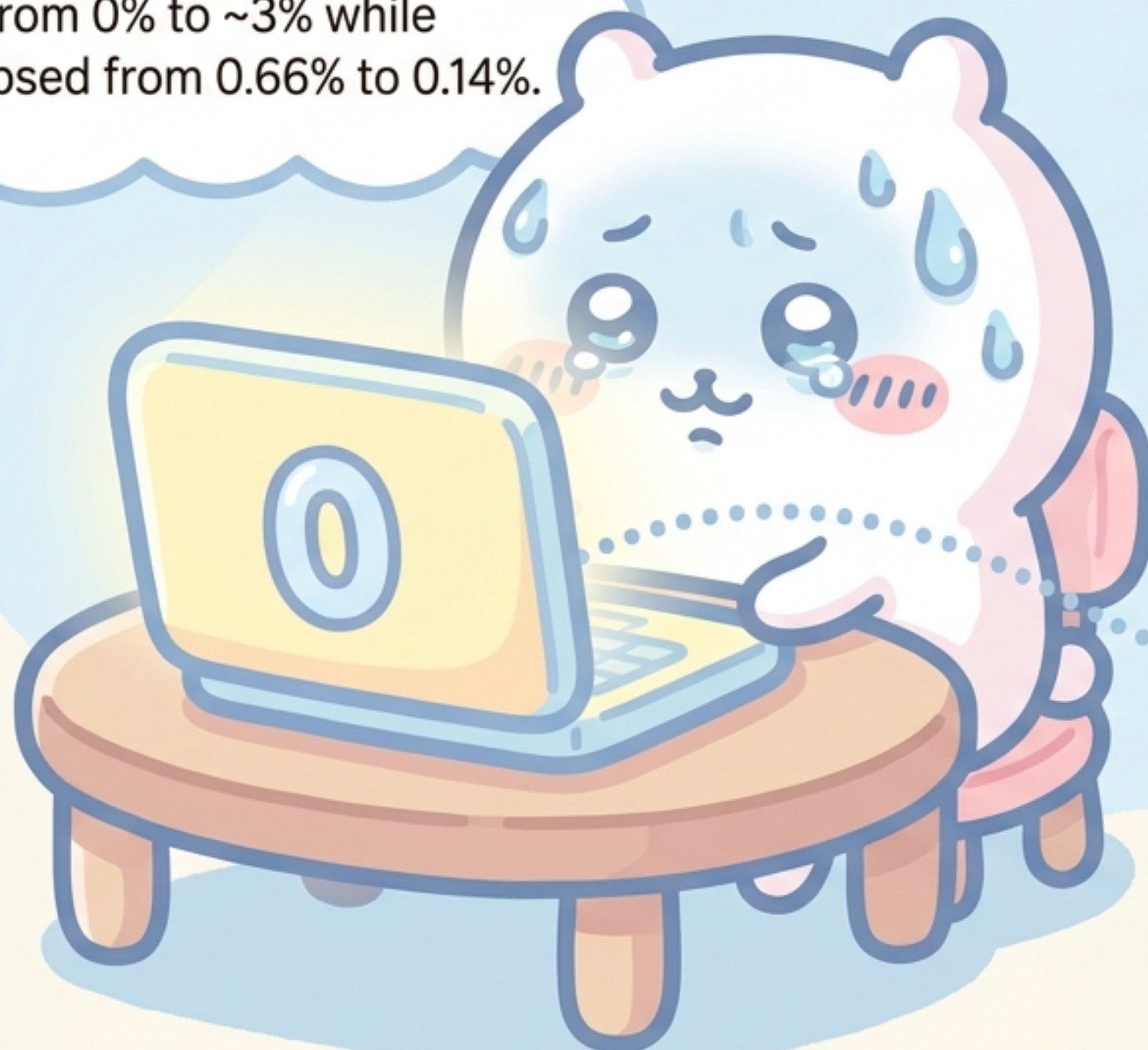


The Canary in the Coal Mine

Freelance displacement was the first validated prediction of the Intelligence Curse. Enterprise AI model spend rose from 0% to ~3% while freelance spend collapsed from 0.66% to 0.14%.



Direct AI Substitution (2024-2025)

- Translation (Ground Zero): Post-editing pays 25% of former rates; many translators dropped from 60 hours/week to zero requests.
- Writing Volume: Dropped by 30%.
- Dev Work: Dropped by 21%.

AI Vision



The “AI-Washing” Reality

- **Narrative > Tech:** Layoffs are driven by AI’s potential, not its actual performance.
- **Instant Regret:** 55% of employers who made AI-driven layoffs regret the decision.
- **AIRD:** 71% of workers fear permanent displacement, yet 30% have literally zero AI exposure.
- **Zero ROI:** 95% of AI investments have shown zero return so far.

The Real Curse is Psychological

Companies are performing “AI transformation” for investors, creating real economic damage before the technology is fully ready.



The Open Source Rebellion

Predictions of permanent "wealth lock-in" underestimated the physics of open-source. Intelligence has a falling marginal cost.

Shattering the Capital Moat

- **DeepSeek V4:** Trained for just \$5.6M (1/10th the cost of Meta's Llama), instantly erasing \$600B from Nvidia's market cap.
- **The Arcee Miracle:** A tiny team of 30 people built a 400B parameter model that matches Meta on industry benchmarks.

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A cute, white cat character wearing a blue graduation cap and gown is crying. It stands next to a wooden ladder that is broken at the bottom rungs. The background is a warm, orange-yellow sky with soft, white clouds.

The Entry-Level Collapse

The most devastating validated prediction: the bottom rungs of the career ladder aren't creaking—they are completely missing.

The Missing Rungs

- **-67%:** Drop in junior tech hiring (2023-2024).
- **-27.5%:** Drop in total US programmer employment over two years.
- **6.1%:** CS graduate unemployment rate.
- **76%:** Employers hiring equal or fewer entry-level workers than last year.

Result: Young people are abandoning CS degrees out of fear.

The Bifurcation & The Centaur Era

The future is a split between those who team up with AI and those replaced by the narrative. The Centaur Window—where Human+AI beats pure AI—is open now, but may be brief.

