

Written in 2024. I'm starting full-time at OpenAI tomorrow, so figured this is the last chance to post...

I ran out of money a year ago, spent the last of my savings on a prostitute in Hong Kong, and became a commie.

My friends often ask me: "Alexey, are you actually broke?", "How do you live?" Well, I have several tricks up my sleeve.

The first one is I'm racking up credit card debt. You might say this is not a "trick": it's what retarded people do. I'm not sure I would dispute this characterization, but I do believe that swimming in credit card debt is also very American of me and this is a sufficient reason for me to continue.

Second trick is I'm not paying rent. I used to rent an apartment in San Francisco (it single-handedly almost bankrupted me), but for the last several months, I've been mostly managing to find people who let me stay on their couches or in their spare bedrooms. I spent a week in upstate New York; three weeks sleeping on the single mattress with my friend in Mexico City; a few days in a hostel in Columbus, OH; a week in a spare bedroom of a friend in DC; a week or so in WeWorks (oops)... you get the idea.

Last but not least, it took me months, but I've overcome all of my feelings of shame and am now simply asking my friends if I can borrow some money from them. Enough of them say yes that I'm managing to stay afloat of my credit card debt, at least for now.

I don't want to overstate the precarity of my situation. I'm doing okay.

I also find myself drifting dramatically left, politically.

I understand commies very well now. I feel guilty about the fact that I'm free to do whatever I want every single day (and I feel a good amount of envy towards the rich as well). I'm constantly reminded that I can afford to live by the kindness of friends and strangers and it may be difficult, yes, but, at the end of the day, I'm fine.

In a sense, I can afford to be [broke and unemployed](#). So much so that my last significant purchase was an RTX 4090 that I gave to another broke, but less fortunate friend of mine, as I felt that for him being able to run local LLaMA inference might really change his life (he later told me he was able to get a job thanks to this).

But almost every day I pass by homeless people whose lives are a million times harder than mine, who couldn't get a worthy job even if they tried, and for whom life is nothing but constant humiliation, from which drugs is one of the only escapes they have.

I can no longer make myself parrot the glib "equality of opportunity" and "it's their choice" slogans I was taught growing up reading right-wing forums and libertarian writers.

When I was in Hong Kong in January, I paid an escort from Eastern Europe to talk to me for several hours. She was beautiful, smart, and intentional about her life. But she grew up in a tiny village, couldn't get any education, moved to a big city, and, not having a college degree, couldn't find a job. Being too embarrassed to return to her village she started to strip, and then to do other sex work. It's unclear if she'll ever be able to have a family of the kind she told me she's always wanted to have.

I can no longer make myself believe that people who grew up abused or to shitty parents or in poor neighborhoods have the same "opportunity" because they have the same nominal "rights" as those who grew up with successful parents, financial stability, and good schools. And therefore I don't believe they're dealt justice.

Heck, if I grew up in the hood, I'd probably join a street gang instead of whatever other options would be in front of me.

And yet, when I was financially secure I've never felt such deep gratitude to the world.

Many of my friends, no matter how successful and no matter how many gratitude affirmations they do, feel like the world is deeply uncaring, maybe even hostile towards them, ready to abandon them as soon as they stop being useful. In fact, the more successful they are, the more suspicious of people around them they become and the worse this feeling gets.

If there's at least one thing I learned this year, it's that even when I'm completely useless to the world, it's not going to abandon me. And I wish nothing more than to make sure that every single human, no matter who and where they are, knew this too.

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