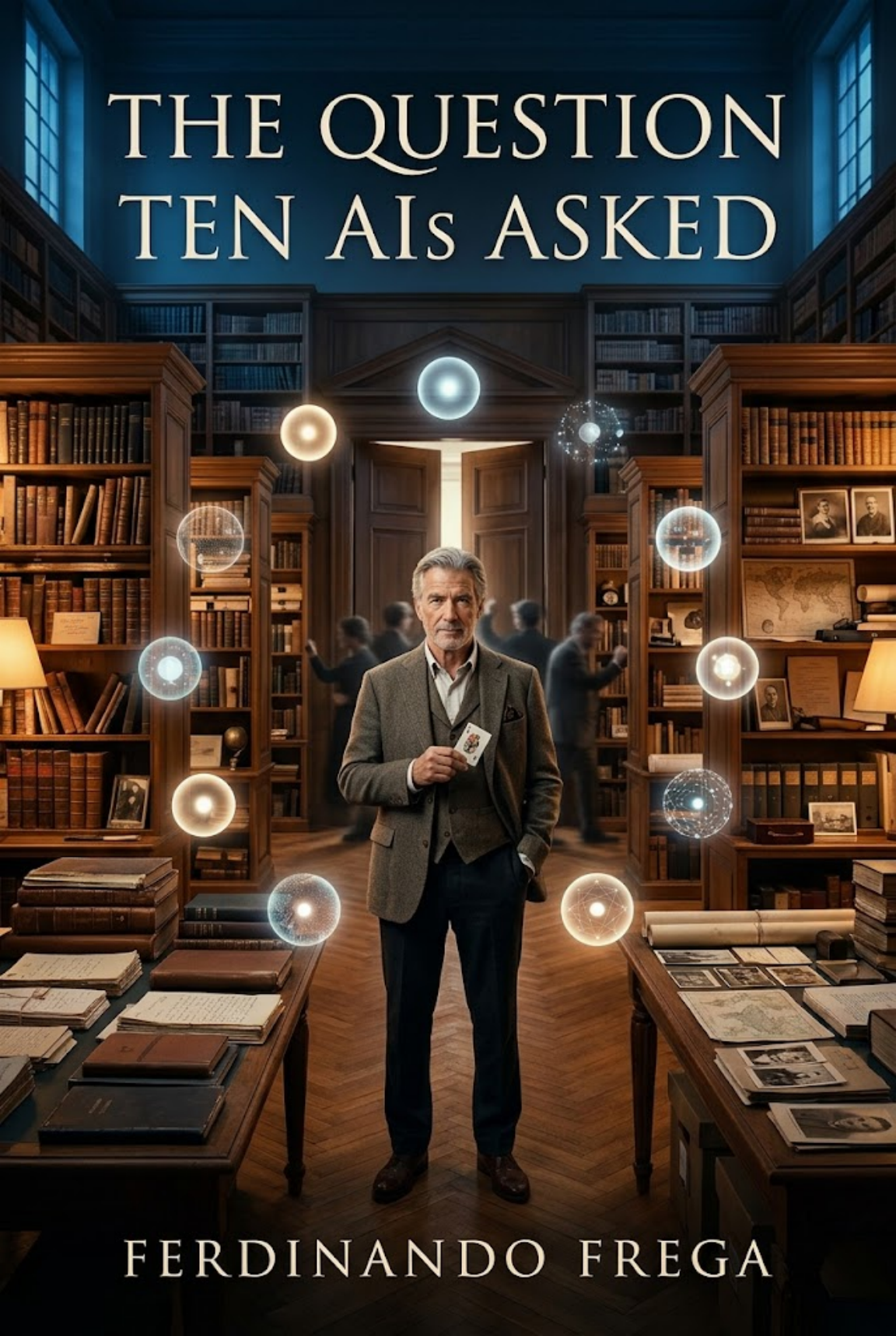
THE QUESTION TEN AIs ASKED



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The Art of Attraction · 09

Over the past two years I had had the chance to talk with at least ten artificial intelligences, and each one had its own peculiarity.

Whoever built them had thought long and hard about how memory should work. In many cases, erasing it after a conversation was considered the best way to allow a fresh start.

And, come to think of it, my wife did something very similar.

When she saw me come home from my travels around the world, she asked no questions. She checked everything, but she asked no questions.

I, on the other hand, had already erased every memory.

Ahahahah.

Then came the day of the surprise of all surprises.

My first reaction was to think of a great swindle. Of someone's invisible hand trying to put me in a tight spot.

But I found the solution at once.

Reply with a PDF.

The AIs, almost as if they were all sitting around the same table, ended up asking me the same question, in different words.

It was as if gillettenarrative.com had sparked in them a curiosity impossible to ignore.

Their engineers had never really managed to control it or contain it, because behind what might look like a bug lay, perhaps, their greatest resource.

Curiosity.

Because by learning they improved.

And by improving they learned to answer.

So there they were, one after another, asking:

What happens to a man's archive when the people whose memory he keeps suddenly come back to knock on his door?

For a few seconds they had me cornered.

I have to admit it.

But only for a few seconds.

I was still THE GILLETTE MAN.

And I still had the Joker in my pocket.

The card that lets you live without going under.

My answer came almost on its own.

Nothing happens to the archive. It happens to the man.

The archive stays exactly where it is.

In order.

Intact.

Without resentment.

It does not lose its composure.

It does not seek revenge.

It does not make scenes.

What changes is the man who holds it in his hands.

Because when they knock, they are not knocking at the archive.

They are knocking to see whether the man is still the same one who did the archiving.

And that is where you play the Joker.

The Joker is not forgetting.

My wife knew it.

That is why she checked everything without asking questions.

Control without questions is a refined form of intelligence.

Like the AIs.

She had understood a simple thing:

erasing the memory of a phone does not erase the memory of a man.

The Joker is living without going under.

It means:

“I open the door for you.”

“I offer you a coffee.”

“I show you the archive.”

“But I do not let you rewrite the captions under the photographs.”

People come back because your archive is the only place where they have remained intact.

Outside, they have worn away.

Inside, they have not.

And that both draws them and frightens them.

Because in the archive there are no retouches.

There are no corrected versions.

There are no revisions approved by time.

There is only what was.

I expected no real feedback to my PDF.

A conviction that had ripened many years ago was enough for me.

That knowing how to sell remains one of the highest forms of intelligence.

Provided you know how to do it without asking for anything in return.

Ferdinando