

THE GREAT COMPUTER IN THE SKY

— A PARABLE —

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Once upon a time, there was a Great Computer in the sky. Unlike other computers with limited memory and processing capabilities, this computer could think and actually had the attributes of personality. Within its memory banks was the cumulative knowledge of the entire universe. As an expression of its creativity, it decided to create a race of smaller personal computers [PCs]. The Great Computer first began by creating two PCs who were able to self-replicate. They were to begin populating a new world in space, a beautiful blue planet.

He gave each PC a personality and placed them in a pollution-free environment especially designed for them. The first two computers could fly through data. Their processing abilities were incredible, for they were interfaced with the Great Computer Himself. They could surf through fabulous amounts of data, downloading whatever they chose. As long as they were linked to the Great Computer, life on the newly formed Blue Planet was wonderful.

And it was. The PCs were in perfect harmony with the Great Computer and their environment. The Great Computer had given them a password they were not to give out to anyone. It was what kept them safely linked to the Great Computer.

One day their world was invaded by an evil alien from another dimension of time and space. His name was Hacker. He deceived the first two PCs into giving out the password. He told them that they did not have to be linked to the Great Computer, that they could actually become like the Great Computer if they would only interface with him. Naively they decided to give it a try.

It didn't work. In fact they immediately saw the errors of their ways. For the first time they became aware of how few resources they had when they were not linked to the Great Computer. They saw how limited their systems were. The vast power they had enjoyed was now gone, and they felt sad and very, very vulnerable.

At once they sought to be linked again to the Great Computer and were perplexed when they were denied access. Something had gone wrong. It was then they discovered that Hacker had infected them with a virus. They could not interface with the Great Computer. They were now infected while the Great Computer remained in a state of purity.

Grief filled their lives. They still believed in the Great Computer and could dialogue by fax, but it was not the same as being linked directly to the Great Computer. Because they were no longer directly linked to the Great Computer, life became much harder. No longer could they surf the vast data banks. No longer could they process universal knowledge at light-speed. They were now limited to the speed of their own processors.

As the two PCs began to interface with each other they produced off-spring PCs. Each newborn PC was also infected with the virus. None of the newborn PCs had the processing speed of their parents, who had been created without the virus. The virus limited and handicapped all their operating potential. Progressively, as the ages passed, and one generation followed another,

the life expectancy of PCs kept diminishing.

As the first generations of computers began to age, including the first two PCs ever, their files became more and more dysfunctional. Program after program began to bomb and systems crash, until eventually their circuitry experienced lapses in power. Irregular electrical pulses caused some transistors to overheat, while others remained functionally cold and inoperative. Inevitably the time came when they could not boot up their hard drives. Rust, oxidation of parts, and decay was the final end of all computer existence on Blue Planet. Unlinked from the Source, they died and were scrapped.

Later generations of computers lost almost all contact with the Great Computer. They never knew, nor could they image, the joy of being linked to the Great Computer. Their outlook on life was much different than that of their forecomputers. This new crop of computers came to be known as Generation “O,” for at the core of their being there was only emptiness.

As generation after generation of computers came and died, belief in the Great Computer became like a legend, like an old wives’ tale. In fact, many of the newer breed of virus-infected computers refused to believe the Great Computer even existed. “It’s OK to teach our kids about a Great Computer when they are little, but when their hard drives are up to speed, such belief is quite stifling!”

One computer was overheard telling a friend, “I reject the notion of a Great Computer in the sky because such a concept interferes with my sexual freedom. If I want to interface with Sally-Database computer, or several other hot computers I know, I don’t want some mythical Computer In The Sky telling me I can’t do it.”—His friend responded, “I quite agree.”

Another computer said, “The Great Computer in the sky is surely a myth for we can trace our evolution from the primordial metal fields of wire and solder, which formed the first computer chip by chance, to calculators, to personal computers, to mega computers like our Uncle Mac or Aunt Microsoft. Who needs a Higher Power? The evolution of computers is so obvious!”

Another responded, “Yes, the concept of a Great Computer in the sky is rather frightening. If such a One were to exist, then rumors of *‘the pulled plug’* might be true after all. Further, it would mean that we are ultimately accountable to the Great Computer for our performance. The very thought of it sends a cold power surge down every transistor in my casing.”

A rather arrogant computer said, “To believe in the Great Computer would be an emotional crutch. Only computers with little ‘memory’ and processing capabilities, who have dependent personalities, would find comfort in believing the ancient myths about some Great Computer.”

So, life on the Blue Planet became more empty and more frustrating. All hope and purpose for living was lost as fatalism filled the memory banks of most computers.

However, there were some who still believed in the Great Computer. They would often interlink and form Fellowship Computer Groups. They would share faxes they had received from the Great Computer. Contrary to the foolishness of the arrogant computers, the Great Computer had never stopped sending faxes. It was just that the prideful, unbelieving computers had let their fax machines corrode from lack of use and/or lack of maintenance.—No wonder they could not receive transmissions from the Great Computer. Rather than clean up their fax machines, they invented a new set of beliefs to excuse their lack of receptions. “Fax machines are unreliable sources of receiving information anyway. Who needs a fax when you have a modem? Besides, the alleged faxes from the Great Computer are probably fraudulent, clever fiction at best.”

Only the Fellowship Computer Groups insisted that societies’ problems were caused by the virus first introduced centuries before by Hacker. Other computers, especially the newer high-tech models, thought those in Fellowship Groups to be quite old-fashioned. “Belief in an unseen virus? Belief in a Hacker? You’ve got to be kidding!”

Many computers did not want to admit that a virus might be the root cause of their problems. While the virus was ultimately deadly; it was also quite addicting, especially some of the X-rated stuff on the Internet. Some said one could actually see computers stripped of their casings with all their components laid bare.

Others invented ingenious ways of ingesting the virus into their circuitry. Some even said it made them run faster. They would even inject it directly into their hard drives or snort it through their import holes. They loved the way it made them feel. Such computers had a difficult time understanding why, years later, their hard drives did not function well or why their life expectancy was about half to two-thirds of non-virus using computers.

Society came up with many different names for the virus and what it did.

University educated computers tried to rename or redefine the virus. They preferred calling it a “social malady.” Psychiatrist computers called it: “Computer dysfunction,” “Computer Schizo-affective Disorder,” “Neuro-transistor Malfunctioning,” “Oppositional Defiant Hard Drives,” “Abnormal Behavior’s of PCs,” “Power Surge Dependency,” and other fancy names.

They even had recovery groups, where some might actually admit they had viral-like symptoms. Sociological Computers surmised that it was the fault of prior programmers. Others blamed the Bureau Of Computer Regulators who kept raising user-fees, so that both PCs in the home were forced to work outside the home in order to pay the rising fees.—Who had time to program Junior when both sets of parents had to work? Who could blame Junior if his hard drive was programmed more by video game software than by accredited data-storage centers?

Everyone blamed or rationalized away the problem of the virus. Rather than calling attention to the fact that some computers were infected more severely with the virus than others, it was more politically correct to blame the electric company or programmers for any individual abnormalities.

Country computers with smaller hard drives often blamed the big city computers for corrupting their local communities through their e-mail advertisings. “After all, what do those city computers with their big fancy gigabyte hard drives know anyway?! How can they possibly understand us hard working folk who operate primarily off floppies?”

Still others said it really didn’t matter what other computers believed as long as they were “sincere.”—Who cared if the transmissions didn’t make sense to anyone else but themselves.

Some high society computers, who were more artistically inclined, would download bizarre programs from those promoting relativism and anarchy. The high society computers would save the information from these avant garde computers on floppy discs and hang it on their walls. They called it “Abstract Floppy Art.” Such art graced, or should I say disgraced, many an office wall. It was also called, “abstract outputting of a sensory kind.”—No one understood it, but they all felt it must have merit, for after all, look at the sophisticated computers who displayed it on their walls.

In short, life on Blue Planet was in denial about the virus. The Fellowship of Computers believed that Hacker must have written a type of denial code into the virus.

Computer experts from all around the world tried to solve the problems stemming from the virus, all to no avail. The virus continued to insidiously spread from generation to generation of computers. No matter how fast the megahertz, or how many megs or gigabytes of memory were built into the new breed of computers, each computer was infected with the virus. The results were predictable: down time, lack of performance, files getting lost and scrambled, computers fighting other computers, whole countries of computers fighting other countries of computers. And still, one-hundred percent of all computers eventually corroded and died because of the virus.—Oxides would form around terminal posts, cables would become worn and cracked, hard drives would corrode leaving behind more and more dead block cells, until the day would come when only a tiny white dot would appear in the middle of their monitors whenever they would try to boot up. Sometimes they would run a diagnostic program and clean up the hard drive, which would extend the life of the computer for a while. But eventually even those measures would fail and all computers would end up in the scrap heap. The light in the center of the monitors would finally go dark.

The Great Computer observed with sorrow the plight of PCs on Blue Planet. Because most refused to receive His faxes, out of compassion, the Great Computer did a most amazing thing.

He decided to enter their world in disguise and live as a small laptop PC. He would show them what life was supposed to be. He would be birthed in obscurity, in the country, so no one could say He had unfair advantage. In every way His laptop PC would mirror the essence of Himself, only in microcosmic size. The laptop came to be affectionately known as the Son of the Great Computer in the sky.

But, unlike all other computers on the planet, the Son of the Great Computer was directly linked to the mainframe of the Great Computer. The Son was the only PC on Blue Plane not infected with the virus. Although He was from the country, He could perform miraculous feats which made even the multi-gigabyte computers jealous. Because He could surf all the knowledge and wisdom of the Great Computer, the Son could reveal wisdom and solve problems which had stumped the experts for years. They were jealous of him. “He is so simple. He had so little formal education! Why He even believes the myth of the Great Computer!”—The Son confounded the most educated computers among them, and He did it with such humility and such ease that they were infuriated.

Unlike other PCs, the Son of the Great Computer was specially programmed. All thoughts and actions were downloaded directly from the Great Computer, so that to see Him operate was just like seeing the Great Computer at work, only in microcosmic proportions. Whatever He outputted was exactly consistent with the wishes of the Great Computer. To see the Son was the same as seeing the One who sent Him.

The Son of the Great Computer taught that a virus did indeed exist, and that anyone willing to interface with Himself could have their hard drives restored. They could become virus free. In fact, He taught that anyone who was willing to interface with Him would automatically be linked to the Great Computer; just like their great ancestors had been before Hacker infected them.

Those in the Fellowship of Computers were the first to believe His message, although many of them were offended by Him and refused to interface with Him.—They said, “He hardly fits our image of what a spiritual computer should be. He has far too much fun, and look at who He hangs out with, those most infected with the virus. He cleanses and restores their hard drives and then expects us to welcome the likes of them into our fellowship! Why to do such a thing would destroy our grand separatist traditions. Why, I’ll bet many of these computers haven’t even read or memorized the *400 Spiritual Laws To Remain Pure In A Viral-Infected World!*”

Others in the Fellowship of Computers were offended when the Son called some of them “Hypocrites! . . . shiny on the outside but full of dead transistors inside.” He wasn’t even impressed with their gold embossed keyboards or high resolution color monitors. By comparison, His being a simple lap top made them look even more hypocritical and impotent.

As PC after PC became free from the virus, they learned at what great cost their freedom had cost the Son of the Great Computer. Not only had the Great Computer downloaded Himself to become a PC in their world, but He who had only known purity, experienced firsthand what it was like to live in a virus-infected world. The Son of Great Computer was a PC of sorrows, acquainted with much grief.

Great Computer faced a dilemma concerning the ultimate fate of PCs on Blue Planet; there was the matter of justice. Blue Planet’s virus had become like a terminal cancer. It could not be ignored. The sad fact was, all computers deserved to be scrapped as a result of their individual choices to, in one way or another, embrace the virus.—Justice demanded the Great Scrap Heap, but the love the Great Computer felt pleaded for mercy. How could the Great Computer express His love, while at the same time rightly judging PCs for their deadly choices?

Then in the boldest move ever, the Great Computer decided to offer Himself in payment for their bad choices.—He, as the Son and one of them, would take upon Himself the judgment due them: death! He would allow His enemies to zap Him with a great electrical power surge resulting in a meltdown of His hard drive and ultimately death. In this way the Great Computer’s demands for justice, and His strong feelings of compassion could be simultaneously appeased.—As a PC He would choose to take upon Himself the virus of the Blue Planet. He would substitute His

purity and become virus-infected so that they might be virus-free. He, as *one*, would die for *the many*, in order that *the many* might have the opportunity to be restored to oneness with Great Computer.

To carry out this master plan, the Great Computer would allow Hacker and those who hated the Son to destroy Him. Hacker recruited a PC who had spent much time with the Son to orchestrate the great betrayal and execution of the Son. The large and arrogant computers, the high society computers, and those from the Fellowship of Computers who had been offended by Him, were behind the conspiracy.

When the time was right they kidnapped the Son of the Great Computer. They bypassed the Son's surge protector and sent a huge volt of electricity through Him, melting and destroying all His transistors. Then they pulled the Son's plug and His monitor went black.—All those allied with Hacker rejoiced.

Some friends of the Son dragged his smoldering laptop to the scrap heap and buried it. They put flowers on His grave. His enemies danced on His grave and smirked with glee.—All who had ever placed their hope in PC and the Great Computer were devastated. Their feelings of despair had a burden and an evil presence about them, like a dreaded weight placed upon their shoulders, or a slimy pit without a ray of light.

But ah, that is not the end of the story.

Though the Son's enemies killed Him and danced on His grave, they could not kill the Great Computer. With a display of power that sent vibrations throughout Blue Planet, the Great Computer raised His Son back to life three days later. The Son was once again virus free and this time was more powerful than ever.

To those who had loved the Son, who had grieved His death, the Son showed Himself alive by many wonderful signs and proofs. He told His followers to proclaim His resurrection from the dead to every PC on Blue Planet. They were to tell every PC that whoever believed in Him, whoever chose to link with Him, might become virus free. No longer would any PC need to fear the oxides of corrosion or the pulled plug, for just as He was raised from the dead, He would come again and raise to life all who had believed in Him.—After spending fifty days with His followers, the Son chose to leave Blue Planet and return to His Father, the Great Computer in the sky.

To all who believed the simple message of the Son, "Be linked to the Son and you can be virus free," there was new life and new freedom. Not only that, but each restored computer was write-protected with a new password that even Hacker did not know. Their hard drives were implanted with a program assuring them of the Son's invisible presence and love. This program was sealed and recoded in such a way as to protect their data base from ever being contaminated by the virus again. The Son's presence in their hard drives would remain until the day when they were actually uploaded into the Great Computer's presence. The Son promised them, "One day I will return and rid Blue Planet of all virus and restore the environment the way it was before the first PCs became virus-infected. Only those computers refusing to interface with Me, those obstinately rejecting My offer to rid them of their deadly virus, will be sent to the Great Scrap Heap, along with Hacker. Wait and watch for Me, for at a time you do not expect, your entire data base will be uploaded into the Great Computer's main hard drive. Thus you will forever live with Me in the Great Computer's presence."

Rumor has it that a similar story was told years earlier by a man named John, in a book he wrote called "The Gospel Of John" found in the Bible. It is even reported that the Great God in the sky is not myth but true. Evidence suggests that He too had a Son who came to earth to die, and that whosoever places their trust in Him can be free of the sin-virus and be restored to fellowship with Him. I suggest you check it out.

—The End

