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Digital force: disrupting life, liberty and livelihood in the information age

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PART IV: CONCLUSION

7:46 You open your eyes. Your eyes don't hurt because your wearable has woken you up at the right time in your sleep cycle. Wearables had been going out of style for a few years, until companies started mining sleeping data for useful nuggets of information about how to nudge people into better sleeping behavior. When you learned that your particular sleep cycles are unusually disturbed by salty food, you cut back on your salt intake and have been sleeping like a baby ever since. You still sleep with a wearable to notice when work is becoming too stressful so that you know when you need make adjustments or take a vacation. You are now always connected to cyberspace.

8:35 You connect to work. With the advent of virtual reality, much more work can now be done from home while it is still possible to maintain a social bond with the work place (wherever that can be said to exist nowadays anyway). Many people have set up virtual reality rooms in their home offices so they can have a simulated work environment with their colleagues. It used to be expensive to do so, but then again, so was setting up a computer system at one point.

13:52 You get into your car. You are going to meet with a client and you want to shake the other person's hand and look them in the eye. The car is not yours. It is far too nice. As transportation network companies started using autonomous cars which pick you up within minutes of ordering, this saved a tremendous amount of costs of cars standing idly by, gathering just dust and rust. The saved costs have been added back in added luxury. A nicety invariably developed into a necessity. Your drive to the city is 50 minutes, which it usually is. You sit back and start preparing your presentation. If you would have needed to drive the car yourself, then you would have chosen to live closer to the city, but you don't have to, so you didn't choose to. As did many others. Marchetti's Constant was broken. The trend of people moving into cities was reversed and housing costs normalized. The saved costs from housing are now spend on larger houses and on housing services – such as gardeners, cleaners, cooks and personal coaches for physical, mental and spiritual health.

14:45 You meet your client. You are a miner, both in the traditional and in the modern sense. With the advent of autonomous driving came a quick push towards the electrification of cars. The more a car drives, the more it needs to bring down its cost per kilometer and electric driving

was just the way to do that. The prices of several natural resources which are used to build car batteries have shot through the roof in the previous decade and your company has found a new way to correlate vegetation growth from satellite imagery with the resources needed. Business is booming.

19:15 You connect to play. You work hard and play hard with your virtual reality headset. When virtual reality started making real progress, entertainment companies initially tried to play movies on it, just like they had once tried to have performance plays on television. When they discovered that the inherent properties of virtual reality allowed for much deeper immersion, they knew that they had to adjust the entertainment accordingly. The results were amazing.