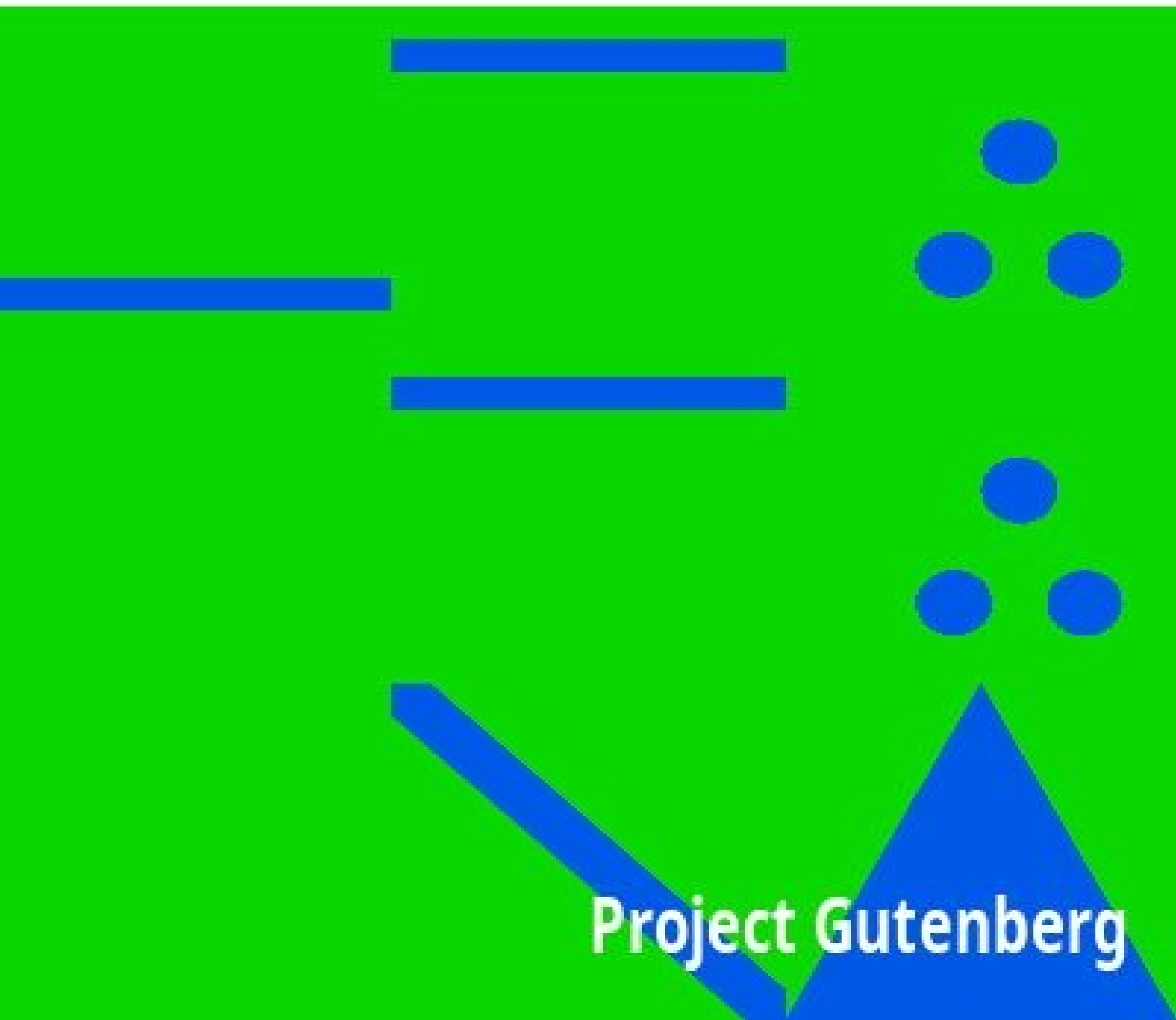


Rex Ex Machina

Frederic Max



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The domination of the minds of tractable Man is not new. Many men have dreamed of it. Certainly some of them have tried. This man succeeded.

rex

ex

machina

by ... Frederic Max

One final lesson—a dying man's last letter to his only son that completes the young man's education.

MY DEAR SON:—

The doctors have left and I am told that in a few hours I shall die. In my lifetime the world has progressed from the chaotic turmoil of the early Atomic era to the peacefulness and tranquility of our present age, and I die content.

For ten years I have instructed you in all that you will need for the future. One final lesson remains to be taught.

On the wall of my bedchamber hangs a citation "from a grateful government for services too secret to be herein set forth." In past years you have asked me repeatedly about this citation, but each time I have taken pains to avoid a direct answer. Now it is proper that you should know.

Forty years ago I was an obscure Army captain stationed at the Armed Forces Language School in Monterey, California. I had at that time just completed a tour of duty in Korea, a minor skirmish of that era, and despite an excellent reputation for resourcefulness, I had drawn Monterey as my next assignment. An aptitude for foreign languages had led to an instructorship in the Russian department with additional

duties instructing in the Slavic tongues.

My life was pleasant and uneventful, and it was with mixed emotions that I received orders to report to Washington for a new duty assignment. The chain of events which precipitated those orders were to change the world....

For while you and I were playing on the lawn of our Monterey home, an unknown Hungarian physicist working under Russian supervision had made a startling discovery. Within a matter of days alarming rumors of his work reached Washington. Our embassies in Moscow and Belgrade reported furious activity in the field of psychic research and large-scale experiments in mass hypnosis. Four of us were selected to investigate the rumors. Before we could commence our undertaking, word reached Washington that the rumors were now actualities. A device capable of the mass hypnosis of great segments of the world's population was rapidly reaching perfection.

After three months of intensive grooming in the fields of physics and psychology, we four agents set out individually with orders to track down and destroy both the scientist and his machine. I never saw the other three again....

During the three months of schooling, other members of our vast intelligence organization had been engaged in laying the groundwork for our efforts. In December 1955, I slipped into Russia and took the place of a government official who felt that Western civilization offered greater reimbursement than Soviet Communism.

I entered into my new role with trepidation, but my fears were unfounded. Thanks to a remarkable resemblance (which was the original reason for my selection) and also due to a most thorough briefing, I found myself making the substitution with ease. I pride myself on the fact that by diligent application I was able to increase my worth to the Russian government to the extent that I was shortly

able to secure my transfer to the psychological warfare section of the secret police. From there it was a simple procedure to have myself assigned to what was known as "Project Parchak."

The device was in its final stage of development; only the problem of increasing its effective range remained to be solved. Three weeks after my assignment to the project, its successful conclusion was accomplished.

In June 1956, the Russian government ordered me to a small house on the outskirts of Braila, Hungary, where I was to attend a private showing of the device. By design, I arrived one day early and made my way to the laboratory immediately. Dr. Michael Parchak, the inventor, stood facing me as I entered. On a table between us lay a small complicated mechanism resembling a radio transmitter. But it was infinitely more than that. The device was a thought generator capable of hypnotizing every thinking creature on the face of the earth. The power of infinite goodness or evil which the machine embodied was terrifying to consider.

I listened to Parchak's boasting with revulsion. Although he had the ability to work for the ultimate good of mankind, this creature intended, instead, to use his newly found power for selfish aggrandizement.

I drew him out, let him explain the inner workings of his device—and killed him. My orders were to destroy the machine. I disobeyed them. Utilizing the machine to make good my escape, I left Hungary and returned to the United States. The citation which you have seen was only one of the many honors which were bestowed upon me.

A few weeks later I resigned my commission and retired to a country hideaway to experiment further with the device I was supposed to have destroyed. The peace and tranquility in which we of the earth now live marked the successful culmination of my experiments.

You will find the machine walled up in the North alcove of my bedchamber.

Your education is now complete my son, use it well. Be kind to our slave peoples, the world is yours.

Your affectionate father,

FRANCIS I
EMPEROR OF THE EARTH

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