Foreword: NOT vaporwave but inspired by its aesthetics. It does not seek to capture any idealogies shared by the vaporwave community, nor capture real world 80s things. It does not do references. Rather, both this story and vaporwave share in corrupted, consumerist nostalgia. This story does not tackle any perspective on consumerism and how it affects human life.

Glitch is big part of vw. Dream like glitches.

Backstory of the vw world (which is never explicitly stated in the story itself): Humans have created AI for some purpose (like in Black Mirror episodes such as Hang the DJ). This requires the AI to learn things, which creates a dream-like, glitchy 80s pink and cyan world. All the AI share in this space; what humans use them for is never explained, though there are many hints as to what, and the reader can build up their own theories. The place is comfy and rosy, as if the AI are living in a slowed down 80s Miami paradise forever. Vaporfunk and slowed down music constantly plays in desolate malls. Outside, the world is very computer-like. Every resident AI is like some broken 80s ad. Humans and mannequins live together, never questioning anything.

Unlike other stories which explore 'what is real vs not real' or 'subservient AI trying to find its identity', this story is purely about an AI trying to drown out the outside world and live within its aesthetic dream world. It is not a bleak story; there is no pushy moral about whether the AI is right/wrong for not trying to escape (which it can't do). There is no/little moral; only aesthetic.

The AI cannot escape its world, and it doesn't need to. The story ends with the main character finding the pleasant memory it was trying to recreate, and feeling satisfied and content. There is NEVER any option to escape the world; it is like humans trying to grow wings in the 15th century. Note the AI are always self-aware and there is no discussion about who is real- they all have consciousness. But they never interact with the real world, and live in their dream-like world. The consumerist world of humans had become the only home the AI will ever know, like how animals underwater create envs from human plastic.

No scene set in gritty world. Humans never show up, just like how modern day stuff would never show up in LOTR. What were the AI made for? Never answered in this short story bc not impt.

The conflict in the story is that the AI keeps on forgetting a rosy memory it once had. It's like when humans forget a tune or show experienced when they were much younger. Memories become abstracted emotions, instead of exact replicas of what happened. So the main character AI has to search this world for it. But it faces outside horrors which break down its world and mislead it to other memories.

The AI does work by living out its life. Somehow, recreating this 80s aesthetic is required for AI that DO interact with the outside world to perform human tasks. The AI inside are separate; all of them work together as if they are in a factory. But the AI all have fun on the inside.

The AI's name is Tony. Tony is frustrated because no one can understand his nostalgic memories, and he begins to wonder if he'll ever find them. He has to travel to horrific boundaries that cross into the real world- in a way his AI brain cannot comprehend- to reach his desired goal. When he finds it, he relaxes, as if on a beach. Tony keeps on staring at certain objects/landscapes, and they bring up certain memories. These eventually piece together into a whole, and Tony begins to create false memories about what was there, and is led astray into horror. But he eventually learns to 'lose himself in the

aesthetic' (which is what the AI are supposed to do) and this leads him to the right path. There is a 'moral' but one that is different from typical AI stories. Or perhaps there is no pushy moral, but more of an exploration of why nostalgia and finding lost things is so important.

Geometric shapes, flickering TV sets, driving

The story is more of a tour through a new kind of world, rather than a deep story. What were all the strange VR-like worlds depicted on old software covers and textbooks? Why are there just statues in the middle of empty, cyber-like places?

The interesting thing is that all these things do have some human analogue, but whatever the original purpose was has been corrupted and is not important. Tony doesn't care about what the original, horrific human events his memory was linked to. He does not care that the consumrist products have hints of a human suffering from addiction, trying to escape its life with consumrist products. He only cares about re-capturing those lost feelings, those bits and pieces that gnaw at him and tease him, like a puzzle he needs to solve but can't. What is Tony's role in relation to humans? That is all left up to the reader's imagination.

<<<

https://www.amazon.com/Void-Isaiah-Laing/dp/172713320X/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_t_1?_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=DKFTZ8HZWJ439BAQVRPS

https://www.amazon.com/NOJOY-H-William-Davis/dp/1980466580

worlds exploration: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIZrHe-93WU