

Tech Inner Circle

Members' Handbook

6th Edition

THE
HELPFUL BOOK
COMPANY

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Welcome from the team

First of all, thanks for joining and welcome to our Tech Inner Circle!

You've done the right thing by joining. We think you'll find it useful and we really want to make using your PC, tablet or smartphone easier and less stressful for you. And to help you get the most out of your membership, we've written this little booklet to make sure you know all the things you get and how to use them.

It's only a *little* booklet – that way you don't have lots of instructions to wade through. But it covers the things people tend to ask about. If there's something else you want to know, just ask (see page 13 for how to get in touch).



*You need a short handbook,
not one like this...*

Feel free to get involved – if you see a question on the Clubroom (see page 5) that you know the answer to, go ahead and answer it. Or if you're just thinking, "I'd like to know that, too" – say so! Or even if you're just wondering, "I wonder what everyone thinks of such and such" – put up a question asking what everyone else thinks. If you're thinking about something, chances are some other members are too, so it all helps make the Inner Circle better for everyone else!

So, thanks again for joining and we hope you find it interesting, helpful and even, who knows, fun!

Yours

Mike ☺

Jess

Kathryn

Mike, Jess and Kathryn

Introducing the team...

"Hey, I'm Mike. You'll see me around the Inner Circle quite a bit, answering questions and writing Journal posts. When I'm not busy with the Inner Circle, you'll find me tinkering with various IT related things in the office.



I (shamefully) love chips, crisps, chocolate and coke. A friend of mine (a doctor so it must be true... right?) once told me that anything beginning with a C does *not* have calories in it...

I really enjoy walking in The Lakes or along a nice beach, or to anywhere that sells chips actually... I love taking photos and listening to the radio. And I always wear odd socks. Life's too short to pair socks..."

Mike ☺



"Hi I'm Jess, and I'm kept pretty busy here at The Helpful Book Company. I started out in Customer Services, but now I work as an editor, do a bit of book-keeping and I'm always on hand to help with the Inner Circle too!

In my spare time I love going on long walks with my two springer spaniels, Sam and Leeland. They love the beach so we try to get down there as much as possible. I also love going fishing, I've just recently been fishing to Bodo, Norway and it was incredible!"

Jess

"Hi, I'm Kathryn. I joined Helpful Books almost a year ago as an editor - those of you who've used our Smartphones Made Simple video course will have heard my voice on several of those videos - so hello again!



I've also worked as an English teaching assistant in France (never again), a tour guide, and a customer service rep on the electric goods returns desk at Tesco. So I'm used to dealing with misbehaving technology!

I'm a massive bookworm, a huge fan of the lindy hop and (when I get the chance!) love going bouldering out in the Lakes."

Kathryn

Here's how it all works...

The Inner Circle website is at:

www.TechInnerCircle.co.uk

...and that's the hub of it all. The different sections of the website are kind of like rooms in a club – you can watch videos in the Cinema, read articles and ebooks in the Library and ask questions or leave comments in the Clubroom. You can also read regular news and tips from the team in the Journal.

So, how do you use it?

To use a particular part of the Inner Circle, first go to www.TechInnerCircle.co.uk. The first bit you'll see is the Home page, where you'll find the most recent additions to the Journal, Library and Cinema.

If you're on a PC or large tablet, you'll see a set of options along the top of the screen, like this:



On a smartphone or small tablet, you'll need to tap on this little menu button to bring them up:



If you want to read one of our quick how-to guides or download an ebook, click or tap on “Library” to have a browse. We'll tell you more about the Library on page 9. Clicking on “Cinema” will take you to all the videos we've recorded for Inner Circle members – our regular monthly “Inner Circle TV” and some other bits and pieces – more about that on page 10.

To ask a question or read what other people are asking,

click on “The Clubroom”. And there’s also a “Member Help” section with some tips for if you get stuck or aren’t sure how to find something.

The first time you open an article, video or journal post on the website, it’ll ask you for the password. You will have been sent this in an email when you first joined and it’ll change every month – we’ll email you the new one each month, a few days before it changes. Just type that in where it asks and press enter.

By the way, it might remember the password for a while, so you won’t need to type it in every time. If you have any problems with the password, see page 14.

Here’s what you’ll find in each part:

The Journal

Here you’ll read recent thoughts and news from the team. It might be a tip that one of us has found out about a new piece of software, news of a particularly nasty virus to beware of, or a new article that we think you should read.



Here’s a picture of the Journal (after the password is typed in)

We update the journal often, so you can keep right up to date just by reading it.

You can also reply to posts here if you want to talk about something one of us has mentioned. But it's not the best place to ask general questions – for that you want...

The Clubroom

This is the place you can ask questions, answer them and make general comments.

So if you have a technical question, you can ask it here. You'll get an answer from one of us, depending on who's covering the Clubroom that day.

Other Inner Circle members can answer as well. If, for example, you want to ask what a particular make of printer is like, the more answers from different people who've used it, the better!

You can answer other people's questions here as well – or just say "That problem happened to me, too. I'm looking forward to hearing what to do about it!"

You can read questions other people have asked and the answers – several people have told me they'd had the same problem as someone else without even realising it.

The more detail you include in your question, the quicker it is for us to answer it for you. We like to make sure we have as much detail as possible so we can really get to the bottom of your problem and help you fix it.

By the way, there's a video in the "Member Help" section of the website, explaining how to use the Inner Circle – in particular The Clubroom. You might want to watch that before getting stuck in.

Here's what the Clubroom looks like:

This is how you post a new comment.

The Clubroom

Hello, this is The Clubroom. It's the place to ask us technical questions, see what other members have asked and if you want to, say "Me Too!" or chime in if you found a way to fix the problem. As ever, this is semi-public so please don't write anything here you wouldn't write on a public forum. We look forward to hearing from you. Many thanks. Mike, Jess & Kathryn

Ask us a Question

Got a technical question? Just fill in this little form for us, and we'll do our best to help you. To identify your problem (and more importantly, to work out how to fix it) we need to know exactly what we're working with – so the more detail you can give us, the better we can help you. Use the **big box** at the top to **describe your problem**, then type in your name and address underneath.

- At the bottom of the form, tell us **which device** you're struggling with (e.g. printer).
- And finally (if you can) let us know the **make and model** of your device. We have a [quick guide here](#) to help you figure it out.

If you've got a more general comment to make, that's great too – you can just use the bottom blank!

The name you enter will be displayed. We collect your email address but do not display it. See our [privacy policy here](#). Required fields are marked *

Comment

Name *

Email *

Save my name, email, and website in this browser for the next time I comment.
 Notify me via e-mail if anyone answers my comment.

Tell us which type of device you are struggling with (e.g. PC, tablet, smartphone, printer etc)

Do you know the Make & Model of your device?

Post Comment

Type your query in this box here. Make sure you include as much detail as you can so we can get to the bottom of your problem and hopefully help you sort it. (We'll ask a few questions about your device at the end of the form.)

Type your name in this box here.

Type your email address in this box. Don't worry, only Mike, Jess and Kathryn can see this – it won't be displayed publicly.

If you can, please let us know these details for the device you're struggling with here.

Then click here to post your comment to the Clubroom.

This is what the comments look like on the Clubroom:

The image shows a vertical thread of three comments in a grey-themed interface. Each comment is in a separate box with a header containing the user's name and a timestamp. The first comment is from 'Cartmell' (May 4, 2020 at 2:29 pm) with a placeholder icon. The second is from 'Mike' (May 4, 2020 at 4:32 pm) with a profile picture. The third is from 'Cartmell' (May 5, 2020 at 12:19 pm) with a placeholder icon. Each comment box has a circular reply button on the right. Annotations with arrows point to these buttons and the comment boxes, explaining their function and how replies are positioned.

Each comment (and any replies) go in a grey box like this.

Click here to reply to this comment... or here to reply to the reply.

This message is slightly to the right so you can see it's a reply to the original query, not a new question.

This comment has a photo of Mike, who it's from (the photo's called an "avatar"). This one has no photo - that member hasn't set up an "avatar" (yet). See the next page.

This one is even further to the right... it's a reply to the reply!

By the way, when you're replying to someone, it really is worth using the reply button (👤) on the right of their comment, rather than adding a whole new comment using the boxes above. It keeps questions and answers together so they're much easier for everyone to follow.

Emails from the Clubroom

Since we first set up the Inner Circle, we've made a couple of little changes to make the Clubroom a bit easier to use.

One that I wanted to mention is that whenever

someone replies to a comment or question you've left on the Clubroom, you'll get an automatic email to let you know. That way you don't have to keep checking back to see if there's a reply.

If you don't seem to be getting these emails, it could be that your computer thinks they're spam (junk emails) and is putting them in a spam or junk folder. We've written a help article about this in the "Member Help" section of the website - there are some things you can change that might help.

A slightly fancy feature – Avatars

You might have noticed that some of the comments on the Clubroom have a little photo of a person next to them, and others have a sort of pattern in different colours.

Techies call these "Avatars" and the idea is you can see at a glance who's replying to you - a bit like in some newspapers, where they have a little photo of the columnist.

We started it off so you could easily see where Mike or Jess (or whoever it was) had replied to a question... but if you'd like, you can have your own photo, too.

You don't need to. If you don't, it'll just put a little coloured pattern where the photo would go.

But if you want to, go to the "Member Help" section of the website and look for "Set Up Your Own Gravatar" (or search the Inner Circle for "gravatar" - more about searching on page 10). Follow the instructions and every time you put up a question or comment, it'll have a photo of you next to it.

Oh, and it doesn't have to be a photo of you. You might use a photo of your town or favourite car or whatever you like. (Though anyone looking suspiciously like George Clooney may not be believed...)

The Library – a good place to go if you're stuck

In this section you can read “Quick Guide” articles that Mike, Jess, Kathryn and the editors have written specifically for the Inner Circle. These aren't available anywhere else. We've filled them with plenty of detail (without getting into confusing technical stuff) and pictures of the screen where it helps to make it all nice and clear.

We keep these guides up to date and we add new articles here fairly often, so keep checking back.

The Library is a good place to start if you're stuck on your PC, tablet or smartphone. We just might have written an article about the very problem you're having!

You'll also find some ebooks in the Library. Some will be ones you can get elsewhere, but we've put them here so it's convenient for you.

Others aren't available anywhere else – they're only for Inner Circle Members. For example the 50 page ebook “Speed up your PC” is only for Inner Circle Members. No-one else can get it, no matter how much they pay. You can download the book and either print it out or read it online.

We'll be adding more ebooks here from time to time – but not as often as we'll add new videos or articles. We'll only write a new ebook when something needs explaining in a fair amount of detail. But when it does – this is where to come to get it.

The Cinema – when it's easier to see it happening

For some things it's better to watch it done. So we've recorded a few how-to videos specifically for the Inner Circle. They show you exactly how to do different things with your PC, tablet or other device and solve various problems that come up.

These videos range from 5 minutes to quarter of an hour or so. Make sure you've got your speakers turned up!

If the video plays OK but you'd like to make it bigger so you can see it more clearly, just double-click on the video itself and it'll resize to fill your screen. We'd definitely recommend this way of doing it - it's much easier to see what's going on. When it's finished you can simply press the Esc key on your keyboard to get back to normal.

Inner Circle TV

In the Cinema, as well as how-to videos, you'll find episodes of what we're calling "Inner Circle TV". These are like video versions of Journal posts - it's just us talking about something technology related that's been in the news recently.

We've talked about all sorts of things - from the new iPhone X, to password security, to the Amazon Echo.

They tend to be a bit longer than our "how-to" videos - 20 or 30 minutes per episode.

Don't worry that you have to use everything

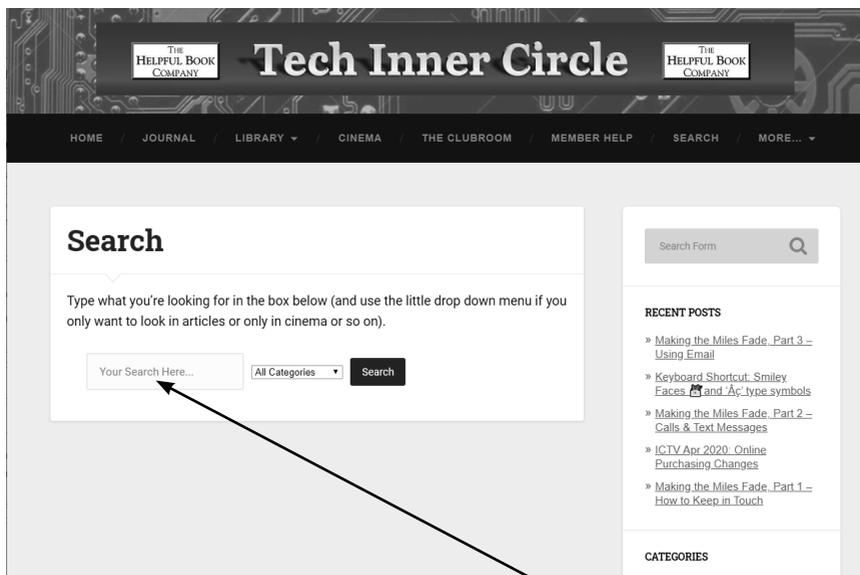
Phew - it already sounds like there's quite a lot. But don't feel you have to use every last thing on the Inner Circle website.

The idea is that you find the articles, videos and so on that are useful to you. And as we add more, you can pick out the bits you want to use. You don't have to read it all - certainly not right away.

One more thing... "Search" the Inner Circle

If there's something particular you want to find out about (for example anti-virus software) and you don't mind whether it's a how-to article, a video or an ebook, you can search for it.

Click or tap at the top of the screen where it says “Search the Inner Circle” to bring up a page like this:



Type what you’re looking for into the search box and press the enter key on your keyboard. It’ll search the whole site for it and give you a list of what it finds. Click on the one that sounds most useful and it’ll take you straight there.

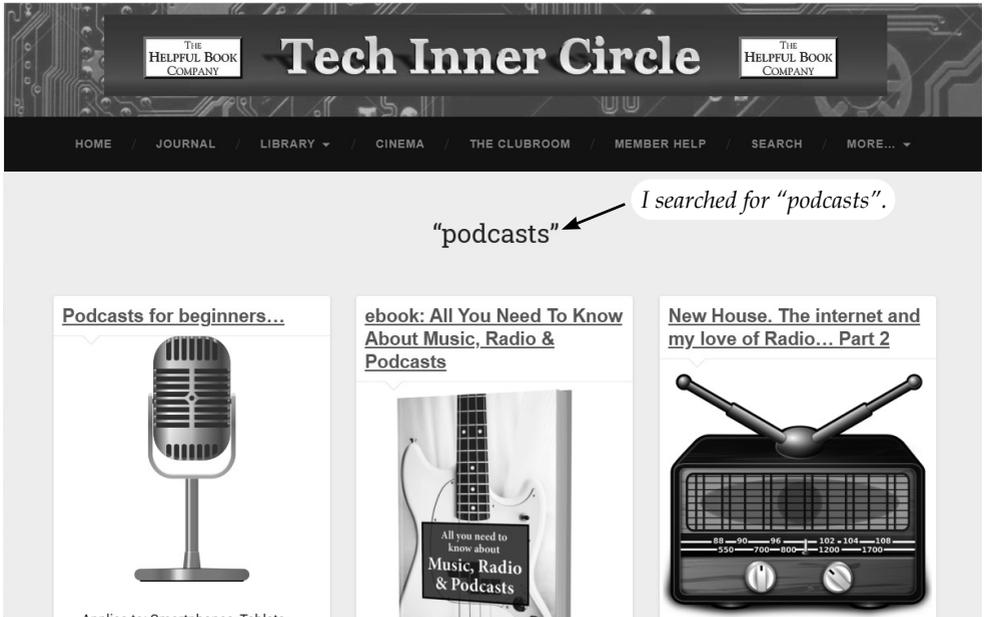
So it searches the articles we’ve written, the descriptions of videos and ebooks, and Journal posts... then it shows you what it’s found.

It’s particularly useful when you’re stuck with some PC or tablet problem. Rather than having to wait for an answer to your question on the Clubroom, there might already be an answer to the very problem you’re having. (Not that we mind you asking about it, you just might be able to save yourself the wait!)

Like most internet searches, though, it searches for exactly what you type in. So if you search for *printer problems* it won’t find an article about *printing problems*

(unless the article also has the words “printer problems” in it). So if you don’t find what you’re after, it can be worth rewording it to see if it’s there, but under a slightly different title.

Here’s what the results screen looks like:



It lists the most relevant results at the top, but it’ll usually find several pages worth of articles to browse through.

You’ve probably noticed that we haven’t mentioned the Clubroom in this search bit. That’s because (for now) there’s no way to search comments on articles or in the Clubroom. We’re really hoping to get a full comment search up and running very soon.

Right that’s it – time to get stuck in

Have a go at the different parts of the website. If you get stuck, you can always come back and have another read of this handbook.

Want to ask a question or get in touch?

If you want to ask a technical question, the best way is to put it on the Clubroom. Between us, we check that every working day, so it's the quickest way to get an answer. It also means the questions & answers are there for everyone to see – good if anyone has the same problem.

But for some things you might not want to use the Clubroom. For example if you've changed your email address and need to let us know, you might not want to put the new one up there for everyone to see (though all our members are very nice and wouldn't do anything dodgy with it!)

The best way is probably to email us at queries@techinnercircle.co.uk. Between us we make sure that email address is checked each working day, even if one of us is not in the office.

We're not really set up to give technical help over the phone but if you need to ring up about anything to do with your membership (for example if the credit card you joined with is now out of date) you can ring us on 01229 777606 – Emma, Jade or Alicia are the best people to talk to about your Inner Circle membership, payments, passwords and so on.

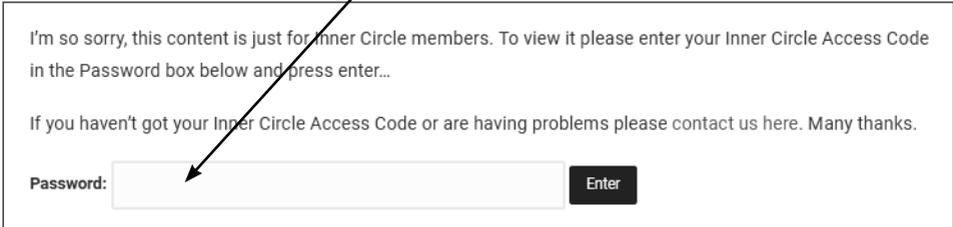
Or if you like, you can write to us at The Helpful Book Company, 13B Devonshire Road Estate, Millom, Cumbria LA18 4JS. Nothing wrong with good old pen and paper!

The passwords and how they work

The Inner Circle is all kept private to you and the other members by a password. Every month the new password

will be emailed to you, a few days before it changes. Once it's changed, and you go onto the Inner Circle website, you'll be asked to type in the new password.

You type it in here:

A screenshot of a web form for password entry. At the top, it says "I'm so sorry, this content is just for Inner Circle members. To view it please enter your Inner Circle Access Code in the Password box below and press enter...". Below that, it says "If you haven't got your Inner Circle Access Code or are having problems please contact us here. Many thanks." The form has a "Password:" label on the left, a text input box in the middle, and a black "Enter" button on the right. A black arrow points from the text "You type it in here:" above to the text input box.

Sometimes it'll remember that you know it, so you might not have to type it in again every time, but it's a good idea to keep the password somewhere safe each month.

If you have trouble with the password...

Three things to check:

First, make sure you have the most up-to-date password – it changes every month, on the 1st (unless that's a weekend, in which case it's the next working day).

Secondly, make sure your web browser is set up to allow cookies - your computer uses a cookie to “remember” that you've just got the password right (more help on this on the next page).

Thirdly, make sure you aren't using any capitals and that caps lock is turned off (tap it again and see if the caps lock light turns on or off – you want it off). You also need to type the password in with no spaces and no full stop after it.

A bit more help on number 1

We send out the new password by email a few days before it changes over. If you can't find the password, have a look to see if you have a spam or junk folder - the email might have ended up in there. If you can't find it, just email

us at queries@techinnercircle.co.uk and we'll send it again. Or give us a call and we'll give you the password over the phone if it's urgent.

Sometimes, the company you get your email from might think the password is spam and not let it through. Even if you can't see a junk or spam folder, there is probably one that you can only access through webmail.

If you're not sure about all this, the best thing to do is 1) email us for the password and then 2) when you get it, go to the "Help Receiving Emails" article in the "Member Help" section - it'll tell you how to add the email address the password comes from to your webmail address book, which should help it get through in the future.

A bit more help on number 2

For more on cookies and how to make your PC allow them, read the article called "Allowing Cookies" on the "Member Help" section of the website.

(We've made sure that none of the Help content is "password protected" so you can still get to it if you're having trouble.)

If you type the password in and it doesn't say it's wrong but just takes you straight back to the screen where you type it in, chances are that your web browser isn't set up to allow cookies.

One more important thing...

Oh, don't forget, you need to keep us up to date with any changes to your email address, so we can send you the new password each month!

Just email queries@techinnercircle.co.uk with any changes... or if you prefer ring 01229 777606 and talk to Emma, Jade or Alicia.

A Few Questions People Sometimes Ask

Do I need to print everything out for later?

No, you don't have to. Some people like to read articles on paper instead of on screen, which is fine if you prefer it. But the ebooks, articles and quick guides in the Library will be there permanently, so as long as you're a member, you'll be able to access them. The same goes for the videos in the Cinema and Clubroom questions and answers.

What if I change my email address?

Best let us know so we can make sure we send the monthly password to the right email. The easiest way is to send it to queries@techinnercircle.co.uk - or you can ring 01229 777606 if you'd prefer to talk to Emma, Jade or Alicia!

My card details have changed, what should I do

If you have a monthly membership (most people do), we'll need the new details to take your subscription. It's not a good idea to email the new details, just in case someone hacks into your email (it doesn't happen very often at all but it's possible). Best ring 01229 777606 instead and we'll sort it over the phone.

What if I decide to leave, how do I go about it?

Just let us know - email, call or write to us. Don't worry, we won't make it hard, as soon as you let us know, we'll sort it all out for you.

I'm having trouble with the password - help!

See pages 14-15 - there's lots of help there!

I put up a question on the Clubroom a while ago and want to have another look at the answer – how can I find it again?

The easiest way is to dig out the email we sent you when one of us replied to your comment. There'll be a link in the email that takes you straight to your comment in the Clubroom.

If you haven't got the email any more, or you can't find it, you can leave us a comment on the Clubroom or email us and we'll find it for you.

Legal bit:

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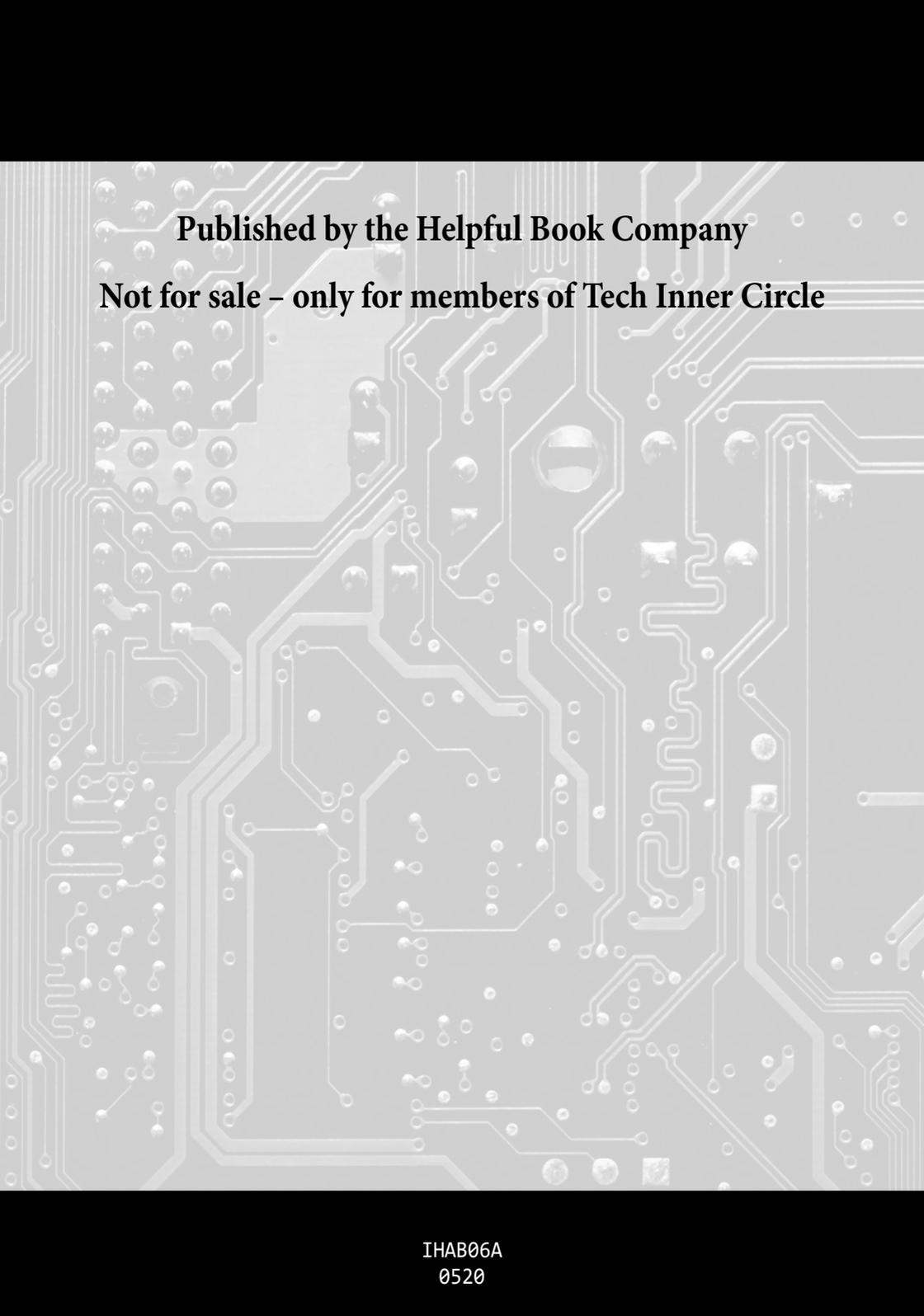
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