

THE FUTURE

Day in a student's life

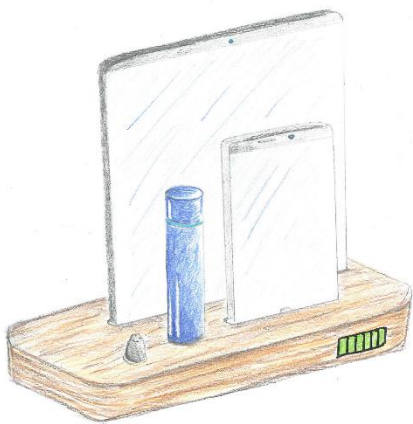
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Mozart's symphony pulls me away from my ideal world of dreams. The lights brighten gently, so not to hurt my eyes. A pale blue light that we've been told enhances our creativity and concentration, while keeping us calm. I try not to read too much into what they think is best for us.

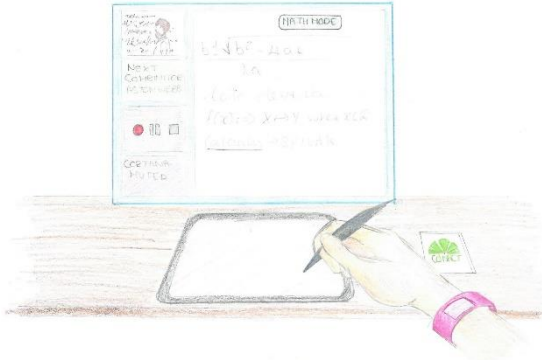
Like every morning there is a routine that has been planned for me down to the last second. I walk past the interactive wall where my meals for the day are displayed, as well as my time table and all the tasks I must do. Cortana greets me. I find it freaky that I can wake up and have a full-blown conversation with an AI that is personalised to my every need. I normally ignore her unless I need something.



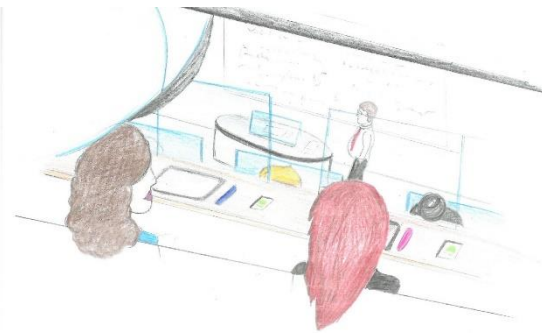
Just before I leave I pack my bag. I put my portable in my bag along with my scribe. I put my EP in, to hear Cortana telling me it is time to leave. Clipping my bag closed, I throw on my coat, as Cortana has told me it is 3 degrees outside. She's worse than my mum! Oops, forgot my phone. I hate when Cortana is better at being human than I am.

Cortana puts on my walking playlist. Nothing better than a bit of Smooth Jazz on a cold morning. Wish they still allowed Rock! All this calming music is enough to make me go crazy! But they know best.

Hmmm... Look at us. All these so-called humans, walking next to each other but none of us ever talk to one another. We are all stuck in our little isolated bubbles. Cortana in our ear controlling our day, our every move. I make it to class right on time.



I take my portable out and place it on the desk along with my scribe. I scan my bracelet on the desk and Cortana tells me I'm connected. Being connected means that there is a holographic screen that is extended from the projector in the desk. The cool thing about this is only I can see it. The connection in my bracelet triggers the chip which I was given at birth. This chip is part of my brain. It means that I can record my life, visually and audibly. It also means that my personal system, which is also displayed on the interactive wall in my room, is available wherever I can find a holographic projector. Which is pretty much everywhere. It's like when my parent took their laptops everywhere. Yikes, to think - lugging those heavy machines everywhere. They are like something from the stone age!

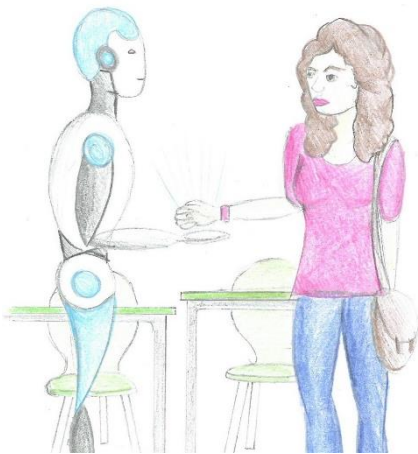


Being connected also means I can see the droid cam on my feed. The droid cam is a tiny silent machine that uses heat tracking to follow the lecturer around the class while he writes on the smart boards. Its good because there is no need for me to strain my eyes trying to read the boards at such a distance.

Being connected also means that I'm in the audio loop. So instead of the lecturer using a microphone, which are so unreliable, they talk into a clip. A clip is this little thing that clips round their neck. Some lectures have it in their necklaces or built into their shirts. It removes all disturbances and echoes so you can hear them as clearly if they were sitting next to you. Using the EP I can record all that he says. The EP is not a device in its own right, apart from allowing me to hear Cortana wherever I go. It is like a controller for my chip. By tapping the EP in my ear I can record, stop, pause and play any audio I like. I generally use it to play music and record the lectures. But it has some sentimental use too.

As today is a maths lecture I turn my portable from keyboard to jotter. This means I can use my scribe to write notes. These notes are shown on my feed, in front of me. At any point I can change to keyboard to type out sentences if I like. Everything I write is turned into a document and stored along with the recorded audio and visual presentation, along with any additional material the lecturer used.

Once the lecture is over, I turn my EP off and scan my bracelet. I hear Cortana tell me I'm disconnected.



I have 4 hours of lectures which will all follow the same pattern. I then have 3 hours of supervised study. And no, that's not human supervision. It is droid supervision. If we are not there to scan in at the allotted time, then it goes against our record. We must work when we are told. The university is intent that we follow their suggested study patterns, as that is what their studies have shown to be most effective. So after 3 hours of supervised study I have a seminar with a small group of other students and a lecturer. This seems to be one of the only hours that I get to talk to a human. These are good sessions. We all get up around a smart board and discuss problems that have been troubling us. I generally record these so I can recall others reasoning.

So, after an 8 hour day I am informed by Cortana that I have a 2 hour work out scheduled. These generally happen twice a week. They are designed to keep our stress hormones under control and keep our brains running at an optimal level. There are rumours that the chips in our head can measure the levels of different chemicals in our brain. Cortana then instructs us to do activities to balance those chemicals. I wouldn't be surprised if this were true.

When I eventually get home to have the pre-planned dinner I am exhausted. I sit in my kitchen eating another organic meal that is controlled in every way possible. Cortana has chosen one of Beethoven's symphonies to accompany my dinner. For once I am too tired to argue with her. So, I get ready for bed. Cortana recognises my routine and starts to replay the lectures on a frequency that gets into my head. I climb into bed and the lights dim slowly. I fall asleep to the sounds of the lecturers talking. I don't know when they stop talking or how many times they are repeated but they aren't there when I wake up in the morning.