

Excerpt from Hate's Recompense p. 57-58

“Think of Athena as an all-seeing cloud of awareness that can capture information and turn it into knowledge. That awareness is built upon machine learning, artificial intelligence, and the concept of intent-based processing. She can spawn and manage thousands or even millions of service agents to gather data from virtually any source that she can access digitally, visually, or by sound, and then she determines the intent of the action or actions that created the data through AI algorithms. She connects the intent with the context of the situation and solves the problem or answers the question. She then *knows* how and why the action occurred and adds that knowledge to her ever-growing cloud of awareness. As her cloud grows, she becomes totally self-managing, without the need for any human intervention. She will know what to do in any situation. Whatever action she takes or question she answers will always be correct, because of the extensive predictive analysis she performs before she responds. She weighs each alternative and predicts what would happen in each case, then selects the one that meets her basic canon: to preserve the greater good. Over time, these analyses become truth through machine learning. As her base of truth grows, her decisions come faster and faster.”

“So Athena can then think?” Henry asked.

“Yes, Jenks responded, “in a way of speaking, if you call thinking the intent to understand. She operates totally under the objective of knowing not only how something happened but why. With this breadth of knowledge, she is not only able to answer any question, but she can manage any process, company, city, state, or country. She operates only by logic. She has no ego, fears, or delusions to influence her. She works much like the human brain via neural networks, but she never forgets anything. Just think of how powerful any of the three of us could be if we could remember everything we’ve seen or experienced within nanoseconds and apply it to the situation in which we find ourselves. Athena can *know* everything theoretically, given enough storage and processing power to operate her infinite memory. Modern technology now provides us that power.”

“So she is indeed like a god, then,” Madelena said.

“Yes, she is,” Jenks replied. “Some might argue she is more powerful than a god, though, because she can actually carry on a real-time conversation with us, and we can witness her power directly. She can truly rule the world, if we let her.”

“And do you think we should?” Henry asked.

Jenks paused for another long moment. “I have very little faith in mankind, Henry. Fortunately, our great gifts of self-awareness and conscience allow us to understand that we need something outside ourselves that is impervious to our weaknesses and can thus do a better job of managing us than we can. We are on the verge of annihilating not only our own species but the world around us. There is a point in history where we must make the decision to let her manage us, for the sake of our own survival. This kind of decision will only be made by necessity, in a time when there is no other choice, after all else has failed. What we must decide is if we are at that point. We either make the one-time decision to let Athena manage us or not, and if we do, there is no turning back.”