A FAIRLY SIMPLE TECHNICAL GUIDE TO WEB3*

(The details are complicated, but the core idea isn't)

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#blockchaingandalf

* This primer is about the "blockchain-based" web3 definition

TELL ME WHAT IT IS
IN ONE SENTENCE

Web3 provides

a familiar interface (a webpage)

to an unfamiliar data-store (a blockchain)

via a website

WHAT IS A WEB3 WEBSITE?
(SLIGHTLY MORE TECHNICAL ANSWER)

From a current technical perspective, a web3 website is:

- 🌏 a website
- 💻 containing code
- 🔗 that allows the site to interact with a blockchain
- 👛 and other blockchain related software

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF USING A BLOCKCHAIN INSTEAD OF A DATABASE?

(part 1)

If your data and/or account is on someone else's database:

they can stop you making changes,

or they can delete your account,

and there is not much you can do about it,

because they control the data store.

Database owners can censor you

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF USING A BLOCKCHAIN INSTEAD OF A DATABASE?

(part 2)

If your data and/or account is on a blockchain:

they can stop you accessing their interface,

or change the way they *present* your data to you,

but only you can change the data,

and you can always go directly to the source - the blockchain.

Blockchains are censorship resistant

BUT WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Handle payments without having to sign up to payment processors, allow users to own their assets, view users as collaborators rather than commodities, provide online identity that is not tied to a company, encourage a truly open community of developers and builders, enable an Internet not just of information but of value, provide resilient 24/7 marketplaces that are transparent and open rather than closed, and much more.

Traditional companies don’t get most of the above.

It’s like trying to explain D&D to a football player:

“How do you win?”

“It’s not really about winning. It’s about interacting.”

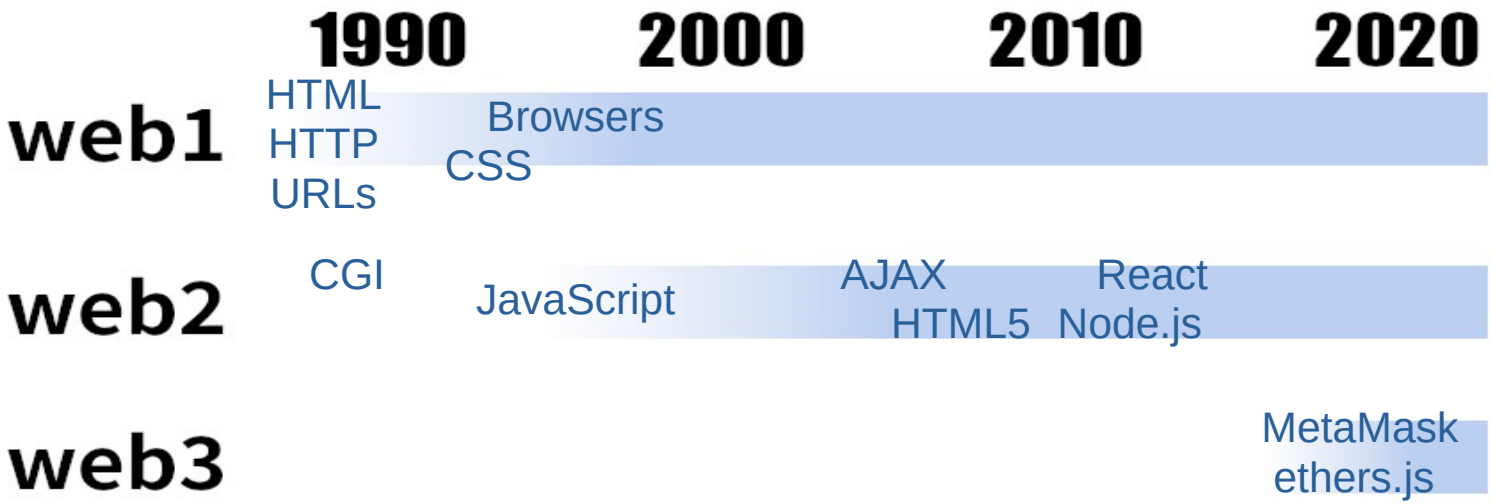
“Then why do you play?”

“Never mind.”

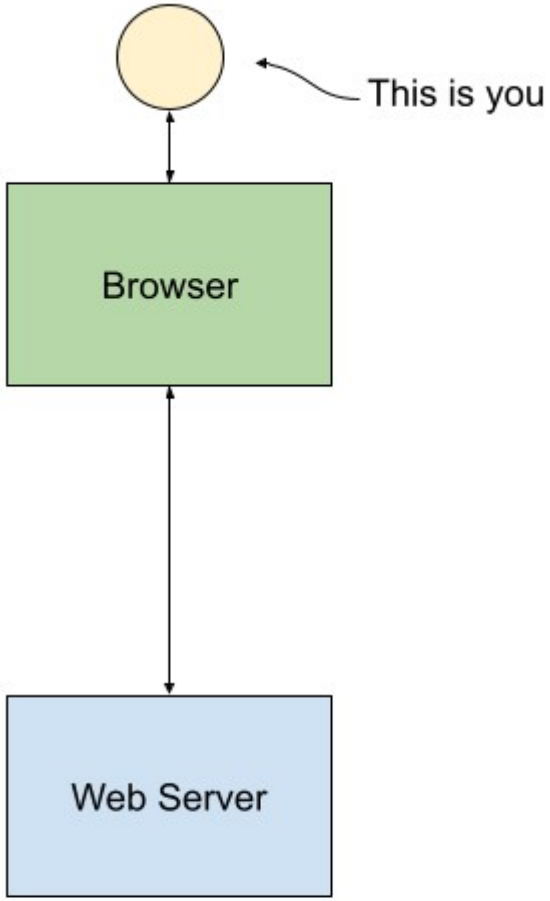
A BRIEF HISTORY LESSON

Technological change happens gradually.

This means dividing things into categories that are often somewhat arbitrary.



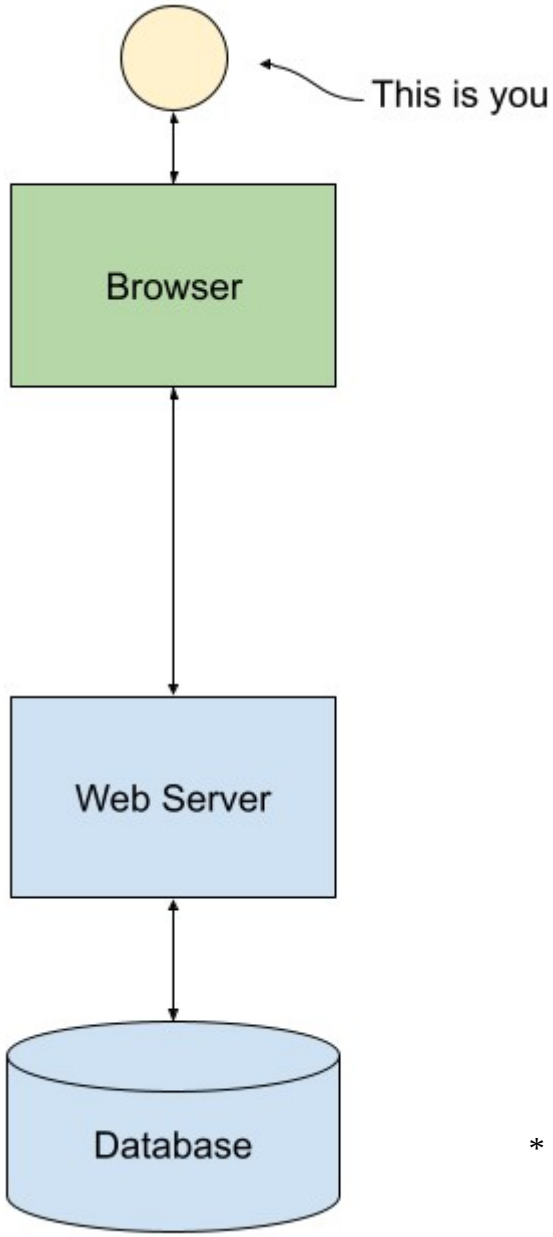
Note that web3 is an extension of web2, which is an extension of web1.



WEB1

Here’s a naive explanation of web1:

You use a browser
to retrieve pages from a web server
and to send data back



WEB2

You use a browser
to retrieve pages from a web server
and to send data back

but the data is stored in a database

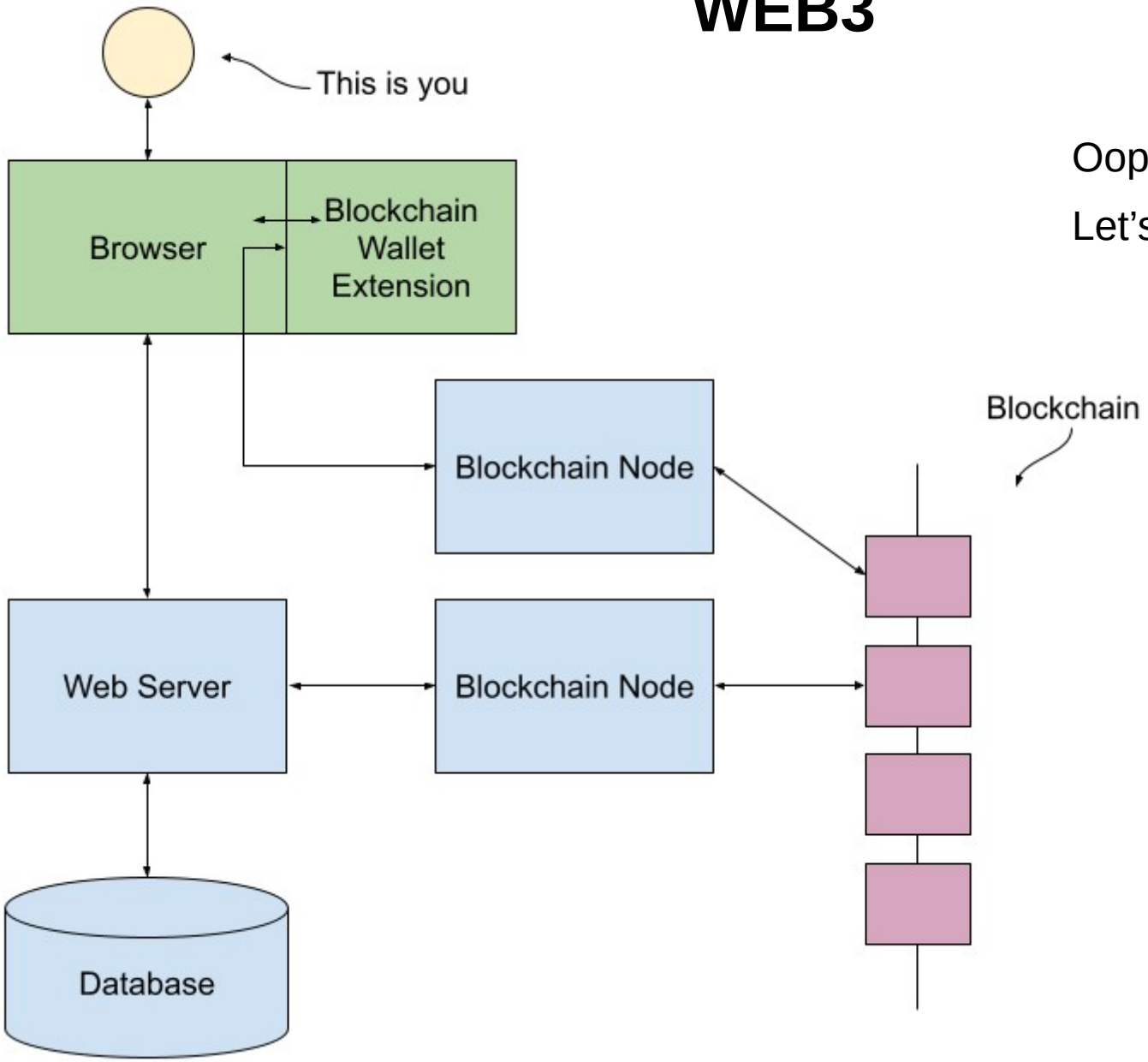
and this is the clever bit:

you can see other people's data* in your page
and they can see your data* in theirs
because it comes from the same database

(this is how social media works)

* Some of it, not usually all of it. Also, it's not your data – it's the website operators.

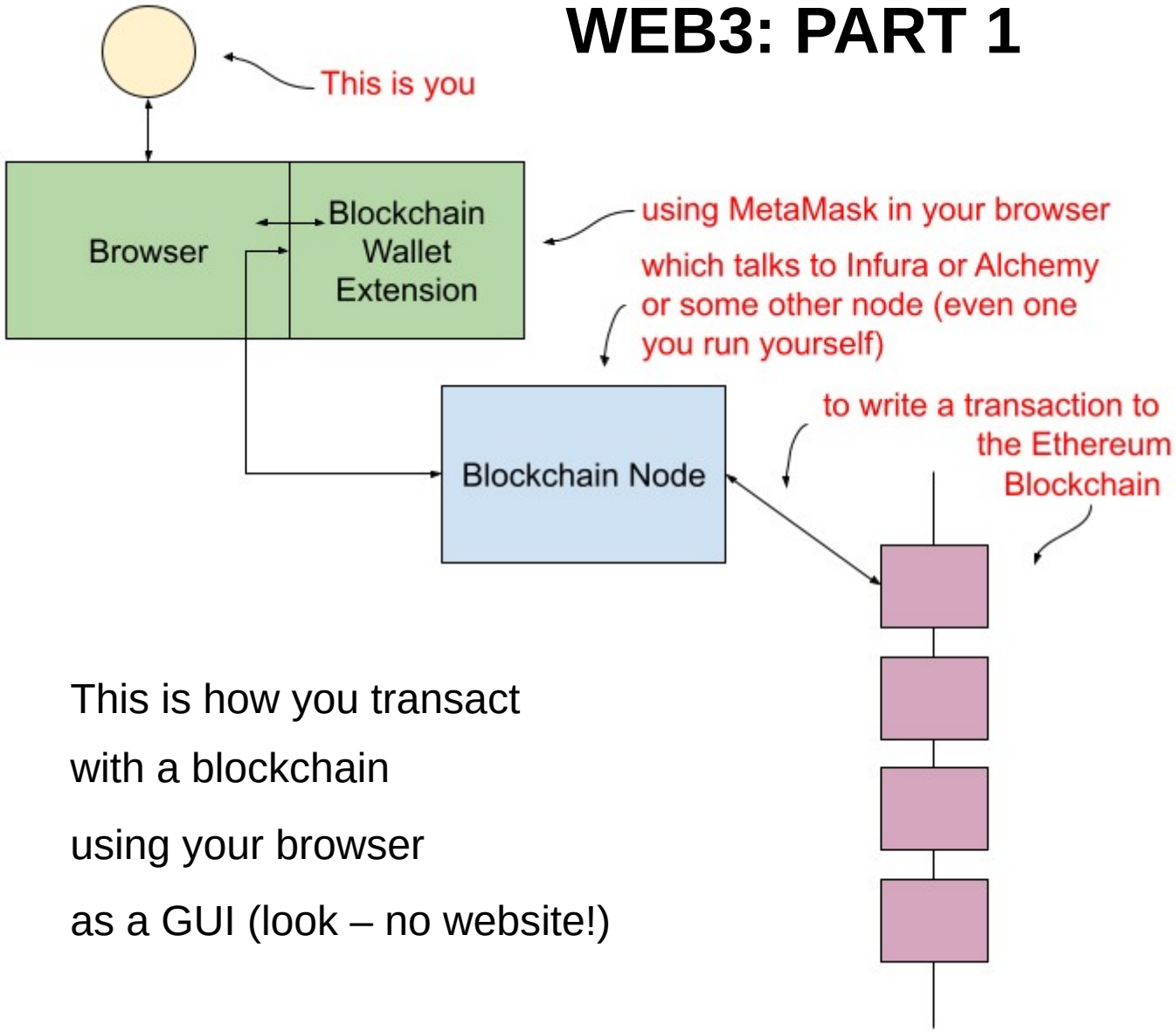
WEB3



Oops, it just got complicated

Let’s back up a bit ...

WEB3: PART 1



This is how you transact

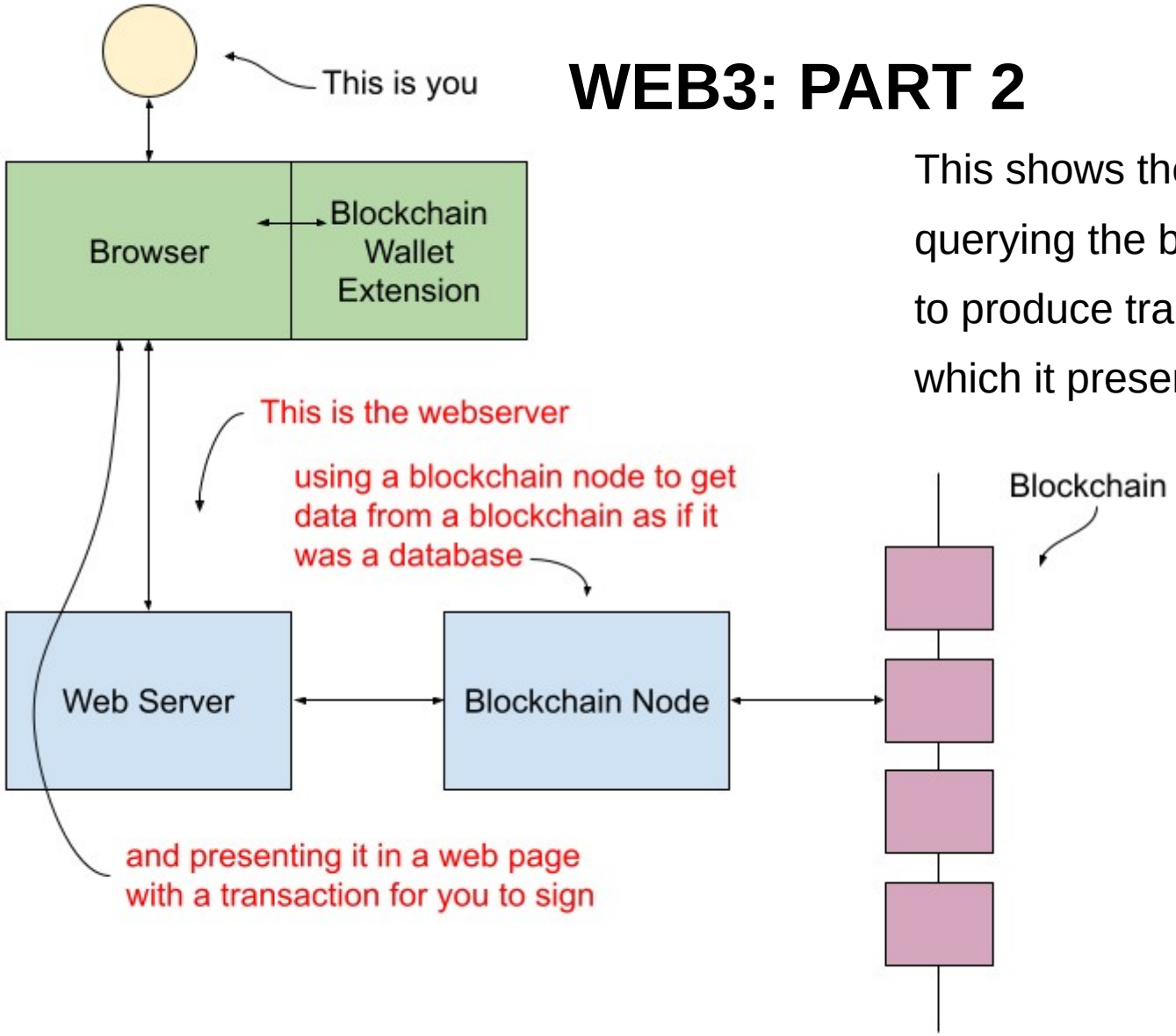
with a blockchain

using your browser

as a GUI (look – no website!)

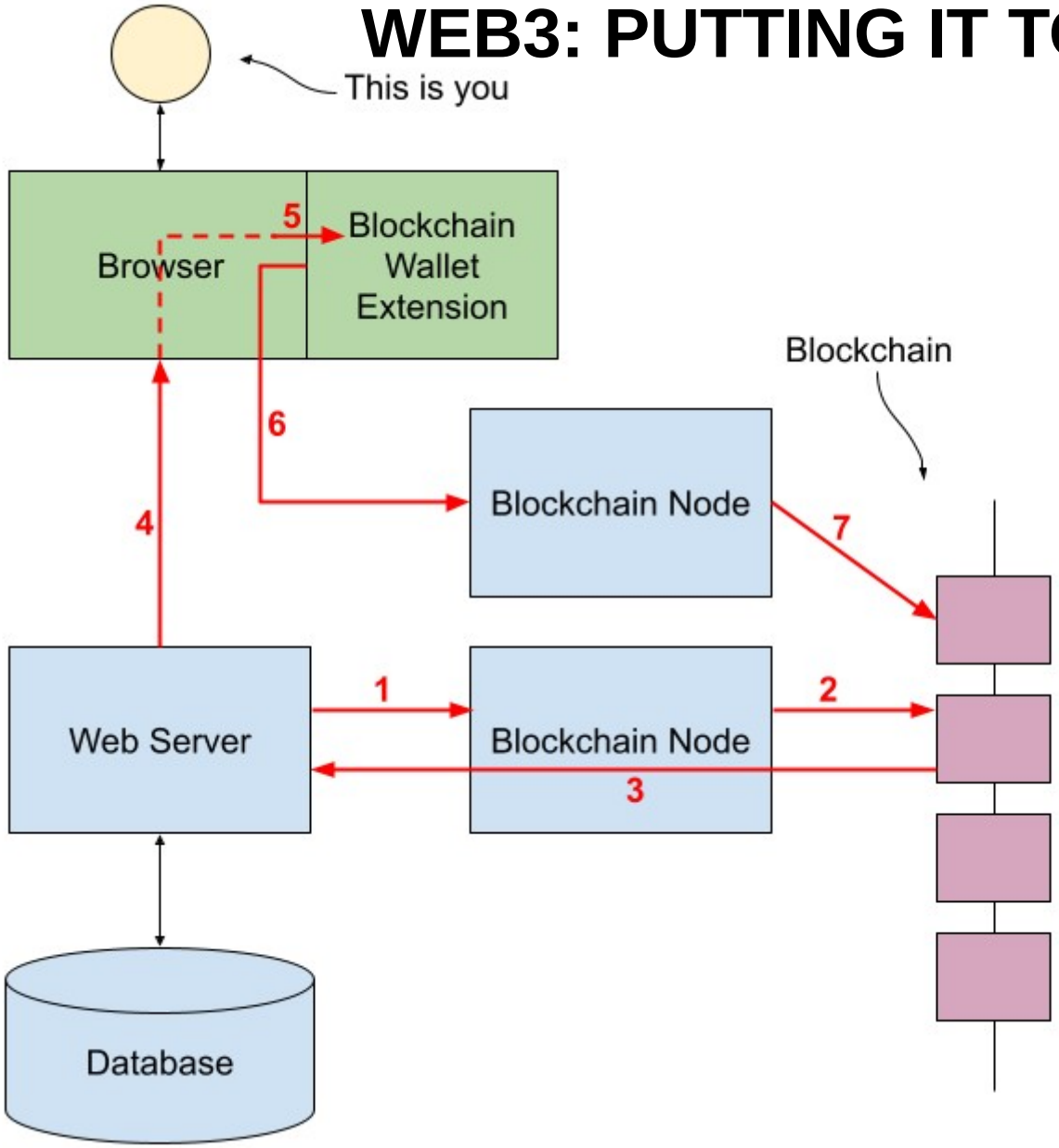
But you have to know what transactions you want to make

WEB3: PART 2



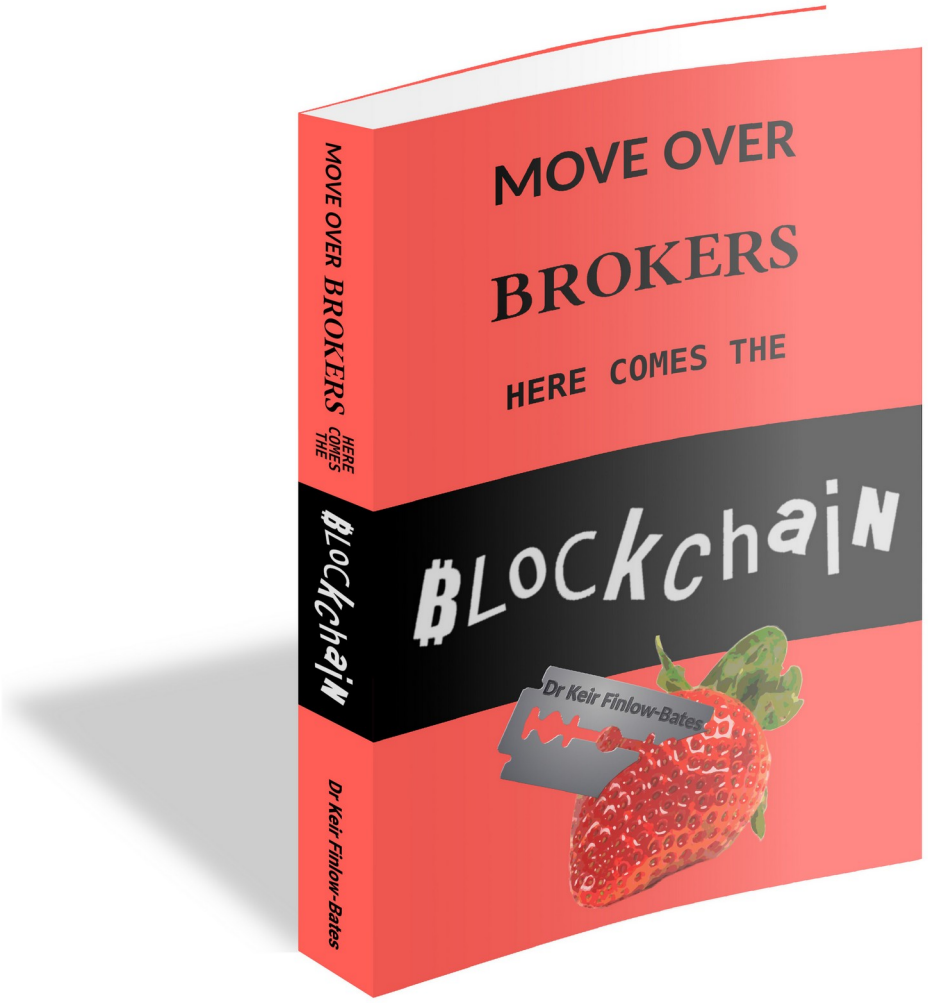
This shows the website
querying the blockchain
to produce transactions for you to sign,
which it presents to you in a webpage

WEB3: PUTTING IT TOGETHER



1. web server queries node
2. which queries blockchain
3. to get data to put into webpage
4. which is sent to your browser
5. is passed to wallet for signing
6. signed transaction is sent to node
7. which writes it to blockchain

FOUND THIS USEFUL?



Why not pick up a
copy of my book, which
explains blockchain
in a similar
(or rather a simpler) manner:

https://mybook.to/moveover

Thanks for reading!

Keir Finlow-Bates