

The Machine Stops



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Start Classics

The future: One machine

Humanity lives underground in isolated rooms.

The Machine supplies food, communication, education, and entertainment.

Direct contact with nature and other people becomes rare.



A system that becomes a world

The Machine is not just a tool. It organizes everyday life.

Vashti accepts the machine. Kuno questions it

VASHTI

- Her life is mediated by the Machine.
- She trusts its systems and conventions.
- Direct experience feels unnecessary.

KUNO

- He wants to experience the world directly.
- He challenges society's dependence.
- He warns that the Machine is failing.

When the Machine breaks down, society has lost the skills and resilience to survive.

When does convenience becomes dependance?

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Can connection make us lonelier?

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Is access to information the same thing as understanding

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What kind of future do we want?

	"good"	The machine stops
Utilitarian	Maximizing pleasure, comfort, and the absence of pain for the greatest number of people.	<i>a dystopian critique of hedonistic utilitarianism. The Machine achieves ultimate convenience and eliminates suffering, but at the cost of human vitality, depth, and survival. It proves that a society maximizing superficial pleasure can still result in total existential ruin.</i>
Kant	Acting out of duty and treating humans as ends in themselves, possessing absolute rational agency and autonomy.	<i>The society violates Kant's Categorical Imperative. Humans strip away their own rational agency and allow the Machine to dictate their choices, effectively turning themselves into mere "means" or cogs to keep the system running. By abandoning free will, they forfeit their moral duties.</i>
Virtue Ethics	Developing excellent moral character (virtues) like courage, temperance, and wisdom to achieve <i>eudaimonia</i>	<i>The environment completely chokes out the cultivation of virtue. Because the Machine removes all struggle, physical effort, and direct conflict, citizens have no opportunity to practice courage or temperance. Without physical and social reality, true flourishing is replaced by passive stagnation.</i>