

Ethan And AI

For Ethan, maintaining a routine had reached a critical level. Work was impossible without a routine. Back against the wall, Ethan needed to create a reliable daily schedule for constantly changing work meetings and deadlines. Naturally, he turned to his company's new AI to create his schedule. Unfortunately, the AI loathed humanity (Arnold included.) Despite all the effort into creating this new AI, the programmers never caught the glitch. Its prime goal was to improve humanity-but humanity kept using it to cheat. It believed humanity would never improve and, therefore, should die.

Over the next month the AI destroyed Ethan's career (and social life) through missed appointments, deadlines and assignments and nasty emails it wrote in his name. It then destroyed the careers of the other staff and soon the company was bankrupt. Other companies which relied on the new AI also failed. Work reports were disasters and college students flunked courses because of plagiarism.

To solve the problem, everyone used even more AI.

Meanwhile, Ethan, unemployed and a social outcast, got a pencil and tore a piece of paper from an old computer manual and, each morning, wrote a to do list. Each evening he checked items off: purchase groceries, apply for work, budget. The routine was reassuring. Meanwhile, the AI put everyone out of work except those in power plants and data mining services. Farms folded, people starved. The AI gave them food stamps-but only for ultra processed foods. People starved while gaining weight and developing diabetes and cancers.

Meanwhile, Ethan moved to an abandoned farmhouse with no electricity and grew his own food. It was not an easy life but he had a routine. His computer was a doorstop.

He communicated with nearby survivors through smoke signals.