

Twitter Thread by Cory Doctorow #BLM



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@doctorow



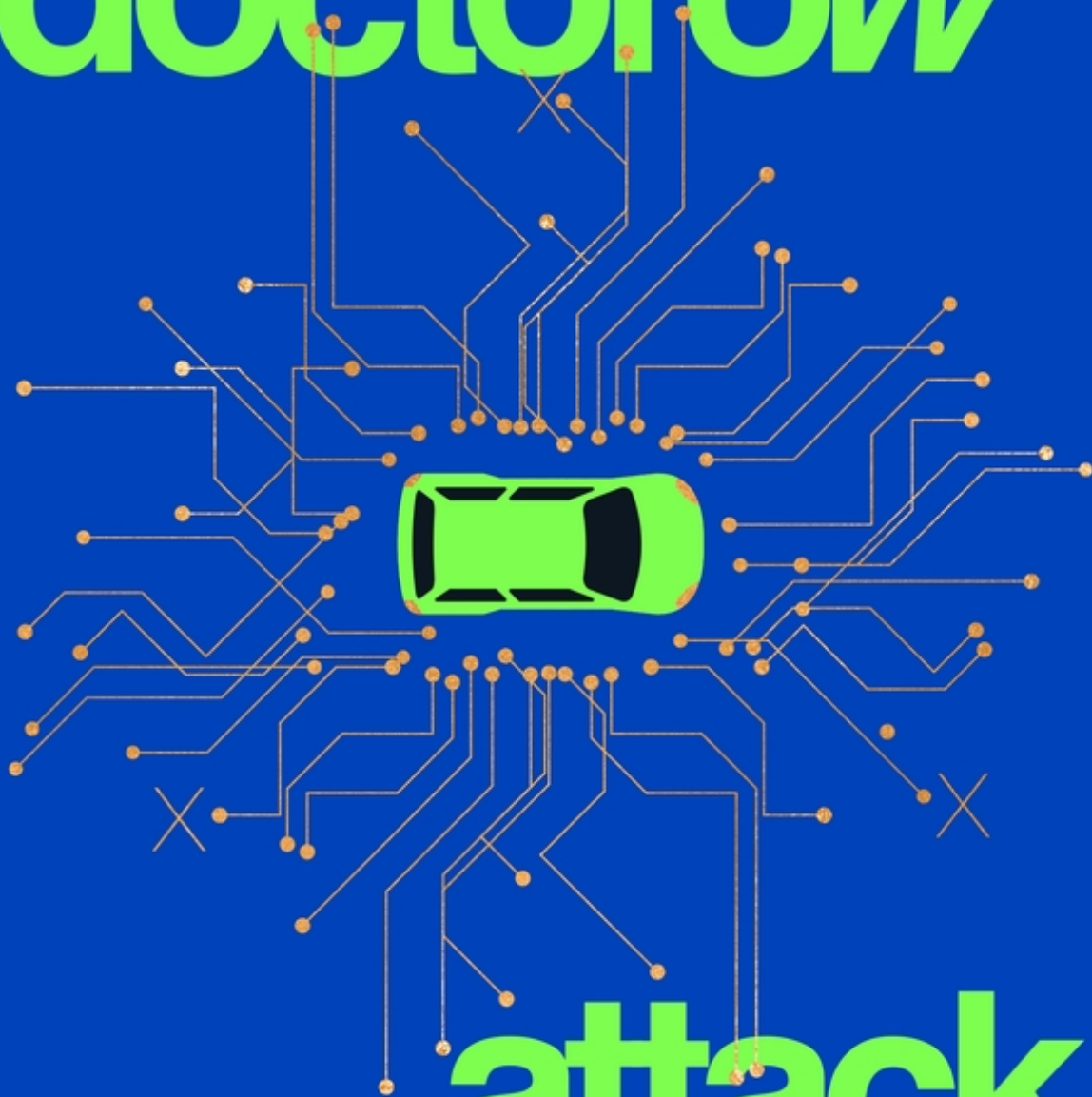
Well this is pretty terrific: @PavelAnni was so taken with my 2020 novel **ATTACK SURFACE** (the third Little Brother novel) that he's created "Mashapedia," a chapter-by-chapter breakdown of the real world technologies in the tale.

<https://t.co/Z2aLwF1Ez3>

1/

cory doctorow

New York Times
bestselling author



"One of the
internet's most
interesting
authors."
—Edward
Snowden

attack surface

The cost of security is everything you believe in.

Pavel is both comprehensive and comprehensible, with short definitions and links for the mundane (MIT Media Lab, EL wire, PGP) to the exotic (binary transparency, reverse shells, adversarial perturbation).

2/

When I was an adolescent, my friend group traded secret knowledge as a kind of social currency - tricks for getting free payphone calls, or doubling the capacity of a floppy disc, or calling the White House switchboard.

3/

I doted on books that promised more of the same: Paladin Press and Amok Catalog titles, Steal This Book, the Anarchist Cookbook, the Whole Earth Review and the Whole Earth Catalog.

4/

But when I sat down in 2006 to write the first Little Brother book, I realized that facts were now cheap - anything could be discovered with a single search. The thing in short supply now was search terms - knowing what to search FOR.

5/

As John Ciardi wrote,

The old crow is getting slow;
the young crow is not.
Of what the young crow does not know,
the old crow knows a lot.

The young crow flies above, below,
and rings around the slow old crow.
What does the fast young crow not know?
WHERE TO GO.

6/

So I set out to write a book of realistic scenarios, dramatizing what tech COULD do, on the assumption that readers would glean those all-important search-terms from the tale, and that this could launch them on a voyage of discovery.

7/

That's the ethic I've stuck with through all three novels and the short stories in the series. It seems to have worked. Anni's Mashapedia is the apotheosis of that plan: a comprehensive set of search terms masquerading as a glossary.

8/

Anni's hosted Mashapedia on Github, and you can amend, extend or contest his definitions by opening an issue in the repo. What a delight!

eof/