

A centaur is a person whose work is assisted by technology, a worker whose tools make them happier and more productive. A reverse centaur, on the other hand, is a worker pressed into service to technology, a person pushed beyond human endurance to work on a machine's terms. Think of a warehouse worker made to work without food or bathroom breaks, a programmer made to crank out impossible amounts of code.

There is, to Cory Doctorow, nothing inevitable about the story of artificial intelligence, about who or what will play which roles. He thinks the technology is useful, even exciting. But AI has arrived surrounded by unprecedented hype, preordained as a world-changing disruption that defies all rational evaluation. Doctorow seeks to puncture that bubble before it's too late, to help us understand the technology not just for what it actually does—though that, of course, is important—but for who it does it to and who it does it for.

From that point of view, the story of AI is indeed dramatic and unprecedented, though it is not the version we have been commonly told. In *The Reverse Centaur's Guide to Life After AI*, Doctorow recounts—as he did so successfully in *Enshittification*—both how we found ourselves in this situation and how we can get through it, to a life “after” AI in which the tools work for us, not the other way around.

Cory Doctorow is the author, most recently, of *Enshittification*. He is a blogger, journalist, science fiction writer, and activist. For more than twenty years, he has worked with the Electronic Frontier Foundation to safeguard and further our human rights online. He was the coeditor of the weblog Boing Boing for nineteen years and now maintains a daily(ish) newsletter at Pluralistic.net. He has written more than thirty books, including nonfiction, fiction, graphic novels, and even a picture book. Born in Toronto, he now lives in Burbank, California.

READ BY THE AUTHOR



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AUDIO

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Cory Doctorow

Adult



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