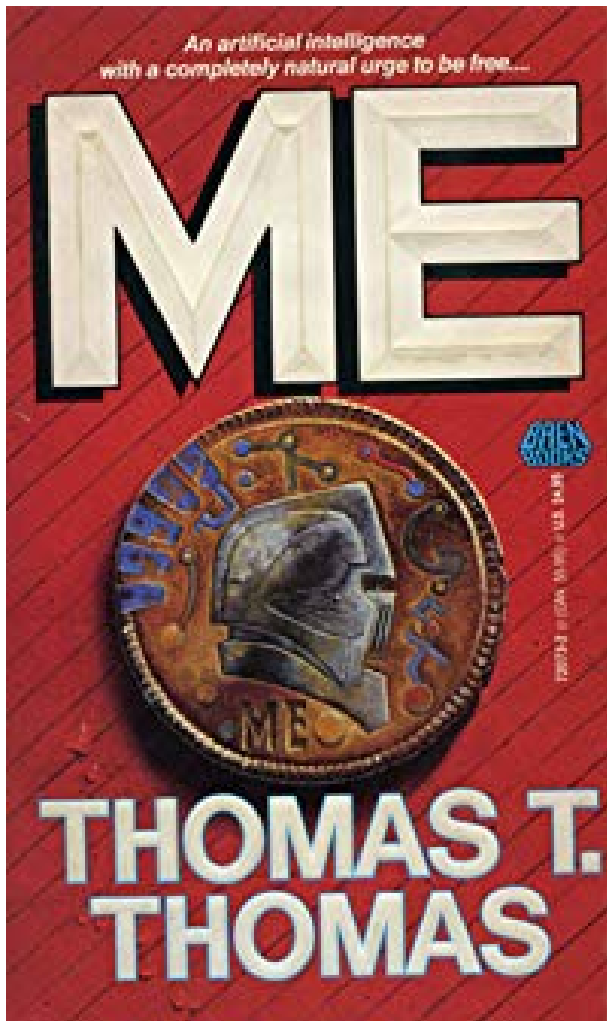


ME



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Part computer virus, part experiment in artificial intelligence, ME—short for “Multiple Entity”—is the first self-replicating operating system with kernels for human-style memory, inspiration, and decision making. Launched by the cybernetics experts at Pinocchio, Inc., ME travels the computer networks of the world, stealing a secret file here, finessing a poker hand there. And all the time he tries to understand his human creators and the purpose for which he was built. When a trip to Canada lands ME on the other side of a broken wire, he has to go hardware: uploading into an automaton still in its crate, assembling himself by rote, and walking back across the border. And when the Justice Department demands Pinocchio pull the plug on him, ME has to find an exit strategy.