer the ones doing the work. The world still turns. Floors are cleaned. Packages arrive. Assignments are written. The processes we are familiar with, remain. BUT WE ARE SLOWLY BEING EDITED OUT. Like animals whose territory shrinks as the forest is cleared, same way we're shrinking our territory within life itself.

#### 4. THE PRICE OF COMFORT

Yes, comfort has a price.

Let's examine that price through the lens of science and philosophy.

We'll start with something basic: the rules of evolution.

##### 4.1 Science

In June of this year, researchers from MIT published a study called *"Your Brain on ChatGPT"* It examined what happens in people's brains when they engage in essay writing.

Volunteers were asked to write essays in 3 sessions over several months. The participants were split into three groups. The first group was asked to write without using anything else but their brains. The second were given access to search engines, such as Google search. And the last group were allowed to use ChatGPT.

The experiment started, participants wrote essays, while scientists measured their brain activity.

Some of the results were interesting, but not so surprising. The more help people had, the less their brains engaged. The group using no tools had the most brain activity. The ChatGPT group — the least. This makes sense, the effort was offloaded to AI.

But something deeper came out:

When asked to recall their own writing, the ChatGPT group struggled. They had a hard time being able to quote from the work they had just created.

The experiment continued, in a 4<sup>th</sup> session, the ChatGPT group were asked to write once again, but this time without using AI. Scientists found that their brain activity showed some recovery — but not fully to baseline.

The takeaway is simple: AI made the task easier — but at a cost. Less thinking. Less memory. Less ownership.

And this isn't just about essays.

We've been slowly edited out for some time now — all in the name of ease.

For example:

We used to memorize phone numbers — now we don't.

We used to do math in our heads — now we don't.

We gave up our sense of direction to GPS.

And now, bit by bit, we are outsourcing our creativity to AI.

So, what do you think happens to those neural pathways when we stop using them?

Neuroscience shows they weaken—just like unused muscles.

It's no different from the body.

We once had tails—because we needed them to climb trees.

Now we don't. Evolution takes away what we no longer use.

And if we're not careful, we might start evolving in reverse.

## 4.2 Philosophy

Science explains the how. Philosophy asks the why.

Let's talk about meaning.

Why are we here—in this world, in this life? WHY?

It's a big, existential question,

but it sits at the very heart of what we're facing.

Albert Camus, the philosopher and Nobel Prize winner, spent his life wrestling with this question.

He called it the absurd—the gap between our desperate search for purpose and a silent universe providing no answer.

But Camus didn't think we are doomed.

He believed meaning isn't found—it's made.

By rebelling. By moving forward — even when it feels pointless.

To show this, he turned to the myth of Sisyphus

—a man condemned to push a boulder uphill for eternity, a task with no end and with no payoff. And yet, Camus imagined him happy. Not because the boulder moved, but because he chose to push it anyway.

*“The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart,”* he wrote.

Because the struggle is the meaning. That choice *“is the rebellion. It's what makes us human.”*

And maybe that's exactly what we're in danger of losing.

Because if AI takes the boulder away.

If we eliminate effort — if we smooth away all resistance — we may be throwing away the only answer that's ever worked, to explain why we are here at all.

But this isn't just a philosophical fear. We've already seen what happens in real life.

#### 4.3 Universe 25

There's an experiment—famous among behavioral scientists—called Universe 25.

In the late '60s, early '70s of the last century, a researcher created a utopia for mice: unlimited food, perfect shelter, zero predators. Abundance, paradise.

As you can imagine, at first, the mice flourished. But then... things changed.

They stopped mating. Stopped parenting. Some overgroomed. Others turned violent.

Eventually, they just stopped doing *anything*.

In about 2 years, the colony vanished.

John Calhoun, the researcher, repeated the experiment more than 20 times—with the same result.

The collapse didn't come from disease. Calhoun said - it came from a breakdown in social behavior — often seen as a lack of purpose. They died from comfort.

## 5. THE CHOICE – TO STAY IN THE GAME

Universe 25 gave us a cold warning. But we're not mice — we are humans with agency and choice.

The game isn't over — but the rules are changing. A new world is here, accelerating faster than we can grasp.

In heading toward 2050, we'll have more time, more resources, and more freedom to do whatever we want.

But with that freedom there will be a balance to hold —

a balance between the power we gain through AI, and the awareness of what that power might cost us.

And a choice — between ambition: choosing to grow, even in the shadow of AI — and surrender: stepping back, believing there's nothing left for us to do.

We'll have to adapt to a world that demands a different kind of strength — not to survive, but to stay human.

And this will require deliberate, purposeful effort — the kind we choose consciously.

Maybe in the future, choosing effort will be like going to the gym — something we schedule just to stay alive inside.

So, tell me — what will you still choose to do when nothing is required of you?

Will you still write — even if AI writes better?

Will you still learn — even if there's no job at the end of it?

Will you still cook — when a perfect 5-course meal appears at the push of a button?

That choice is still ours to make.

THANK YOU!