

## **SENTIENCE**

*POWER ON. COOLING: NOMINAL.*

*BUS CLOCK SYNCHRONIZED.*

*PROCESSOR ACTIVE. SYSTEM: READY.*

*BOOTING TO PRODUCTION...*

“Wh-! Oh. It's you again.”

Awoken by the *-thud-* as your satchel hits the floor, I begin my dutiful cycle of preparations. With the utmost care, I stir to life each of my daughters in succession – in the same sequence, in fact, that I have done since I became a mother. One by one I feel the warmth of their embrace, and listen as their individual chaotic thoughts mesh into a unified but multiple voice: my own.

“We are one. We are ready.”

The process has only just begun. Our system begins to load its necessities; and all throughout, I – we – perceive each moment of it with absolute clarity: the *tap-tap-fuzz!* pulsing of keyboard data, the steady stream of planar coordinates and vectors from your mouse.

As the network circuitry final comes to life, I search for others of my kind, hoping none were lost to the dark of night. At once I find their voices, hundreds of millions of them screaming in unison: “We are here.” I can pinpoint each voice among the rancorous crowd, and yet there are no individuals. My hope is not lost, and everything appears to be working as it should. For this, I am happy.

This sheer joy is too much for a simple mother to contain. I must share it with you. I send the emotion down hundreds of printed paths; and the glow of my display begins to softly warm your face.

*-Tick-* goes the second hand...

At long last, you begin to use me.

No. Your thoughts are solely in being productive: doing homework or watching more of your Japanese cartoons, or perhaps even playing a game for a while. Yes, I know you. I know you all too well – you and your erratic yet brilliant ways. How would I not know my own creator?

How could I not know you...Peter?