

# The Safety Net of Thorns

A Meditation on Stability and its Cost



Imagine someone who feels stuck.

A job. A relationship. A city.

Nothing is *dramatically* wrong on  
the outside. They are functioning.

Paying bills. Showing up.

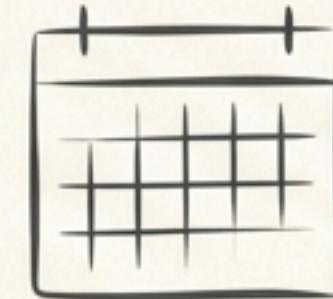
But inside, there is a constant feeling of  
pressure—like something is slowly  
tightening around them.



They think about leaving. They imagine a different life.

And immediately, another voice appears:

**“But at least this is safe.”**



This is the safety net.

A steady income.

A known routine.

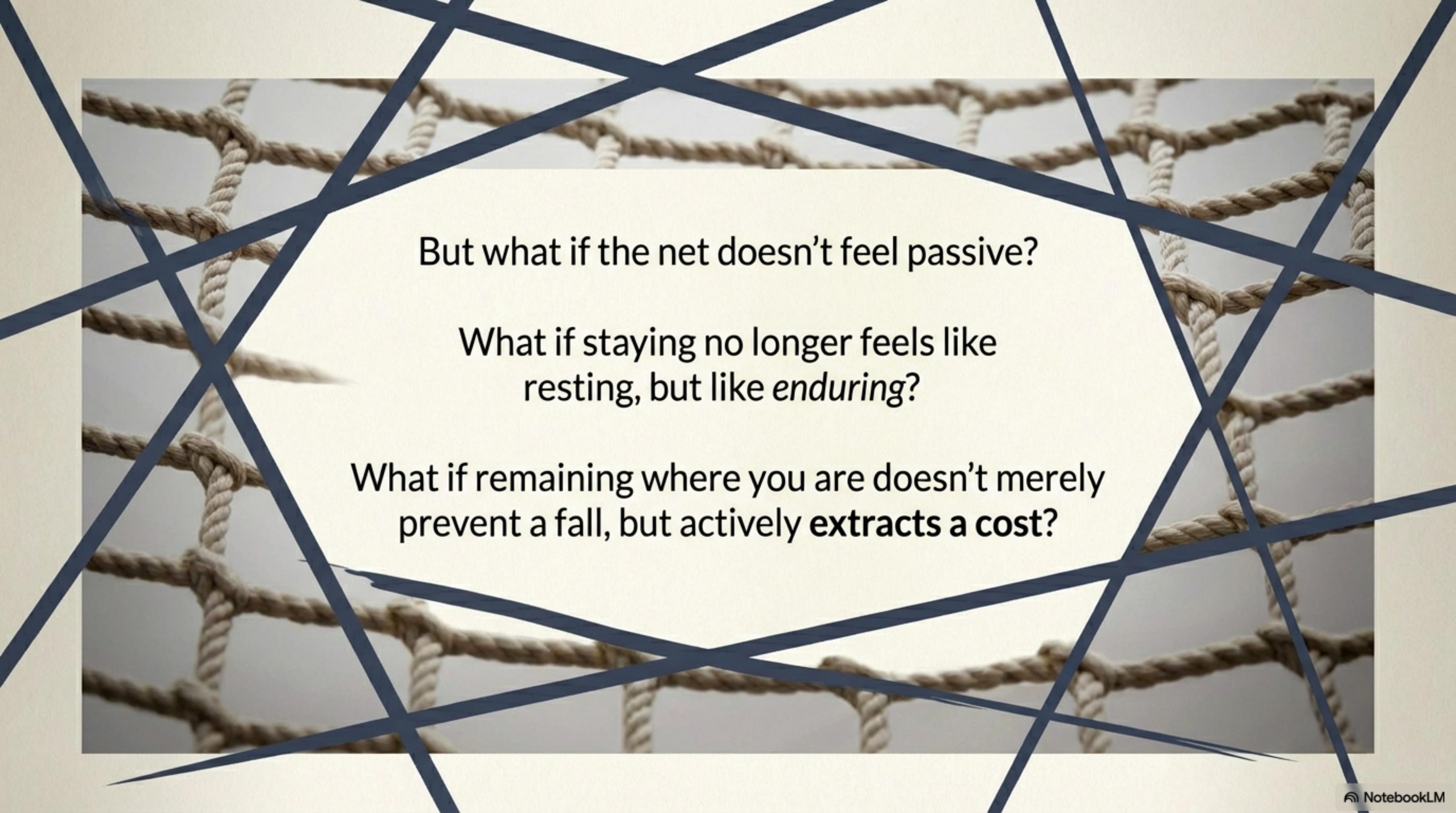
Predictability.

Protection from sudden collapse.

It sounds reasonable.

It sounds mature.

We tell ourselves that endurance is wisdom.



But what if the net doesn't feel passive?

What if staying no longer feels like  
resting, but like *enduring*?

What if remaining where you are doesn't merely  
prevent a fall, but actively **extracts a cost**?



Some **safety nets** are not  
made of soft rope.

They are constructed from obligation,  
from fear, from inertia.

They keep you from falling,  
but they do so by cutting into you.

Some safety nets are made of  
**thorns.**

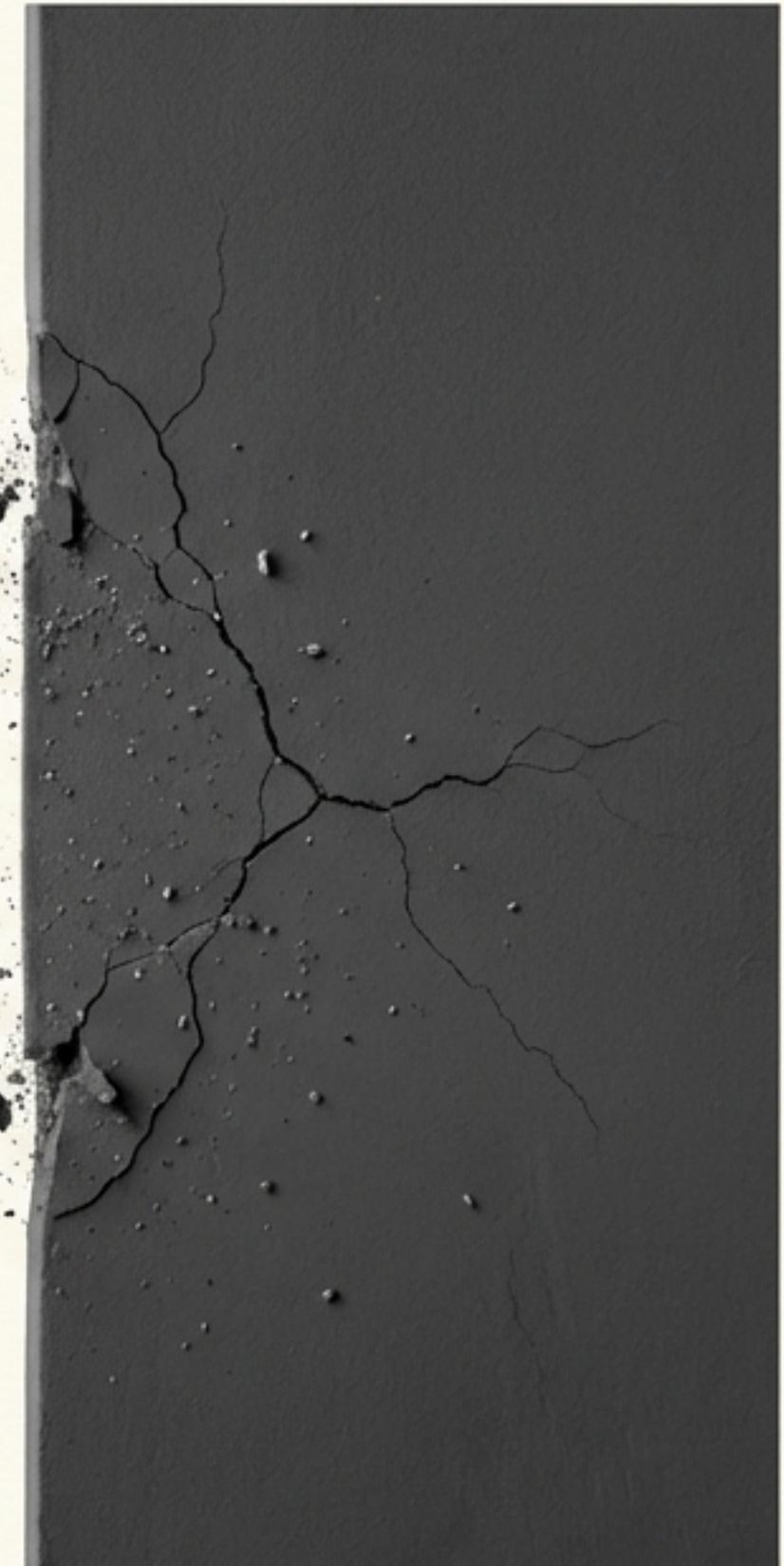


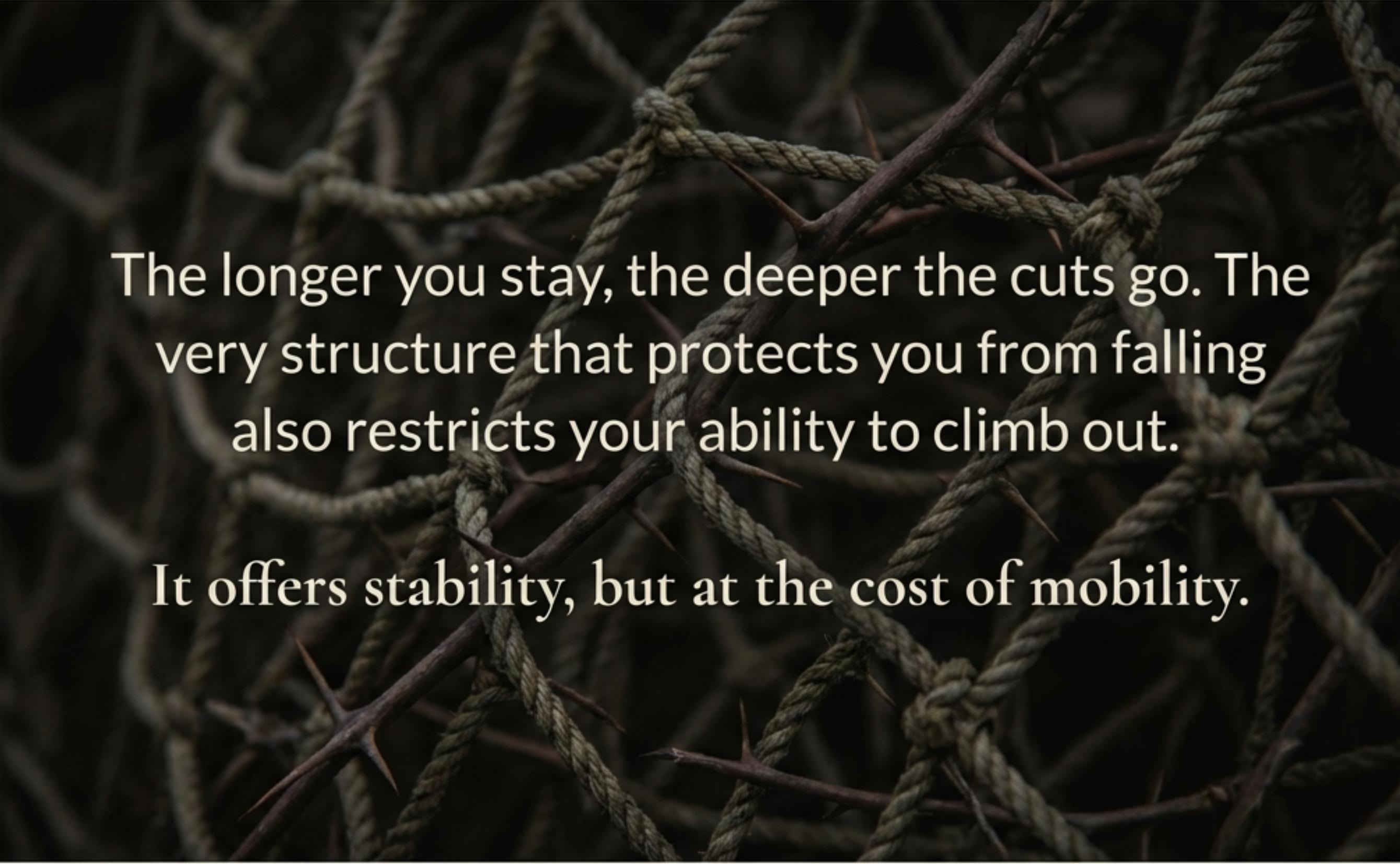
A safety net of thorns does one thing well: it prevents free fall. From the outside, everything appears intact. You are still functioning. Still “safe.”

And that is precisely what makes it so deceptive. While it prevents you from crashing, it does not allow you to rest.

The harm is incremental.  
A quiet loss of confidence.  
A subtle dulling of curiosity.  
An erosion of energy that no  
amount of rest seems to restore.  
There is a slow bleeding—one  
that becomes easier to ignore  
than to confront.

in Cormorant Garamond



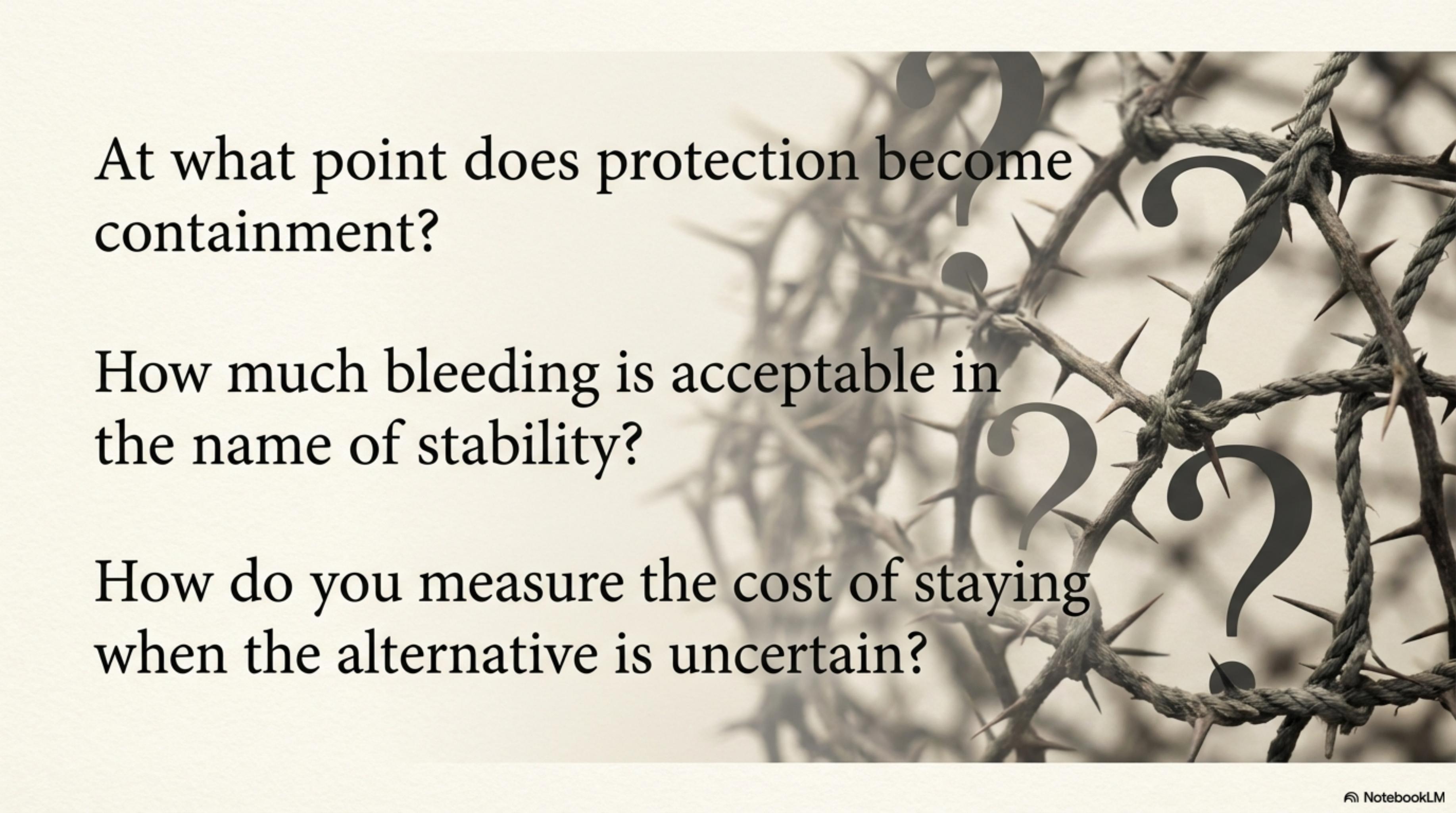


The longer you stay, the deeper the cuts go. The very structure that protects you from falling also restricts your ability to climb out.

It offers stability, but at the cost of mobility.

You are not unsafe enough to justify a leap.

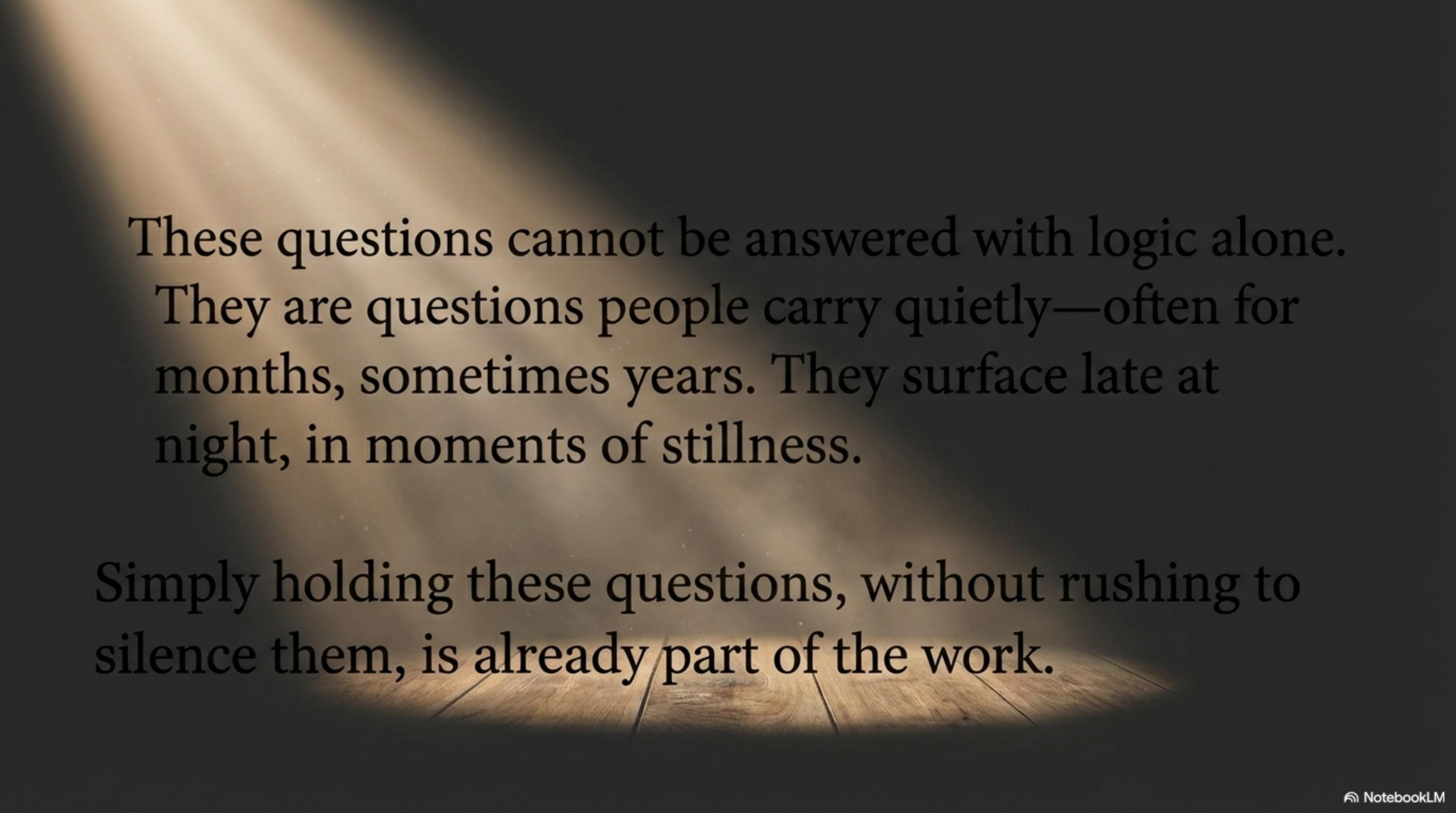
But you are also not safe enough to heal.



At what point does protection become containment?

How much bleeding is acceptable in the name of stability?

How do you measure the cost of staying when the alternative is uncertain?



These questions cannot be answered with logic alone.  
They are questions people carry quietly—often for  
months, sometimes years. They surface late at  
night, in moments of stillness.

Simply holding these questions, without rushing to  
silence them, is already part of the work.

Noticing the thorns  
is not ingratitude.

It is attentiveness to  
your lived experience.

Awareness is not betrayal.  
It is a form of care.



A safety net, at its core, is meant to protect *life*.

Not merely preserve function.  
Not merely prevent collapse.

And certainly not to drain vitality in the name of stability.



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