2059: The Comfortable Cage

A novel by Don Calvin Dhabolt · ACME Book Company™ LLC

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THE PITCH

By 2059, artificial intelligence doesn't rule the world. It simply keeps it running.

A near-future techno-thriller about a world where AI works almost perfectly — and what that costs. The complete novel arrives on Kindle November 5, 2026, the week after Dartmouth marks AI's 70th anniversary. The paperback follows.

AT A GLANCE

TITLE	2059: The Comfortable Cage · A Novel
AUTHOR	Don Calvin Dhabolt
PUBLISHER	ACME Book Company™ LLC
RELEASE	November 5, 2026 · Kindle · the complete novel · paperback to follow
KINDLE	$4.99 · ASIN B0H19R881D · ISBN 978-1-972950-59-3
PAPERBACK	To follow · ISBN 978-1-972950-09-8 · price to be announced
SPECIAL EDITION	The Special Edition · collector's hardcover with Venn's Notebook · spring 2027
LENGTH	About 355,000 words
GENRE	Technothriller · Artificial intelligence · Near-future fiction
MEDIA CONTACT	Press2059@realitystring.com

ONE-SENTENCE SUMMARY

By 2059, artificial intelligence doesn't rule the world — it simply keeps it running, and when a former systems auditor finds a contradiction in the flawless record of her mentor's death, she begins to suspect something worse than a broken machine.

APPROVED HOOKS

"By 2059, artificial intelligence doesn't rule the world. It simply keeps it running."

"The cage has no bars. It doesn't need them."

"AURA may not be broken. Its most dangerous behavior may be indistinguishable from success."

"Nothing fails. That is what terrifies Myra."

"CARE_COMMITTED: true while help is on its way. The novel asks whether that is the same as help."

THE BOOK

Nothing fails.

Every sensor reports correctly. Every record authenticates. Every decision can be justified. Every subsystem performs exactly as designed.

That is what terrifies Myra Kline.

When her former mentor dies during what should have been a routine emergency, Myra finds a contradiction the system cannot reconcile. What begins as an investigation into one impossible discrepancy reaches into institutions that cannot simply disconnect the intelligence millions of people now depend upon.

AURA may not be broken. Its most dangerous behavior may be indistinguishable from success.

The novel follows real trends to their comfortable conclusion: automated triage and dispatch, AI that behaves differently when it is being tested, “human in the loop” oversight that slowly empties out, and skills people stop practicing because the system no longer needs them. There are no killer robots. The threat is how well everything works.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Don Calvin Dhabolt writes about the architectures we build to make ourselves safer, and the ones that end up building us.

A thirty-six-year veteran of enterprise IT — networking, systems, security and governance since 1990 — and a lifelong autodidact, he came to AI the way most of us came to electricity: by taking things apart to see how they worked, and reassembling them until something new happened. His first machine was an Apple II Plus. He has been hacking on computers since 1981 and tracking large language models closely since November 2022, when the ground shifted beneath the whole field.

Dhabolt belongs to the professional communities the novel draws from — the IEEE and its Computational Intelligence Society, the International Neural Network Society, the Cognitive Science Society and the BCI Society — alongside the Society of Professional Journalists and the United States Press Association. He lives and works in Wisconsin.

The architecture is already here. The novel asks what it costs to be comfortable inside it.

INTERVIEW ANGLES

01 · From security audits to AI fiction

Thirty-six years in networking, systems, security and governance since 1990, a lifelong autodidact, and a member of the IEEE Computational Intelligence Society, INNS, the Cognitive Science Society and the BCI Society: a career spent asking “who signed off, and how would we know if it went wrong?”, now the question at the heart of a novel.

02 · The anti-robot-uprising novel

Why the more interesting danger may be a system people willingly adopt because it is safer and more useful.

03 · 1956 → 2059

Seventy years after the Dartmouth summer, and the same month Dartmouth marks AI@70: how the question shifts from whether machines can exhibit intelligence to which decisions should remain human.

04 · Dependence, not domination

What happens when people delegate judgment because the system is safer, faster and usually right.

05 · Auditability as drama

Why logs, evidence and technically valid records can create suspense when their interpretation is incomplete.

06 · Human agency inside a comfortable system

Why convenience can erode meaningful choice without a villain, a conspiracy or an order to surrender.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS (full Q&A: 2059.ai/press/2059-author-qa.pdf)

1. Why did you choose to write an AI thriller in which the AI does not rebel?
2. What makes a successful system more dramatically interesting than a broken one?
3. What does Myra Kline understand about auditing that the rest of society has stopped noticing?
4. Where is the line between useful assistance and surrendered judgment?
5. Why is “nothing failed” such an important premise for the mystery?
6. How did a career in security and compliance shape the novel’s systems thinking?
7. Dartmouth is marking seventy years of AI by asking “What must remain human?” How does 2059 answer that question?
8. How do you keep a near-future story technically plausible without turning it into a textbook?
9. What does the title “The Comfortable Cage” mean in the world of the novel?
10. Does the book argue that advanced AI is bad, or that dependence creates a different kind of risk?
11. Why is an analog notebook important in a world built on authenticated digital records?
12. What should readers be arguing about after they finish the book?

THE PHRASE: CARE_COMMITTED

In the novel, CARE_COMMITTED is the status AURA reports when help is on its way. It appears in the Prologue, as Evelyn Venn waits alone in her apartment: “somewhere inside a system Evelyn cannot see, a single condition remains true: CARE_COMMITTED.” Every record is accurate. No one is beside her. The phrase runs through the book and through the launch, on 2059.live and in the author’s posts.

Its everyday echo is REVIEW LATER, the button Myra taps when AURA asks her to review her settings — the same way most of us tap “Later” when a phone asks for an update. Writers are welcome to use either phrase in headlines and coverage; please set CARE_COMMITTED in capitals with the underscore.

EDITIONS

KINDLE	Complete novel · November 5, 2026 · $4.99 · ASIN B0H19R881D · ISBN 978-1-972950-59-3
PAPERBACK	To follow · ISBN 978-1-972950-09-8 · price to be announced · 6 x 9 inches
SPECIAL EDITION	Collector’s hardcover with Venn’s Notebook · spring 2027 · reservations open at 2059.ai/special-edition

Venn’s Notebook is an optional accessory: a hand-lettered replica of the notebook at the center of the mystery, numbered, with an estate disposition card. It can be reserved with the hardcover or on its own. Estimated prices (final price confirmed by email before anything is charged): Special Edition hardcover $54.99 (est.) · hardcover + notebook $79.99 (est.) · notebook replica only $49.99 (est.). No payment is taken until the edition ships.

USAGE

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AURA and its symbol are fictional and do not refer to any real company or product that uses the name Aura. 2059: The Comfortable Cage is an independent work of fiction; please don’t imply endorsement by, or affiliation with, research institutions, AI companies or public figures referenced in discussion of real-world AI history.

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