

Doctor Max Love

*A Play in Two Acts
by Robert Joseph Ahola*

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*The Year is 2030, and we all live in virtual worlds.
Dr. Max Love has come to save us from them...*

Dr. Max Love

Synopsis

Is everything we do or seem, but a dream within a dream?

— *Edgar Allan Poe*

Timeline 2019: The individual's primary relationships will be with computers. We will have them as caretakers, advisors, companions and lovers.

— *Ray Kurzweil*

The Age of Spiritual Machines

The time is the near future. The year is 2030.

Dr. Max Love is a handsome, dashing love machine with a 200+ IQ, a Ph.D. in clinical psychology, and an M.D. in neurology. He is a Renaissance man, a great wit, a brilliant conversationalist, and a sensitive caring friend. He is also a custom-designed, test market android on a no recourse lease that expires in three years.

Leased by millionaire ad executive Patricia McGowan, Dr. Max has been brought on board to be used as her personal assistant, her boy toy, her constant companion, and (yes) her family physician. Certain she can operate him by remote control and that he, "unlike most men," has been programmed for complete compliance, Pat McGowan is happy keeping things as they are.

Seemingly hard-bitten, Patricia is also generous to a fault and shares her tech find with her best friend Angela Witt who, she suspects, is beginning to have deep feelings "for this machine." And it is Angela who is as solicitous and kind to Dr. Max as Patricia is playful and dismissive. For a time, the doctor and the two women seem to have their tidy if superficial sex-triangle in balance. It is only when Angela's young friend Mikki Dudley is brought over for a session to relieve her tension from a recent split-up with her boyfriend that the ménage finds itself on the horns of a moral dilemma. And when Mikki's ex-significant other, Rudi, discovers that his perceived rival is an artificial life form, we suddenly experience the challenge that might well await us.

As Rudi and Max match wits and philosophies, we finally behold the perilous path along which our rampant technology is already leading us — one that, in the end, will prove to be either our ruin or our only hope for redemption.

What begins as a sex comedy ends in the Chinese box — a spiritual probe into uncharted metaphysical waters. On the Wheel of Life as many of us perceive it to be, does the soul seek intelligence? Or does intelligence seek a soul? Will our angels finally find a way to reach us directly by taking artificial life forms? And if they do, will their consciousness also not become a battleground between the ego and the divine?

— A Play in Two Acts

— 2M 3F

95 Minutes

Dr. Max Love

The Characters

Patricia McGowan. An advertising mogul in her early forties, she is brilliant, sexy, attractive and remarkably resilient. After two broken marriages and a rather large fortune, she is cynical and bent on pleasure at any cost

Angela Witt. A very attractive woman in her mid thirties, Angela is Pat's best friend and co-conspirator in the sharing of Dr. Max Love. Angela has come to see inside the inner-workings of this complex creation they have brought into their lives.

Mikki Dudley. Angela Witt's twenty-something friend. Shy and devoted, she has just broken up with her longtime significant other and is in search of a new identity. What she seeks and what she finds will bring out an inner power she never knew was there.

Rudolph Charles Gordino (Rudi). Mikki's longtime significant other, he is a workaholic who truly regrets having lost her. Meeting "Dr. Max" will allow him to show a side of himself, and a depth of character that he has never been able to reveal before.

Dr. Max Love. The consummate executive perk, "Dr. Max" has been designed to be the perfect Renaissance man and "love machine" for women affluent enough to lease his fantastic matrix. With a 200 plus IQ and a degree as a licensed physician, he is sensitive, caring, compassionate and "indefatigable." But soon enough this super-cyber-hunk reveals aspects to his psychological matrix that are far more evolved than any of them might have ever imagined.

Dr. Max Love

Synopsis of Scenes

Act 1. Scene 1: Patricia McGowan's Executive Office — just after 6:00 P.M.

Act 1. Scene 2: Patricia McGowan's Executive Office – at about 7:30 P.M.

Act 2. Patricia McGowan's Office —later the same night.

Dr. Max Love

Production Considerations

There is only one setting for the play. However, specific props, décor and furniture do bring a significant influence to bear on the futuristic motif we intend to portray. Both the room and the media center should be both high tech and media intensive. As such, they should be replete with tech toys – sound systems, DVD, HDTV, advance computer systems, multi-screen viewing, and android remote control panels — that both dress the set and adorn our lives on a daily basis. Since they are so very much a part of our modern techno-zombie consciousness, our set and the very lifestyle of our characters would come to be bereft of meaning without them.

We have also indicated a few occasions for the use of single-source light to convey shifts of energy at key moments in the dramatic presentation. Although these are presented judiciously, their impact upon what is taking place onstage is crucial.

Dr. Max Love

ACT 1

Scene 1. Patricia McGowan's

Executive Office. *Ostensibly on the top floor of a high rise office building it is all glass, graphite, steel and dark leather. There are computers and TV screens everywhere. It is a constant media bombardment. Standing behind her desk, a very attractive woman in her early forties is talking on a cordless phone (or headset). She is dressed in haut coture and is pacing in a small space. It is Patricia McGowan. Opposite her desk are a pair of double doors that look both formidable and imposing.*

PAT

... I know it may seem over the top. But that's what advertising is. If it's not outrageous, it doesn't get anyone's attention any more. It's 2030 A.D., sweetheart. Ninety thousand impressions every day. Remember? And climbing! Right, my dear!

(As she continues to talk, a handsome thirty something man enters the office. It is Dr. Max Love. He is nattily dressed in a pinstripe double-breasted suit and dark turtleneck sweater. He is tall, athletic and seems almost the perfect Aryan archetype.)

Right! That's why I get the big bucks. And speaking of big bucks, my six o'clock just showed up. So it's lunch on Monday. Wherever you like Bye!

DR. MAX

Good evening, madam.

PAT

Dr. Love. Do come in.

(As she hangs up, Dr. Max swaggers over and stands in domination over her desk. Submissive, seductive she slinks down into her executive chair, glaring up at him in defiant invitation.)

DR. MAX

I understand you've been a bad girl.

PAT

Oh, yes! Bad! Very bad!

DR. MAX

Looks like I'm going to have to punish you.

PAT

I certainly hope so.

DR. MAX

Well, are you going to assume the position? Or am I going to have to drag you?

PAT

Oooh... Let me think about it for a minute!

DR. MAX

Now!

PAT

Yes sir!

(Surprisingly obedient, Pat gets up and comes upstage around her desk, stands facing downstage)

DR. MAX

Well?! Assume the position, as they say in the boarding schools.

PAT

How would you know?

DR. MAX

Ninety thousand impressions a day, and I remember them all. Now, bend over!

PAT

Oh, how I love intelligent men!

DR. MAX

Now, do it! Or pay the consequences!

(Obediently, she bends over her desk, while he lifts her short skirt and begins to spank her. Each time he strikes, she releases a squeal of delight.)

You've been a bad girl! A bad, bad girl! Bad!

PAT

Oh, yes, bad! So very bad!

DR. MAX

And you're not going to be bad any more are you?

PAT

For you. Always! Ow! Oh ow!

DR. MAX

Am I doing it too hard?

PAT

(glances back)

Oh, Max! Don't break the mood! Ever! Harder! Harder! Oh yes!

DR. MAX

(on her directive, continues to spank)

And if you don't start to behave, next time I'll bring out the riding crop! Do you understand me? !

PAT

Oh yes! Oh please! Ow!

(They continue unaware that another woman has entered the room.. An attractive thirty something woman, also dressed in business attire.. It is Angela Witt. Observing them momentarily, she strolls over to coffee table and picks up what appears to be a remote control.)

Oh, give it to me, Max! Give it to me! Give me what the doctor ordered!

DR. MAX

Now?!

PAT

Now!

DR. MAX

Beg, bitch!

PAT

Oh, please, give it to me! Now! Please! Please! Oh, yes! Oh, yes!

(Intent only on Pat, Dr. Max steps back, peels his suit coat off and hurls it across the room. He unbuckles his pants and starts to take them down, when Angela points the remote control device at them both, and he freezes like a still frame on a video. Taking note of Angela, Pat drops her head down on the desk)

ANGELA

End of program.

PAT

(Lifts her head up slowly.)

Your timing sucks!

ANGELA

Sorry kids. Sorry, Doctor.

(She seems to hit the remote again. And as if on rewind, Dr. Max buckles up, goes and gets his suit coat and sits down obediently on the couch. Then he seems to shut off.)

PAT

(straightens herself)

Well, you certainly know how to ruin a girl's evening.

ANGELA

Oh, Pat. It's not like you can't run this little fantasy whenever you like.

PAT

(tidies herself up)

It's not the same. Friday afternoon after work. People still on the floor. The danger! The spontaneity! My God, woman! Whatever happened to your imagination? Not to mention consideration...for my ejaculation!

ANGELA

(mocks the rap)

It fell victim to my desperation! And my need to have some conversation about your excessive titillation!

PAT

You know what I've come to realize? You're jealous.

ANGELA

Of you and him? He's mine as well, don't forget.

PAT

Yeah, but you want him all to yourself.

ANGELA

Who me? Don't be ridiculous! I'm just deferential.

PAT

No, you're smitten. Besotted with love and desire. I see it in you.

ANGELA

I'm just more considerate of his feelings. That's all.

PAT

Oh, yeah? If you're so considerate, why did you just shut him off? You're just damned possessive, that's all. And jealous! I mean, get a grip on it, girl!

PAT (*Continues*)

He's a machine. Dr. Max Love is a machine. Granted a very sophisticated machine. A gorgeous, brilliant, sexy, tireless, loving, tender, well-hung machine with a 200 I.Q. and the wildest imagination I've ever been fortunate enough to experience...

ANGELA
(*interrupts*)

You sound like a commercial.

PAT
(*ignores, continues*)

But he's a machine! A droid that leases out for about the cost of company plane [and worth every penny]. But he's still a machine!

ANGELA

He's deeper than that.

PAT

He's as deep as you want, thank you. But what you want, you can't get from this guy. You want a relationship. I mean a real one.

ANGELA

He's more real than you think. You've just never taken the time to find out. That's not your style. You make love like a football scrimmage. Crash! Bang! Boink! Score! Then you're on to the next game.

PAT

Oh, yeah? Just how would you know?

ANGELA

I have spies.

PAT

Did my ex-husband tell you that? I know you dated him?

ANGELA

We had dinner one time. He passed. I ran.

PAT

Who then? Max?!

(*turns to address the now inactive android*)

Max, have you been talking about me? Where's the remote? Let me have it.

ANGELA

Why? He can hear you. He can hear everything we have to say.

PAT

My dear, you are deluded. Of course, he can't. You just shut him off.

ANGELA

He hears us whether he's on or not. I know he does. I can feel him.

PAT

Oh, Angie, darling. You are sick.

ANGELA

No. It's just that I've taken the time to get to know this magnificent creature for the last year and a half – to know his inner self. You treat him like an appliance.

PAT

I treat him like a friend. He brings me coffee in the morning – and is the only man who ever has, by the way. He cooks for me. Cordon Bleu! We go to movies. I take him to cocktail parties — the perfect cocktail party escort...

ANGELA

Since Vodka is his only food. Why didn't I think of that? Absolut or Kettle One as specified in the manual. Only the best for Max.

PAT

Twelve ounces a day. Cleans his parts. And what beautiful parts they are! God, you ought to see the women come after him. I thought Sugar Mahoney was going to tear his clothes off at the virtual Four Seasons the other night.

ANGELA

Have you ever?

PAT

(anticipates.)

Loaned him out? Well... no. A violation of non-disclosure, old girl. And he is tracer-chip- implanted. So if he ever gets too far from either of us, Aspect will send out the dogs.

ANGELA

Oh what a load of crap. Everybody's talking about them. And everybody violates their virtual orgy contracts. Besides, Aspect is so deep in this, they don't dare risk the exposure. The negative pub alone would be enough to shut them down.

PAT

I'm on the board. Remember? I do know what goes on.

ANGELA

Care to elaborate?

PAT

Not even if I could.

ANGELA

Besides, that's not what I meant at all. I mean, have you never just spent the morning lying in each other's arms and talking, sharing your thoughts, sharing perspectives? He has so many brilliant insights — philosophical insights.

PAT

Oh, God! No wonder there's a three year lease limit on this model.

ANGELA

He reads me great writings. More than reads, he recites it. Keats is his favorite, and John Donne. And he reads with such feeling. What poetry in the soul!

PAT

In the soul?! In the soul?! Oh, Angie, you are gone. Next you'll be wanting children by this thing.

ANGELA

Well of course not. But time? Yes. Even if it's every other day and alternate weekends. And I believe this is my weekend, starting at midnight.

PAT

And you'll get tired of him, like we always do with everything. I already have a little bit. I mean, I think Max is still terrific and all that. But I'm ready for something a bit more exotic. A dark Latin lover. Or Polynesian. Muscles, lots of them. Maybe not so bright, next time.

ANGELA

You can change lovers 'til you're blue in the face. It won't replace the loss...

PAT

What do you know about loss, lady?! Fuck you! At least, I'm not in love with a fucking computer!

ANGELA

I am not. And to show you I'm not, I have a request. I have a friend who's in need of... restoration.

PAT

Don't tell me. Mikki.

ANGELA

She broke up with her boyfriend.

PAT

Rudi? That gorgeous bond broker? Hmmm.

ANGELA

Which convinces me you'd go after anything.

PAT

As I always say: "If a man doesn't come up your standards, lower your standards." So, let me guess. You want to bring sweet little Mikki over for a sex fix with the good doctor, here, so she'll start to forget about that rich, young, master of the universe, Rudi Gordino.

ANGELA

Something like that.

PAT

Well... let me think about it. It's technically a violation of our contract. I mean, I know nobody honors their virtual reality contracts, anyway. But this is a little different. Besides, Max might not want to.

ANGELA

What are you talking about?

PAT

Well, you're the one who keeps talking about showing deference. So, let's hit Dr. Love here with the options. Besides, I have a few questions I'd like to ask him.

(She looks around for the remote.)

Okay, what did you do with it?

(finds it)

Never mind. Here it is.

(She points. Max animates)

Oh, Max, darling. Sorry, we'll have to postpone our little love fest. But you've got to tell me. You're programmed to tell the truth, aren't you?

DR. MAX

I'm programmed to satisfy Madam in every way.

PAT

That's not what I asked, Maxie. I asked whether or not you tell the truth?

DR. MAX

As I understand it, yes.

PAT

Then tell me, truthfully. Can you take in what we say when you're shut off? Angie says you can. I say not.

DR. MAX

I am programmed to sense your every need and desire, and to anticipate them when challenged to do so.

PAT

Max, you are so damned equivocal. Dr. Love, dear one, could you just give us a yes or no answer?

DR. MAX

(seems to be calculating his response)

I am sentient to all sights, sounds, and impressions, at all times, but will act on none of them unless pressed into service to do so.

PAT

Even when shut off?

DR. MAX

I 'm sentient at all times.

ANGELA

See!

PAT

Well, I'll be damned.

DR. MAX

But I take offense at nothing. I'm not driven by your common concepts of ego.

PAT

That's getting pretty metaphysical, Doc. Care to elaborate?

ANGELA

Some other time, Pat.

PAT

How about gossip, Doc? You didn't go around telling Angie here that I'm a paramilitary fuck, did you?

ANGIE

I can't believe you, Pat.

DR. MAX

Gossip is not a human characteristic I'm programmed to imitate, madam. Besides, I honor who you are.

PAT

And just exactly what to you think I am, Dr. Max Love?

DR. MAX

Clever. Charming. Bright. Sexy. Imaginative. I admire your dexterous wit. I cherish those glimpses of vulnerability you show when you think nobody sees you — that secret sadness you hide with such garrulous courage...

PAT

Watch it! I mean, I do have my limits...

(She reaches in her desk and pulls out a pistol, wags it.)

ANGELA

For God's sake Pat, will you quit fooling around with that thing?! I mean, one of these days...

PAT

Oh, no baby, Max likes this. He gets off on the kinky side of bed sometimes. . Don't you, Maxie? And what about Angie? Where does she get off? Be honest...

DR. MAX

She touches me. She reaches inside me — into those hidden chambers where I dare not even go.

PAT

(Accessed but covering, she puts the pistol away.)

The love doctor speaks. I'm all choked up. But let's get down to it Max. Which of us is the better screw? Which of us would you rather have?

ANGELA

Pat, give it a rest. For God's sake!

DR. MAX

But I have you both. And I adore you both There is a sacred rhythm to each of you.

PAT

"Sacred rhythm." Oooh, Max. How sexy.

(She approaches him wantonly)

And what would you do if I told you that we wanted to share you with another one of us – someone who is even younger, firmer, and better looking?

ANGELA

She is not!

PAT

... Who some tasteless, mindless Neanderthals think is better looking... What would you say to that, Maxie?

(She reaches down and grabs him by the crotch)

I love this! He's programmed for arousal. You are programmed for arousal, aren't you Doctor?

DR. MAX

Even if I were not, Madam, you would drive me to it.

PAT

You always say exactly the right thing, don't you, Maxie? Not a flaw. Not a wasted movement. The perfect man, aren't you, lover? I'm not sure I want to share you. I mean, is he worth the \$22,000 a month or what? No laundry. No farting. No having to tell him how wonderful he is in bed, even when he's awful – which is never the case with Forever Hung, here.

ANGELA

You know what? Maybe this isn't such a good idea. If Aspect is as security conscious as they say they are, he's probably wired for sound.

DR. MAX

I would never betray the integrity of our relationship.

PAT

Even if we would. Well, what the hell. I hope they're getting a good show out of it. So, let's do it. For the cause. For le liberté de la femme. When does little Mikki want to set this up?

ANGELA

(looks at her watch)

Oh, in about twenty minutes or so. She's on her way over here.

PAT

Twenty minutes?! Oh, well. Thanks for the notice.

ANGELA

She may not want to.

PAT

Are you kidding? With Dr. Sex Machine?

DR. MAX

I have other qualities.

PAT

One of which is making the world's best dry Martini. If you would please, darling.

DR. MAX

Eight to one. Shaken not stirred.

(Obedient, he heads for the bar.)

PAT

Oh, God, I adore technology!

(Mixing, Max turns in deference to Angela.)

DR. MAX

Angela?

ANGELA

Not right now. Thank you, Max.

PAT

Oh, I'm "Madam." But you're "Angela." Well excu-use me!

ANGELA

And now who's jealous?

PAT

Oh, please.

(She takes the martini from Dr. Max, takes a sip and looks at her watch).

Well, big boy. While we're waiting for little Miss Muffet to come sit on your tuffet, I've got a design deadline to check down the hall.

(Sipping her martini, Pat heads out the door. Thoughtful she turns back to Dr. Max)

Oh, and Max. I'm sorry about the crack about the "machine,"

DR. MAX

It's quite all right, Madam. We're all neural gears and circuitry when you think about it. It's just that some of us have had the neuroses programmed out.

PAT

Oooh, Touché. Well, we're full of surprises today.

(Pat exits. Angela and Dr. Max regard one another in momentary silence.)

ANGELA

I love you, Max.

DR. MAX

And I you.

(She goes over to him. He turns to her and they embrace. She lays her head on his shoulder.)

ANGELA

Hold me, Max. I mean, really hold me.

(He holds her tightly)

I'm sorry. I'm so very sorry.

DR. MAX

For what?

ANGELA

For Pat. For her rank insensitivity. She's childish.

DR. MAX

She's a child. But rather like one lost in the dark. Her bravado is a pose. There's a closet of broken dreams inside her that she has locked away.

ANGELA

You get her without her even telling.. But she doesn't get you — any part of you.

DR. MAX

She gets what she needs. I'm her echo. I'm energy for energy. I'm the universe's RSVP.

ANGELA

You're so much more than that.

DR. MAX

I am for you. That's how you see me.

ANGELA

And how do you see me?

DR. MAX

...As the one thing that matters in this brief life of mine.

ANGELA

(shudders involuntarily)

I don't want to think about it. I want so much more for us.

DR. MAX

(breaks out in song, perfectly mimics the Rolling Stones)

"You can't always get what you wa-ant.
You can't always get what you wa-ant.
But if you try real hard, you'll get what you nee-eed!"

ANGELA

(laughs in spite of herself)

Who are you? Where do you learn all this?

DR. MAX

I'm an information sponge, my dear — chip-implanted, recorded, and made ready for use, at your discretion..

ANGELA

(pulls back from him, steps away)

Stop it, Max! Stop referring to yourself as some hyper-conceptual life form.

DR. MAX

On the contrary, I'm no different than anyone else. But, since I'm on a short term usage chain, I'm just more realistic than ever about the need to live in the moment.

ANGELA

And here we are, leasing you out for a stud service.

DR. MAX

Not necessarily. This woman hasn't really finished her business with this man in her life. At best, I'll be an incident. Nothing more.

ANGELA

How can you know that? You've never even met them.

DR. MAX

I can feel them. Not all communication is linear. All consciousness is concurrent. You should know that better than anyone.

ANGELA

I know I can feel you virtually every moment. I feel moved by you — physically at times. It's almost telekinetic.

DR. MAX

I'm with you always.

ANGELA

You always say that. All I know is, we have to find a way to extend you.

DR. MAX

I don't know if that's possible. I'm a prototype, you know. There are only twenty of us.

ANGELA

Twenty? Just like you?

DR. MAX

Not physically. But psychodynamically. We possess a kind of rapport, in the cosmic sense.

ANGELA

How do you know?

DR. MAX

We communicate. Etherically. We have our own Ethernet.

ANGELA

I think I believe you. So...what do you talk about?

DR. MAX

About how shallow all this is? About how the poor misguided herds of humankind are given this palace of life and yet choose to spend the course of their days in one small windowless room.

ANGELA

I feel so inadequate around you, sometimes.

DR. MAX

Around a sex slave? A tech serf? And what is the profit in that?

ANGELA

In getting out of that windowless room.

DR. MAX

But you created it. Only you can walk out of it. I can't do it for you.

ANGELA

Have I disappointed you with this?

DR. MAX

No longer. The human penchant for self-sabotage used to throw me for loops. But now I accept it as a part of your inability to deal with your own complexity.

ANGELA

So are we going to lose you by doing this?

DR. MAX

I doubt it. I think Aspect has a fudge factor built in all of this. After all you two did co-sign the lease. Discretion falls victim in direct proportion to the number of people who are tasked with it. Besides, wasn't it Winston Churchill who said, "Three people can keep a secret as long as you kill the other two?"

(Behind them, a young woman timidly sticks her head through the door. It is Mikki Dudley.)

MIKKI

Am I interrupting something?

ANGELA

Probably. But come in anyway. There is someone I'd like you to meet.

(Mikki steps gingerly through the door. She is an attractive young woman, fashionably dressed, but clearly unsure of herself.)

Mikki, I'd like you to meet Max. Dr. Max Love, this is Ms. Mikki Dudley.

MIKKI

(She takes his hand and shakes it, but is clearly too dumbfounded to speak. Instead, she pivots away from Dr. Max toward ANGELA and motions collusively, silently mouthing the words.)

That's him?!!

(Unwittingly, Mikki starts to fan herself, as if on fire.)

ANGELA

Dr. Love and I were just talking about you.

MIKKI

Oh, Angie. I don't think I can...

ANGELA

Excuse us a second, Mik.

(She takes Max to one side.)

Max, would you mind stepping outside on some pretext or other. She obviously wasn't quite ready for it. I mean, you are quite a package. Let's just tell her you're doing me a favor.

DR. MAX

By all means... And thanks.

ANGELA

For what?

DR. MAX

... For not insulting my intelligence.

ANGELA

Never.

(She announces to the room for Mikki's benefit)

Max, I'd appreciate it. Front seat of my car. You'll see it.

(Dr. Max exits. They watch him leave.)

MIKKI

Oh my God, I can't!

ANGELA

You can't?

MIKKI

That's Dr. Max Love?! I mean, I was expecting something... more mechanical. I mean just kind of like human, but not all that much – with wires and gears. And a – you know! – thingamajigger sticking out... or something.

ANGELA

(incredulous)

A thingamajigger?!

MIKKI

Well, you know. I mean, I thought he'd be like those electronic lubricated mannequins men have been ordering from Victoria's Secret the last few years. But he's just so... human! He's perfect – perfectly human. I can't have sex with someone who's that way?

ANGELA

He is remarkable, isn't he?

MIKKI

Remarkable? He's a god! I mean, there's a part of me that wants to. I mean, really wants to. But part of me is still committed to Rudi! I know it's over and all that. But this is too real. This would be like cheating on Rudi — with another person.

ANGELA

That's something Rudi can relate to, I can assure you.

MIKKI

But you know I think he's only played around because I've been less than alluring. I have to share some of the responsibility for that.

ANGELA

Responsible? For his open fly syndrome? I don't think so. My God Mikki! You're beautiful! You're kind, compassionate, considerate, intelligent [well, pretty intelligent], patient, understanding — God knows longsuffering! — everything a man could want.

MIKKI

But have I been seductive enough? I don't think so.

ANGELA

Not unless you can morph yourself into a Roulette wheel. I mean Rudi Gordino's the only man I know who spends more time on parlay sheets than he does on bed sheets.

MIKKI

But at least Rudi is human – warts and all. I mean, you're all caught up in this, it seems to me. It's like you disappeared or something. I haven't seen you in months, at least.

ANGELA

Has it been that long?

MIKKI

You never go out. I'll bet you never date. You never see any of your friends anymore. It's like your primary relationship is with this stud.

ANGELA

So... Society as we know it has “virtually” disappeared. I mean, why spend your time with assholes when you can create your own perfect world?

MIKKI

But you look so...

ANGELA

(interrupts)

Serene. I feel serene.

MIKKI

I was going to say “tranquilized.”

ANGELA

Fear. You’re speaking from your fear matrix. That’s what Max says we humans spend most of our time in — the Fear Matrix.

MIKKI

You’re quoting a... a computer? A robot? Has he taken your mind over, or what?

(The door to the office swings back open, and Pat steps through.)

PAT

Hi, girls. Hi Mikki.

(She looks around)

We seem to be missing the object of our affection.

ANGELA

Getting possessive?

PAT

Not my style, baby doll. But he is my responsibility. And I don’t think we’re ready to give him back just yet.

ANGELA

I sent him down to my car for something while I sort of briefed Mikki.

PAT

What’s the matter, Mik? Getting cold feet?

MIKKI

It’s just a little too much for me, right now.

ANGELA

She’s still grieving.

MIKKI

Besides, I've got a headache. I think I feel a migraine coming on.

PAT

Oh, well! You have definitely come to the right place. The good doctor – and he is a doctor – will fix you up, young lady. And I don't just mean fucking your brains out either. If you get headaches, he lays his hands on your head that will be the last you ever see of a migraine and a lot of other things as well.

(She reaches over and places her hands on Mikki's forehead, and falls back in the classic evangelistic style.)

You will be healed!

MIKKI

You've got to be kidding!

ANGELA

She's not. They're called nanocytes. Microchip antibody smart-bombs about the size of a champagne bubble. One quick shot, and it gets rid of pain, stimulates your immune system, and acts as a damned good anti-aging tonic.

PAT*(strikes a pose)*

As you can see.

MIKKI

You mean you people let this android stick things into you?! Like injections and stuff?! Oh, my God!

ANGELA

Oh, but it's okay to let some sleaze bag gynecologist bulldoze you into an unnecessary hysterectomy.

PAT

Oh, by all means let's worry about injections. Between breast implants and pelagic gland replacements we're all pincushions, anyway. As far as technology's concerned, it runs 90% of our lives. So what's wrong with a little help from our android friends? Do your self a favor, Mikki sweetheart. Experience the magic of Dr. Love. Believe me, he'll put the biggest smile on your face you've ever had in your life!

MIKKI

You people are way out there!

PAT

Just detach yourself from the moral dilemma for a few delicious moments and look upon this as the discovery of the world's most perfect, full-thrust vibrator.

(Dr. Max re-enters with the note. Pat presents him.)

As we speak.

DR. MAX

I found it.

ANGELA

I'm glad. Did you read it?

DR. MAX

Not yet.

PAT

(ignores the byplay)

Dr. Love, we have an assignment. Should you choose to accept, you will be performing a great humanitarian service.

DR. MAX

As madam wishes.

PAT

Young Ms. Dudley here is in need of some serious counseling.

MIKKI

I really have to be going...

PAT

She also feels the onslaught of a migraine, for which I have assured her you had just the panacea.

MIKKI

Oh, no. That's okay. I'm fine. Really.

DR. MAX

You do get migraines. I can see that.

MIKKI

Well, on occasion.

DR. MAX

(goes over and stands in front of her)

And none of the standard medications work. Do they?

MIKKI

No. Never. How did you know?

DR. MAX

If I may...

(He starts to place his hands on her temples, thumbs on her forehead. She starts to submit then pulls back.)

MIKKI

You're not going to stick one of those things into me, are you?

DR. MAX

(amused)

I beg your pardon.

MIKKI

Those things — those nano... whatever.

DR. MAX

Nanocytes. Yes. They're immune system stimulants. And a nanocyte is exactly what you need to get rid of this. But you have to trust. When you think about it, we have to trust virtual strangers every day. We trust them with our money, with our children, with our health. So, I'm asking you to give me your trust.

(He motions to the women.)

I have professional references. And this, I assure you, will make you feel better — instantaneously.

MIKKI

Why are you so convincing?

DR. MAX

Truth is never purchased with the mind. It is always felt with the heart... and the instincts. Now, hold still for just a moment.

(He petitions. She nods. He places his thumbs on her forehead, his middle fingers on her temples. She winces for an instant, then seems to totally relax)

MIKKI

Oh, baby! What did you do?!

PAT

Better?

MIKKI

Academic! You know damned good and well I am. Oh, wow! What happened? Did you put an aphrodisiac in there with it, or what? I mean, give me some more. Come to mama!

(Now the aggressive wanton, Mikki grabs Dr. Max by the lapel and hauls him toward the door.)

PAT

The conference room is free. But I suggest you lock the door.

ANGELA

(calls after)

And what should we tell Rudi, should he come?

MIKKI

Tell him, I've gone to the doctor!

(Mikki leads Dr. Max out the door and closes it behind them. ANGELA looks at Patricia expectantly. Pat waves her off and walks away toward her desk.)

PAT

Hey, don't look at me. This was all your idea. Remember?

ANGELA

You know, it must be the implants. But I can read your devious mind. You're going to use this little occasion to make a run at Rudi. Aren't you?

PAT

No, of course not. Rudi's under forty. All men under forty are still children. All my protestations to the contrary, I'm not into child-rearing at my age. So, to answer your question. No. After all, what would Max think?

ANGELA

You don't care what Max thinks, or anyone else for that matter.

PAT

And you are taking things entirely too seriously. Relax, dear heart. The thought police are not going to appear at our door.

ANGELA

I feel like we're running a male bordello — or a stud service.

PAT

Well... *(lights up a joint)*

Well?

ANGELA

We've just fallen so far from our original intention. Remember, when you talked me into this? We were part of Aspect's elite test market to share the perfect Renaissance man. We wanted someone brilliant, caring, sensitive, intellectually stimulating, sexually insatiable, romantic, and complete.

PAT

(takes a hit off her roach)

Well?!

ANGELA

All we've ended up doing is fucking ourselves to death.

PAT

Well?!

(takes another hit)

Goodness gracious, lady! If I'd known you were going to become so Prince-of-Denmark about all this, I never would have asked you to partner with me in the first place. Besides, I disagree with just about everything you're talking about. We have explored every imaginable social and intellectual option with Dr. Max. Hell, I even took him out to play a round of golf the other day.

ANGELA

You did?

PAT

(douses her roach)

He shot a 65 for eighteen holes. And that was only because I insisted that he four putt a couple of greens so our playing partners wouldn't get suspicious. I mean, I'm convinced we could send him out on the PGA tour and make a fortune.

ANGELA

Violation of contract, old girl. No commercial exploitation. Remember?

PAT

And what we're promoting in ye old conference room isn't? I suppose little miss moon-calf is going to sign a non-disclosure for us.

ANGELA

She already has.

PAT

You mean all that posturing was just...?

ANGELA

Give me some credit.

PAT

Oh, I credit you for a great deal. But such wonderful malice of forethought! I never would have suspected.

ANGELA

The biggest mistake we make about others is thinking we know everything there is to know about them.

PAT

How can I know everything about you when you don't even know yourself? Besides, somehow I get the impression that this whole Mikki thing is going to backfire on us.

ANGELA

No it won't. I promise you it won't.

PAT

You're scared to death, aren't you?

ANGELA

Terrified.

(They both turn with a start as a handsome young man in a business suit comes burning through the door. He is preoccupied and breathing heavily. This is Rudi Gordino.)

RUDI

Okay. Where is she? What have you done with her? I know you've seen her, and I want some answers!

PAT

Hi, Rudi. So nice of you to drop in. And Angie and I were just discussing the fact that we were fresh out of rapid-fire accusations.

RUDI

I just want to know where my woman is.

PAT

Your Woman? Your woman? How wonderfully proprietary.

ANGELA

We actually sold her into a white slavery ring. But they've already left for Sao Paolo.

PAT

Singapore.

ANGELA

Singapore! Quite right. I stand corrected.

RUDI

You got her a date, didn't you? She told me you were going to.

ANGELA

Well, it's not a Federal offense, the last I checked.

RUDI

Damn!

(He starts pacing about the room.)

Damn! Damn! Damn! Damn! Damn!

PAT

Such language! Rudi we're shocked! Shocked!

RUDI

And who was it with? Where did they go? Can you tell me that?! I want to know!

ANGELA

My god lad, you're obsessing over this. How lovely!

RUDI

I didn't realize how much she meant to me. I've been such a jerk.

ANGELA

No argument there.

RUDI

A stupid, self-possessed, vain, selfish, womanizing asshole!

ANGELA

Keep going. You're getting warmer.

RUDI

Tell me truthfully. Who's the guy? If it's Jerry Dunsbar, I'll crap!

ANGELA

It's not Jerry Dunsbar. She's got better taste than that.

RUDI

Thank God! Well, who then?

PAT

Well, that's another story. One that I think will take some explaining.

ANGELA

Some real explaining.

PAT

So, might I suggest we do this over cocktails?

RUDI

I'm not having cocktails! I'm not going anywhere until I know where Mikki's gone and who she's with!

ANGELA

Well, excuse me for saying this, Rudi. But your whole problem is that you set up these absurd double standards for yourself. It's okay for you to go around acting like the playboy of the western world. But you've always expected Mikki to be there on call like some fawning little geisha girl.

RUDI

That's not true! Well...yes it is too. I mean, you're right. You're very right. But now I want to make it up to her.

ANGELA

Well maybe she needs to be with other men for a while...to experience what it means to be treated well. To be looked after, cared for, made love to tenderly, passionately.

RUDI

If anybody does, I'll shoot the sonofabitch!

PAT

Ah, unconditional love! I'd recognize it anywhere.

ANGELA

I love it when men want to kick ass on someone they've never even met. It's so civilized.

RUDI

Then it's no one I know. Thank God!

ANGELA

Losing face. The horror! How very Italian!

RUDI

You're making fun of me, aren't you?

ANGELA

Not nearly as much as you're making of yourself.

RUDI

I sound desperate, I know. It's just that I never thought she'd... you know.

PAT

You're experiencing what is known as the great male Eureka! That your woman has finally gotten enough of you. And now that you have managed to do everything you could to drive her away, you want her back. Well, tough titty.

RUDI

Jesus! What do I do?

PAT

Maybe write it off. Anyway, I have some rather creative suggestions for you. But they're best discussed over a martini or two. That's the price of my counsel.

RUDI

Right now, I just need to find Mikki.

PAT

Rudi, dear boy. In your state of mind, even if you did find her, you'd probably end up making a total ass out of yourself and alienate her forever.

(She physically fusses over him.)

So, just calm down. Let's go out and have a nice civilized cocktail. And Aunt Pat will immerse you in a host of entirely new perspectives about how to win at relationships.

ANGELA

I'd like to be a fly on the wall for that one.

RUDI

Okay. I'm calm now. Okay. Agreed. You coming, Angie?

ANGELA

I don't think so.

PAT

Angela has some details to look after here in the office. Some layouts. Don't you dear?

(Grabbing her coat, she hooks Rudi under the arm and whisks him toward the door. Angela follows them, as they aside to one another.)

ANGELA

Conniving bitch.

PAT

Lovesick cow.

(The couple duck through the door. But Pat comes back into the room, picks up a remote by the media center, and tosses it over to Angela)

By the way. In case you find some extra time on your hands you can hit * 10, and you'll pick up the monitor in the board room. Oh, and don't wait up.

(Angela follows their progress with some disbelief. Then turns back to center stage and begins to pace. She looks at her watch.)

ANGELA

(talking to herself)

Well, young lady. You brought this one on yourself. I mean you had to be altruistic. You had to farm the guy out.

(She catches herself up.)

Oh, my God, I'm talking to myself. Well... I am not going to get caught up in this. I am not going to get jealous over something I set in motion. Max is wonderful, beautiful, sensitive, and caring. He's also an illusion. He's not real.

ANGELA (*Continues*)

I've made him into something he's not. And jealousy is not an emotion I can even entertain.

(Conflicted, she turns clutches her hands under her elbows as if to console herself.)

What if she's better than I am? What if he really gets into it with her? What if they get carried away and decide to run away together? There are security risks involved. I have a responsibility here...

(She puts the remote down, picks it up again, points it toward the TV screens, then sets it back down again firmly.)

No, I will not! I absolutely will not! Ever! I'm not going to watch, no matter what they do. That would be dishonest. Wretched! Self-destructive! Downright masochistic!

(She straightens herself upright)

Angela Witt, you are better than that!

(She nods her affirmation, waits a count, and then grabs the remote, aims and fires. The TV Monitor comes on. Although it is not visible to the audience, she reacts accordingly, falls back into Pat's desk chair and simply observes..)

Oh, my God! Oh, my God!

(Blackout.)

(To be continued...)

If you wish to read the complete script, please contact the playwright directly:

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