Your agents are shipping faster than you can understand them.

[WHAT MOVED, WHAT STAYED]

Engineers were the bottleneck. We wrote the code.

THEN	that moved to the agents.
WHAT'S LEFT	judgement. And judgement runs on understanding.

[THE REASON CHANGED]

Why still understand the code? Not for the reason you think.

OLD REASON

Verify

and this you can systematise now: loops, evals, deterministic checks. hand it to the machine.

THE REASON THAT'S LEFT

Participate

this you can't hand off. every cycle you understand, you put your taste in. that's what steers the loop.

[KEEP UP, DON'T OPT OUT]

Everyone's trying to get out of the loop.
I'm keeping up with it.

The loop doesn't stall without you. **It drifts.**

Keep up, and every cycle your insight, experience and intuition go into it. That's the input that steers it somewhere good.

[THE DEBT YOU CAN'T SEE]

Two kinds of debt. One of them hides until it's too late.

	LAST ERA Technical debt	THIS AI ERA Cognitive debt
LIVES IN	the code	your head, or no one's
COMES FROM	shortcuts, over-engineering	shipping what you didn't understand
VISIBLE?	yes, it's in the repo	no, until you must make a call
THE BILL	slower changes	no one knows how the app works

cognitive debt — Geoffrey Litt's term. it compounds quieter, and worse.

[YOU'VE FELT THIS]

Vibe-coded anything past a demo?

Then you've felt the early version of it: the day nobody on the team can say what's actually going on inside the app.

[ONE RULE I KEEP]

I don't ship, or hand off, anything AI-generated **until I can pass a quiz on it.**

Code especially. Sounds childish. **It's the most useful speed breaker I've got.**

[SAME MOVE, DIFFERENT SHAPES]

The stacks I grill with all do one thing: force friction.

Matt Pocock's skills	Garry Tan's gstack	Impeccable
grill-me wayfinder teach	office-hours review	design aesthetics

Slow you down, so you sit with the thing and reach shared understanding before anyone commits.

[AI IS THE BEST EXPLAINER WE'VE HAD]

My docs were a slog. So we turned the architecture into brain-rot clips.

Why that queue, why this service owns that table, decision by decision — the kind of short video you'd thumb past on reels.

Build whatever fits your team: **quizzes, simulations, interactive diagrams, micro-worlds, video pipelines.** As far as your creativity goes.

[FOUR LEVELS]

Every level up, understanding becomes shared understanding.

01 You understand it

02 You + your agent

03 You + your team

04 Your team + all their agents

Most teams stop at 01 or 02. The leverage is at 03 and 04.

Understanding is what judgement runs on.

Keep up with the loop, **and steer it.**