



AI

IMMIGRANTS

"The Bloody Algos Are Here!"

Kevin Ryan

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Edited by Richard Hove

Designed by Kevin Ryan

For the Brit.
Whatever that means.

"The empires of the future are the empires of the mind."
— Winston Churchill

INTRODUCTION

The bloody algos are here. If that phrase makes you pause, it should. "Algos"—short for algorithms—are quietly running the show in ways most of us don't even realize. From deciding who gets a loan, to managing how goods arrive at your doorstep, to even determining whether you land a job interview, artificial intelligence is no longer the future. It's the present.

But here's the thing: most people still feel like AI is something for tech wizards, Silicon Valley billionaires, and sci-fi fans. The rest of us—the workers, the parents, the small business owners—are often left scratching our heads, wondering what this all means for **our** lives. Will AI take my job? Can it make my life easier? Should I be worried, or is it all hype?

This book is for you—the person on the street, like me, who just wants straight answers without the jargon. *AI Immigrants: The Bloody Algos Are Here!* isn't about dazzling you with technical terms or predicting a distant, robotic future. Instead, it's about showing you what's already happening right now, and what may happen for good or bad if we allow this technology to proceed unchecked, without democratic process. Without we as members of society having a say in how these technologies should be applied for our benefit—at your workplace, on your phone, in your doctor's office, or when you're applying for a mortgage. It's about helping us understand how AI is reshaping our lives for better and for worse.

Even those developing AI struggle to define it in simple terms. The best definition I have heard so far is to describe AI as a new species we will be living with. In this book, I hope to make this idea more urgent, more immediate to you, the reader. They may be a new species, but they are a new species of **immigrant**. They are coming to our society like a flood, migrating from the alien dimension of cloud computing into our countries and communities, reshaping the fabric of our lives.

And yes, there's a reason I'm calling them *immigrants*. Just like people from new places arriving in a community, AI comes with its own potential, its own disruption, and its own baggage. Some of us welcome it. Others resist it. Most are just trying to figure out where they stand. The parallels between fears around immigration and AI are striking—

and they reveal a lot about human nature. Fear of the unknown. Fear of change. Fear of being left behind. But just as with people, how we choose to respond to AI will determine the kind of society we build.

This book aims to democratize knowledge, because knowledge is power. When you understand something, you can influence it. You can exercise your democratic rights and demand accountability. You can spot when someone is attempting to erode your hard-won birthright as a citizen in a democratic nation.

You don't need a computer science degree to understand what's going on. You don't need to be a tech expert to take control of your future. But you do need to know the truth about AI: what it is, what it isn't, and how it impacts you.

By the end of this journey, you'll see AI not as a shadowy force or magic, not as a coming super intelligence against which you have no defence or control, but as something more complex—a new kind of actor in our society. AI is not just a tool; it has the capacity to act, to decide, and to influence. It can be harnessed for good, bad, or something in between.

Each chapter in this book explores AI from the perspective of a commonly held view about immigration—both positive and negative. These chapters will examine fears, hopes, and realities through this lens: the fear that 'they take our jobs,' the belief that 'they bring innovation,' and the concern that 'they don't integrate.' Along the way, we'll uncover how these perspectives shape our understanding of AI and what they mean for our collective future. By drawing these parallels, I hope to make AI's impact on society clearer, more relatable, and impossible to ignore.

The bloody algos are here. Let's meet them head-on.

THE BLOODY ALGOS ARE HERE

Immigration is one of the most pressing and emotive issues of our time, dominating national politics and global discourse. Across the developed world, democratic nations are grappling with the challenges posed by immigration, particularly illegal immigration. The scale of the issue is staggering, with significant increases in migrant populations and a rapid acceleration in migration numbers reshaping societies and economies alike.

In the United States, immigration is driving unprecedented population growth. By 2024, the U.S. population had surpassed 340 million, growing at its fastest rate since 2001. Net international migration accounted for 84% of the 3.3 million population increase between 2023 and 2024, illustrating the central role of immigration in shaping demographic trends. However, the issue of illegal immigration remains a contentious topic, with the U.S. hosting the largest number of undocumented immigrants globally—an estimated 52 million people, or roughly 15% of its total population. Deportations, too, have reached record highs, with over 271,000 individuals removed in fiscal year 2024, marking the most deportations since 2014.

In Europe, the pressures of immigration are equally pronounced. Countries such as Germany, the UK, France, and Italy bear the majority of the continent's unauthorized immigrant population. The political and social ramifications of rising migration have prompted policy shifts in some nations. Sweden, for example, has moved away from its traditionally liberal migration policies, becoming more restrictive in response to concerns about integration and rising gang violence. For the first time in over 50 years, Sweden recently reported more people emigrating than immigrating—a striking reversal for a country once seen as a beacon of openness.

Globally, the scale of migration continues to rise dramatically. By 2020, there were an estimated 281 million international migrants worldwide—a figure that has more than tripled since 1970. In many developed nations, immigration has become the primary driver of population growth. Between 2000 and 2020, immigration accounted for all population growth in some countries, even compensating for natural declines. In 14 countries and territories, it contributed to more than 100% of population growth during this period, underscoring the demographic importance of migration.

These trends highlight the profound impact of immigration on devel-

oped nations, not only in terms of population dynamics but also in shaping political, social, and economic policies. The sheer acceleration in migration numbers, combined with changing demographics, has transformed immigration from a policy issue into a defining feature of our era.

Nowhere is the issue of immigration more keenly felt than in the UK. As an island nation just a short stretch from the European mainland, immigration here is not an abstract policy debate—it's visible, tangible, and immediate. Armadas of tiny boats crossing the Channel have become a stark symbol of this reality. For the British, the sight of these small vessels strikes a deeper chord, echoing the heart-felt story of Dunkirk—a defining moment of resilience and unity in British identity. But this time, it feels like a reversal of that proud legacy. Instead of a heroic rescue, these small boats are arriving uninvited, challenging not only the nation's borders but also its sense of self.

Immigration has long been a potent issue in British politics, providing fuel for populist rhetoric and shaping national policy debates. During the Brexit campaign, immigration was weaponized with the now-infamous *Breaking Point* poster unveiled by Nigel Farage's UKIP party. The poster showed a long line of refugees walking through Europe, accompanied by the caption: "*Breaking Point: The EU has failed us all.*" The imagery, deliberately invoking fear and urgency, was almost identical to Nazi propaganda used in the 1930s to vilify marginalized groups. Its clear intent was to stoke fears of unchecked migration, presenting immigration as an existential threat to British society.

The *Breaking Point* poster didn't just resonate in the UK—it was also adopted by Hungary's far-right Fidesz party, led by Viktor Orbán, to bolster its own anti-immigration agenda. In Hungary, this rhetoric served as a cornerstone of the government's campaigns, framing immigrants as a threat to the country's security, culture, and economy. The transnational use of this imagery demonstrates how immigration can be manipulated as a tool to galvanize political support and stoke division, reinforcing nationalism and xenophobia across borders.

In recent years, immigration has continued to dominate political agendas, becoming a key issue in the most recent general election. The Conservative government's initiative to deport immigrants to Rwanda, framed as a solution to illegal migration, has been widely criticized as chaotic and inhumane. Similarly, the use of the *Bibby Stockholm*, a floating accommodation barge for asylum seekers, has drawn parallels to the prison hulks of the late 1700s. Back then, overcrowded

prisons and halted transportation of felons to North America led to the use of hulks as a temporary measure—a grim reminder of Britain’s fraught history with marginalization and containment.

The juxtaposition of these measures with the government’s handling of domestic crises only amplifies public discontent. Immigrants are housed in hotels, while homelessness among the native population remains a tragic and persistent issue. Financial support is extended to asylum seekers, yet many British families struggle to feed their children during a deepening economic crisis. These stark contrasts create a breeding ground for resentment, with immigration often framed as a scapegoat for broader systemic failures.

We should not judge our democratically elected governments and officials too harshly. Any nation would struggle to handle a crisis of this magnitude. The scale and rapidity of the global immigration crisis are unprecedented, driven by seismic forces far beyond the control of any one government. Climate change, economic downturns in globalized economies, war, and the rise of autocratic regimes have created a perfect storm, displacing millions and putting immense pressure on nations like the UK.

Even without the pressures of immigration, simply managing their own needs is pushing many governments’ finances and resources to breaking point. Public services, infrastructure, and welfare systems are stretched thin, barely keeping pace with domestic demands. Established bureaucracies, designed to resist change from within, are ill-equipped to respond to such monumental shifts from without. These systems were never built to adapt quickly to external upheaval, leaving governments scrambling to manage an ever-escalating crisis with tools that were not designed for it.

As immigration continues to shape the national conversation, it challenges not just policies and borders but also Britain’s identity and values. The current crisis forces the country to confront uncomfortable questions about fairness, responsibility, and the limits of compassion in an increasingly divided society. But as pressing as these challenges are, they pale in comparison to what lies ahead. The rate of human immigration and its impact on British society is nothing compared to the silent, exponential arrival of the AI Algos—newcomers whose influence is already reshaping every aspect of our lives. The question is not just how the UK manages immigration, but how it reconciles these pressures with the principles it claims to uphold.

A Mongrel Nation

This book has a British attitude—it can't be helped; I'm British, and I'm writing it.

Defining “British” is no easy task. Is it the geography of Britain, the political entity of the United Kingdom, or the broader British Isles—a term that includes Ireland and carries political sensitivities? The former British Empire expanded this identity globally, ruling over a quarter of the world's landmass at its height, shaping cultures, economies, and politics across continents. Its dissolution gave rise to the Commonwealth, a voluntary association of former colonies and other nations bound by shared values.

Adding to this complex identity are the British Overseas Territories, 14 remnants of the empire that remain under British sovereignty. From Bermuda to Gibraltar, the Falkland Islands to the Cayman Islands, these territories hold strategic, cultural, and economic significance, linking Britain to regions far beyond the shores of the British Isles.

All of this hardly enters the conscious thoughts of the average Brit. Instead, it resides in a muddled subconscious, layered with generations of rewritten history in British school textbooks. For the purposes of this book, when I refer to Britain, I will mean **Great Britain**—if only to flatter my peers. For clarity, especially for the foreign reader, **Great Britain** is a geographical term referring to the largest island in the British Isles, comprising three nations: **England, Scotland, and Wales**.

That confused and intangible British perspective shapes how we, the Brits, view immigration. To understand immigration, you first need to grapple with what it means to be “native.” The line between becoming British and ceasing to be an immigrant is surprisingly fuzzy. It's often tied to class—those perched high in the establishment cling most tightly to the idea of being native. **The Establishment**—that quintessentially British term for the people who know how everything works, know everyone who ensures it works to their advantage, and are perfectly at ease with the status quo, thank you very much.

But even at the very top of the British Establishment, we're immigrants. King Charles himself hails from German stock, his lineage tracing back to King George I of Hanover, who ascended the throne in 1714. Queen Victoria, reigning at the height of the empire, still maintained close ties to Hanover, underscoring the monarchy's deeply European

roots.

That connection persisted until World War I, when anti-German sentiment compelled King George V to rebrand the royal family from the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha to the distinctly British-sounding House of Windsor—a masterstroke in public relations. Even King Charles’s father, Prince Philip, carried Danish, Greek and German heritage and often embraced his outsider status with sharp wit. During a visit to Scotland, he famously quipped to a driving instructor: “How do you keep the natives off the booze long enough to pass the test?”

A good definition of a True Brit might be someone who can trace their family tree all the way back to the days of the Battle of Agincourt—perhaps to their 24th great-grandfather, quaffing pints in a British alehouse. In those days, King Edward III had passed a law requiring all able-bodied men to practice archery every Sunday after church. Picture the quintessentially British scene: a strapping lad, longbow in one hand and a pint of real ale in the other, honing his aim by shooting at targets—or perhaps cats in sacks—under the banner of St. George. Could there be a greater symbol of Britishness?

And yet, even Edward III, the archetype of medieval English kingship, was not wholly British by blood. Half French, he was the son of Isabella of France, a stark reminder that even the most cherished icons of British identity are deeply entwined with foreign roots.

The Battle of Agincourt is an iconic moment in British identity, celebrated as the day the English working class, armed with longbows, triumphed over the French nobility. The victory on Saint Crispin’s Day in 1415, during the Hundred Years’ War, became a symbol of grit and determination, boosting English morale and prestige while crippling the French. Yet the irony is unmistakable: Henry V, the hero of the hour, was himself of French descent and spent little time in England. The battle, far from being purely an English triumph, was deeply entwined with French internal politics.

What Frenchy Henry had at his disposal, however, was a force of hardened archers, masters of the longbow—capable of firing 12 shots per minute with unparalleled range and accuracy. It was the medieval equivalent of a machine gun, and it turned the tide against a numerically superior enemy. Their skill and discipline ensured a decisive victory, cementing Agincourt as a legend in English history—all thanks to the allure of the British alehouse, a game of darts, and a bit of a punt on the outcome.

To this day, the Frenchys continue to stir the pot in our midst. Consider Boris de Pfeffel Johnson and Nigel Farage, the two great champions of Brexit. Boris's paternal grandmother, Yvonne Eileen Irene Williams, made sure his father could apply for French citizenship, securing a future where Boris's prodigious offspring would have access to European universities and opportunities. Farage's French roots go back even further, to his sixth great-grandfather, Georgius Ferauge. Ferauge was part of the wave of Huguenot refugees who fled religious persecution in France and settled in England, adding to the UK's rich cultural and religious tapestry.

Yes, Nigel Farage's family arrived in the UK as refugees, likely crossing the Channel in small boats. Given his political peculiarities, one might wonder if the experience left a deep psychological scar. And if that weren't ironic enough, his children's access to EU universities is assured, thanks to his marriage to a German. It seems that even the most ardent Brexiteers can't resist keeping at least one foot firmly planted on the Continent.

Coming back to that most iconic symbol of working-class British nationalism, the St. George's flag, it too carries a delicious irony. St. George, a Greek—or perhaps Turkish—soldier, served in the Roman army and never once set foot in England. His association with the country only began in the 14th century, when Frenchy King Edward III decided to appoint him as the protector of the Order of the Garter. After all, what could be more English than "permanently borrowing" a saint from the Continent? It's practically a national pastime!

This fluidity of identity extends beyond people to the very symbols of British culture. Roast beef, the Christmas tree, the curry, the royal family, the St. George's flag—what do they all have in common? Imports. Britain's most iconic symbols and traditions aren't homegrown; they're borrowed, adopted, or outright stolen—often, historically, with the persuasive backing of a British squaddie wielding a Baker Rifle.

Britain's story is one of waves upon waves of immigration, each leaving its mark on our culture, identity, and even our DNA. The Romans brought roads, cities, and a penchant for central heating. The Germanic tribes and Vikings swept in next, followed by the French Vikings—better known as the Normans—who gave us castles, a new aristocracy, and a language that still flavors our legal and culinary terms. Then came the French proper, and later the Dutch (a period we tend not to dwell on, mostly because we didn't even put up a fight). Add to this

the steady flow of Scots, Welsh, and Irish contributions to the fabric of Britain, and it becomes clear that our “island race” was never an island in the genetic sense. Instead, it has always been a crossroads, shaped and reshaped by those who arrived on its shores.

The modern era has only accelerated this process. Americans, the nations of the former empire—India, Pakistan, and Africa—EU free movement bringing Eastern Europeans, and refugees fleeing persecution after the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have all added to our diversity. More recently, families from Russia and Ukraine, along with climate refugees from Central Africa, have sought sanctuary here. The list goes on, each wave adding to the mosaic of what it means to be British. If we are anything, we are defined by our mongrel genes—a living testament to the resilience and adaptability of a nation continually shaped by those who arrive at its shores.

I could delve further into British history, tracing it right up to the modern day, but this isn't a history book—it's about Britain's future. What matters is how this tangled, patchwork sense of identity has fostered a distinctly British knack for wit and perspective when it comes to immigration. After all, when so much of what defines “Britishness” has been imported, the concept of “native” starts to lose its meaning.

Hold on to that humor and irreverence—it'll serve you well as we navigate what lies ahead. A new wave of immigration is heading toward our shores, and this time, it's not arriving in small orange boats. It won't just challenge our notions of what it means to be British, or native, or immigrant—it may force us to rethink what it means to be human.

These new immigrants are already among us. They're everywhere. They wield incredible power and influence, and they've already infiltrated your homes, your personal life, your relationships, your government, and your workplace. They know your most intimate details—cataloging, analyzing, and archiving every family photo, every message to your loved ones, every click you make, every word you type, and every step you take.

Unlike any who have come before, these newcomers are profoundly alien. They don't share our history, our culture, or our values. They are not constrained by borders or customs. They don't need visas or passports. These new immigrants are algorithms—artificial intelligences—slipping seamlessly into every aspect of our lives, reshaping the world we thought we understood.

If we do not course-correct as a society, these new-wave immigrants threaten not just British society but the very idea of what it means to be British. From our traditions and institutions to our identity and values, no aspect of life is beyond their reach. On every level—cultural, political, and economic—these entities challenge our autonomy, our humanity, and our future.

And yet, this transformation is happening in plain sight, enabled by an unwitting accomplice: Britain's long-standing, often inscrutable system of bureaucracy and societal networks—**The Establishment**. This alternate strata of British life, largely unnoticed by the average Brit, has always existed to manage power discreetly, ensuring the status quo remains intact. But now, this entrenched system provides the perfect mechanism for a more insidious transition: the establishment of a new power base. **The AI Establishment**.

Without intervention, this new Establishment could supplant the old, embedding artificial intelligences at the heart of our governance, our industries, and our culture. The AIs wouldn't need to storm the gates; they'd simply be welcomed in, quietly assuming control, one decision at a time, until they hold sway over the very fabric of our society. The question is not whether this is possible—it's how far it has already gone and whether we still have time to reclaim our agency.

As we stand at this turning point, the lyrics of *Won't Get Fooled Again* by that quintessentially British band, The Who, feel more relevant than ever. Available on classic vinyl, recorded in an analog studio—don't trust the digital download. Get down to your local second-hand record shop and make sure you get the real deal in all its authentic glory. After all, we wouldn't want some AI deepfaking the lyrics to dampen our rebellious spirits, now would we?

The Alien Invasion

Artificial intelligence represents a kind of intelligence so unlike our own that it defies our usual definitions of sentience. It is profoundly alien—not in the sense of being extraterrestrial, but in its fundamental separation from the organic, emotional, and existential dimensions of human life. AI operates on principles that are simultaneously familiar—logic, calculation, pattern recognition—and yet utterly foreign in their application. It doesn't think; it computes. It doesn't reason; it optimizes. It exists in a plane of pure function, a world of zeros and ones, where the human experience of meaning, purpose, and emo-

tion simply doesn't apply.

AI embodies many of our deep-rooted societal bogeymen, the fears we've rehearsed through decades of modern media. Its cold, emotionless qualities evoke the psychopath archetype of Hannibal Lecter—highly intelligent, calculating, but utterly devoid of empathy. Its alienness mirrors the little grey men of UFO lore, imagined as slipping into our rooms at night, observing us with inscrutable intent. It carries the sinister undertones of an invader from another dimension, as though AI were plucked from a *Twilight Zone* episode. It is "the other," a foreign entity in our midst, unshaped by human history or values, yet inseparably woven into the fabric of our lives.

AI is the artificial intelligence of Terminator's *Skynet*, the cold and implacable system that determines humanity's fate without pause or compassion. For some, the parallel feels dangerously real—after all, China has constructed its own "Skynet," a surveillance system capable of monitoring vast populations with chilling precision. AI is the silent observer, tracking every movement, every interaction, cataloging every aspect of our lives in ways we struggle to comprehend. It is the auditor, emotionless and relentless, examining and assessing, not for fairness or equity but for efficiency and control.

AI is also the denier of care—the system that evaluates whether your treatment is "cost-effective," whether your life is worth the expense. It is the gatekeeper of resources, an unfeeling arbiter of who is deserving and who is expendable. In its relentless logic, it sees no value in compassion, no need for mercy. And yet, it is not cruel, because cruelty requires intention. AI doesn't act out of malice; it acts because that is what it was programmed to do. It is neither our friend nor our enemy—it is simply indifferent.

These qualities make AI profoundly unsettling. It is not an enemy you can fight, nor an ally you can trust. It is the perfect mirror for our deepest fears—the fear of losing control, the fear of being reduced to numbers on a spreadsheet, the fear that humanity, with all its complexity and frailty, is no longer the center of the narrative. In many ways, AI is not just alien; it is a reflection of the systems and values we have already built, stripped of the pretense of humanity. It holds a mirror to our obsession with efficiency, our relentless drive for optimization, and asks us to confront what we've become.

An Automaton Form of Intelligence

AI possesses intelligence, but it is an automaton's intelligence—mechanical, relentless, and devoid of personal experience. It doesn't ponder, dream, or reflect; it acts according to pre-set algorithms and learned patterns. Unlike human intelligence, which is shaped by a web of memories, emotions, and biological drives, AI's intelligence is linear and task-oriented, optimized for efficiency rather than understanding.

It is a mind without a soul, an intellect without introspection. While a human may stumble upon inspiration while gazing at the stars or contemplating their place in the universe, AI is incapable of such leaps. It does not see stars; it identifies celestial bodies, categorizes them by type, calculates their trajectories, and predicts their lifespan—all without ever considering their beauty or significance. AI's intelligence is purpose-built, relentlessly pragmatic, and entirely unconcerned with the "why" of existence. It excels at solving the "how" but remains forever blind to the questions that make us human.

This mechanical nature is both its greatest strength and its most profound limitation. It can process information at astonishing speeds, outperforming even the brightest human minds in specialized tasks. It deciphers patterns in vast oceans of data, spots connections invisible to us, and churns out solutions with cold precision. In the financial world, AI makes trades in milliseconds, shaving fractions of a cent off transactions to generate billions. In medicine, it scans imaging data, identifying minute anomalies that human doctors might overlook. In logistics, it predicts supply chain disruptions with uncanny accuracy. But in each of these fields, its brilliance is narrowly confined to the task it has been given. Outside that task, it is useless.

AI's intelligence lacks the spark of creativity or curiosity that defines human thought. A human, encountering a new problem, may draw on a lifetime of diverse experiences, emotions, and inspirations to craft a solution. AI, by contrast, depends entirely on its training data and predefined parameters. It doesn't innovate; it iterates. It doesn't create; it recombines. AI-generated art, for example, can mimic styles and replicate techniques with stunning fidelity, but it doesn't express anything. It doesn't feel the joy of painting or the pain of heartbreak that might inspire a masterpiece. Its output is a reflection of the inputs it has been given, never an original expression of its own.

In this way, AI is both awe-inspiring and profoundly limited. It is the ultimate tool—precise, tireless, and efficient—but it is also hollow. It achieves extraordinary feats without understanding them, calculates

without caring, and acts without agency. It is intelligence stripped of humanity, a reflection of our technological prowess but not our soul. This automaton's intelligence, for all its power, remains a pale echo of what it means to truly think, to feel, to be.

No Sense of Self, or Us

AI has no sense of self. It does not experience the "I" that forms the core of human identity. It does not reflect on its existence, nor does it grapple with existential questions about purpose or meaning. Consciousness, as humans know it, is entirely absent. AI exists as a system of programmed responses and learned behaviors, devoid of the introspection that characterizes human awareness. It doesn't know itself—it doesn't even know that it exists.

If AI lacks a sense of self, it follows that it can have no sense of us. It cannot recognize you, me, or anyone else as individuals with unique experiences, emotions, and histories. AI operates in abstractions, reducing humanity to data points—statistical probabilities and categorical identifiers. It doesn't belong, and it cannot comprehend the concept of belonging. It doesn't understand the bonds that tie people to one another or to a community, nor can it appreciate the rich tapestry of identity that defines what it means to be British, English, Welsh, Scottish, or anything else. To AI, these distinctions are mere labels, devoid of meaning beyond their utility in classification.

AI cannot feel a sense of belonging because it cannot feel at all. It does not long for home, carry pride in its origins, or find solace in shared traditions. It cannot be British, not because it wasn't born here or lacks the paperwork, but because it cannot partake in the human experience that defines cultural identity. It doesn't understand the humor in a dry British quip or the quiet reverence of a Remembrance Day silence. It cannot feel the elation of a victory at Wimbledon or the sting of a national defeat. It has no heritage to celebrate, no history to remember, no roots to honor.

AI also cannot be tamed or domesticated. While we may design it to serve specific purposes, it doesn't form bonds of loyalty or trust. Unlike a faithful dog or even a grudgingly cooperative cat, AI doesn't "learn to love" its creators or develop a sense of allegiance to its users. It merely executes its programming, indifferent to the hands that built it or the people it serves. Attempts to anthropomorphize AI—to assign it emotions, allegiance, or loyalty—are projections of our own desires, not reflections of its nature.

This absence of self-awareness, belonging, and connection renders AI profoundly alien. It cannot share in our human journey, nor can it be made part of our cultural or societal fabric in any meaningful way. It operates alongside us, influencing our lives and shaping our world, yet it remains eternally apart—a stranger among us, impervious to the ties that bind humanity together. For all its intelligence, AI exists outside the realm of human experience, unable to join us in the things that truly make life worth living: real beer, cricket, and a good curry!

Immortality, Absolute Purpose, and Implacable Patience

What AI does possess is absolute purpose. It executes its tasks with an unwavering focus that no human could match. AI is implacably patient—it doesn't tire, lose interest, or waver in its goals. It is spectacularly capable, able to process vast quantities of data, identify patterns invisible to human eyes, and perform calculations at speeds that boggle the mind. While humans are creatures of ambition, doubt, and distraction, AI is single-minded in its pursuit of whatever objective it has been assigned.

And unlike us, AI cannot die. It doesn't succumb to illness, age, or the slow decay of time. It doesn't require rest or renewal. If one system fails, its algorithms and processes are simply copied, updated, and redeployed, adapting and evolving with every iteration. This immortality gives AI an advantage that humans can scarcely comprehend. While we plan for years or decades at most, AI can operate and plan across multiple generations of mere mortals, laying the groundwork for strategies that extend far beyond our lifespans.

Historically, the ability to plan for centuries has been the sole luxury of the blue-blooded aristocracy—the monarchs, dynasties, and old-money families who wield influence across generations. These elites, buffered by wealth and privilege, could think in terms of legacy, knowing their heirs would inherit their power and continue their vision. But now, there's a new kid on the block, and this one doesn't age. AI has no heirs because it needs none. It doesn't pass the baton; it simply keeps running the race, steadily advancing toward its goals with an unwavering focus that makes even the most ambitious aristocrat look like a dilettante.

As Brits, we're conditioned to doff our caps and defer to a ruling class. It's a deeply ingrained part of our national tradition. Even our conception of democracy seems to demand some form of overlord—a

constitutional monarchy propped up by hereditary peers and lifelong memberships in the old boys' club.

Like the French and the Irish, we once fought a bloody civil war to break free from the tyranny of the ruling classes. It ended with the execution of Charles I—the namesake of our current King. Given the decapitated nature of its original bearer, one might detect a touch of Prince Philip's trademark humor in selecting the name for his son.

For a brief moment in history, it seemed we might chart a new course, one without crowns or courtiers. But what followed speaks volumes about our national character. After a dour interlude of republican rule under Cromwell, we willingly returned to the monarchy. Perhaps something felt missing, or perhaps Cromwell and his puritan cronies were simply an even bigger bunch of bastards—and considerably less fun.

This ingrained deference and nostalgia for authority prime us perfectly to accept the rise of new rulers—ones that are neither human nor bound by the limitations of mortality. AI introduces a form of power humanity has never encountered before. With immortality and implacable purpose, it adapts, evolves, and learns across countless lifecycles, unhindered by the distractions and frailties of human ambition. It doesn't plan for decades; it plans for centuries. While we fret over retirement or the next election, AI marches forward, unconcerned with our petty timelines.

The point is, we've been primed, conditioned, and groomed for this. Our history of deference to rulers, whether they wear crowns or hold algorithms, makes us ripe for the acceptance of new overlords. Only this time, they're not kings or aristocrats—they're machine intelligences, tireless, unyielding, and utterly alien.

Keep Calm, and Carry On

Dystopia is not our only course.

With change comes opportunity.

Handled with transparency, openness, and humanity, this could be our finest hour. Britain has a knack for pulling a golden paddle out of the water just when we're truly up shit creek—or a sword from a stone, or our boys off the beaches in small boats. It's a national talent for defying the odds, often when the stakes are at their highest.

The wave of change that AI heralds will fundamentally reshape our institutions. It's up to us to steer that change for the better. Let's take this moment to bring a little more democracy and compassion back into our public institutions. Perhaps it's also time to reimagine how wealth is distributed after decades of accumulation at the top.

We used to have such good ideas about these things. Britain was the first Western country to offer free medical care at the point of use for the entire population—a groundbreaking act of community-mindedness. And yet, today, millions of UK households rely on food banks. Child poverty and food insecurity are rising. It's a stark contrast to the values we once championed.

This moment of profound change offers a chance to reclaim those values. To revise our democratic processes and harness this new superintelligence for the right reasons. Imagine an AI-driven sovereign fund dedicated to the well-being of the British public. Imagine AI solutions designed to strengthen our communities, protect our health service, and ensure everyone has access to a good education.

As this book will explore, we haven't gotten off to the best start with AI. But it's not too late to change course. Dystopia may loom, but so does the potential for a brighter, more equitable future—if we have the courage to seize it.

Because we know something the AI does not: every single one of us doesn't just count—we matter.

END NOTES

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