

Cyber Eye pits a university professor, a college co-ed, a career spy, and a former member of the Hong Kong Triads against the National Security Agency's dastardly plan to subject unsuspecting citizens to an omnipresent surveillance state.

Cyber Eye

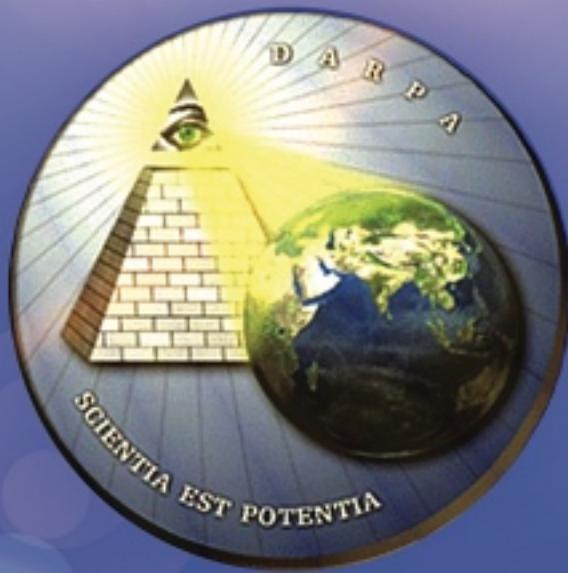
By Stephen P. Goecke

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Cyber Eye

a techno-thriller novel



Stephen P. Goecke

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Chapter 1

The two had barely slipped in to Justin's upscale exposed brick loft before Svetlana began kissing him ravenously, nearly sucking the tongue right out of his mouth. She grabbed the lapels of his sienna leather sport coat and swung him towards the king bed, which sprawled in front of a floor-to-ceiling wall of windows overlooking the willow-lined banks of the Charles River and graceful low arches of Harvard Bridge. As his body sank into the pillow-top mattress, she kicked off her high heels and rubbed a black stocking-clad foot over his crotch.

Justin's burgeoning erection punched through any lingering anxiety he'd had about sexual performance like a shaft of sunlight poking through the gathering dark clouds of middle age to give him a clear view up her skirt; she wasn't wearing any panties, only a garter belt and the sheer black stockings. As she deftly massaged the protrusion in his pants with the ball of her foot, Svetlana removed her light grey Donna Karan blazer and slowly unbuttoned her baby blue silk blouse. Riveted by her striptease, Justin eagerly awaited her firm nipples to bust their way free of the blouse's slinky fabric. She shimmied off the blouse and he sprang up

to cup her grapefruit-sized breasts in his hands, feeling their soft heft as he ran his tongue around her areolas.

“Who said foreplay was dead,” Svetlana growled as she pushed Justin back into the bed with her foot.

She rotated her skirt around her waist and unzipped it. The lightweight wool/silk blend dropped to the floor and she adroitly kicked it aside. Now she stood fully naked at the foot of the bed, her taut muscles and athletic body reminding Justin of the Soviet-era gymnasts he used to fantasize about watching the Olympics while growing up in the 70’s. His heart skipped a beat as she leaned over, unzipped his pants, yanked them off along with his underwear, and lowered her lips towards his beckoning erection.

“Oh, God,” he moaned as she took him entirely into her mouth, her head rising and falling in unison with his thumping heart. It had been a very long time since he had gotten a blowjob.

His ex-wife Cathy had hated oral sex. She harbored a deep Puritan streak and called it “animalistic.” Once, Justin attempted to tell her how the fact that no animals engaged in oral sex was what set humans apart from beasts. She had slammed the bedroom door in his face and wouldn’t have sex with him for over a month. Over the course of their ten-year marriage, his wife began to gradually abstain from having sex with him altogether, saying she didn’t get married to cater to his every

sexual whim and that it was always women who got the short end of the stick, literally.

Boy that had really stung!

Maybe if his wife had been just slightly willing to occasionally satisfy his sexual needs, say even a sporadic hand job, he would have been more than happy to compromise with her regarding the other conflicts in their marriage—like her desire to start a family, his work/life balance, fiscal restraint, et cetera, et cetera. Most wives didn't understand how easy it was for them to get their way in a marriage if they just kept their husbands even somewhat satisfied in bed. It was amazing how far a single blow job could go.

Svetlana certainly had no qualms about oral sex. She was a dream come true. After just a few minutes of fellatio, Justin could feel his penis aching to fill her mouth.

Sensing his impending ejaculation, Svetlana abruptly retracted her head and teased, "You're not going to get off that easily, mister. Not before you lick my pussy!"

Justin nearly came on the spot. God, if Cathy had been this sexually assertive and talked like that he would've done anything for her!

Svetlana advanced on her knees until her vagina was positioned over his face. She reached down and removed his glasses. "You won't be needing these

anymore,” she grinned, setting them aside on a shelf in the bed’s headboard.

Lowering her pelvis over his awaiting mouth, she slowly gyrated her hips around his lapping tongue. Soon she arched backward, her gyrations intensifying and her hips beginning to shudder as her heaving chest made her breasts look like sloshing water balloons. His mouth still locked on her labia, Svetlana slid her calves beneath Justin’s upper back, cradling him, while her thighs straddled his neck. Before he became fully aware of her maneuvering, her muscular thighs gradually tightened against the carotid arteries on the sides of his neck and he started to feel lightheaded. She continued to forcefully grind herself onto his mouth with all her formidable strength and growing orgasmic fervor, and it dawned on him he might actually suffocate. He wasn’t sure he wanted his obituary to read, “He died from cunnilingus interruptus.”

Justin’s bulging eyes looked up at hers with a desperate plea for relent, but she merely looked down at him with steely resolve. The pressure of her thighs against the sides of his neck was like a relentless vise. Beginning to see stars while his lungs burned for air, Justin tried twisting free of imminent suffocation, but Svetlana was Olympic-athlete strong. In one final struggle for survival he flailed his arms wildly and his left hand up reflexively to the headboard, fumbling for

Cyber Eye

something to use as a weapon, but only found his glasses.

With the glasses twittering in his clutch, Svetlana repositioned her right knee to pin his upper arm, momentarily relieving the pressure on this neck. While she concentrated on prying the glasses from his hand, he frantically gulped air.

The Cyber Eye glasses! Is that what she's really after? How did she know about them?

The revelation that this must have been her only intent the whole time scraped across his mind like fingernails across a blackboard. How could he have been so fucking stupid? His enraged ego gave him a surge of strength and Justin rolled his body toward his pinned arm in an effort to prevent her from seizing the Cyber Eye glasses from his grasp.

But it was too late.

While she held the Cyber Eye glasses triumphantly aloft, Svetlana cocked her left knee, preparing to drive it into his temple.

A split second later thousands of fragments of tempered glass pelted the bed like hailstones and skittered across the hardwood floor. Svetlana's body collapsed on top of him, a black hole in her forehead.

Justin froze. Sweat turned to ice while something warm and wet glazed his face. He shuddered as he slid out from under the dead weight of Svetlana's slick

body. Blood smeared his entire chest. He braced for pain, but none came.

He scanned his arms, legs, torso. He was uninjured. The blood was all Svetlana's.

Before another gunshot could change that, Justin recoiled off the side of the bed and nearly vomited as Svetlana's eyes stared vacantly at him. The high-velocity bullet had reduced the back of her skull to a gaping mass of pulped brain tissue and bone. Instinctively, he slithered down to the foot of the bed and positioned his body out of the shattered window's sightline. Sneaking a peak around the bed he scanned the building next door for a sniper.

Nothing.

Svetlana's outstretched arm dangled off the bed, offering up in death what only moments ago she'd tried to take away from him by force. Justin plucked the Cyber Eye glasses from her lifeless hand and slunk back to the floor breathing rapidly, choking back revulsion at the corpse he'd just been having sex with.

Hyperventilating and heart rate skyrocketing, Justin forced himself to concentrate. His blood pressure was undoubtedly through the roof. He'd never been in shock before as far as he knew, but was pretty sure he had the symptoms now. He tried to catch his breath.

I gotta get the hell outta here...NOW!

His jeans and sweater lay in a crumpled heap to his left. Justin rolled over his clothes, snatched them up with one hand, and slipped the Cyber Eye glasses back on his face. His clothes trailing like prey in the maw of a lion, he furtively zigzagged on all fours across the floor toward the front door. The hair on the back of his neck stood on end as he waited for the sound of a gunshot to splay him over the hardwood, but nothing happened. In the entryway he pulled on his clothes, and quickly sank his feet into his hiking boots.

As he stood up with his back pressed against the wall, his knees shook so badly he nearly collapsed back to the floor. Pocketing a deep breath, Justin angled his face around the corner of the entryway and looked back in the direction of the bed and the broken window at the far end of the loft. His eyes focused on and hovered over the video record icon on the top left end of Cyber Eye's heads up display toolbar and his tapped his teeth twice. Immediately a red record light blinked at the bottom of the glasses' display. First he focused on Svetlana's body sprawled on the bed, then slowly panned his vision upward and across to the rooftop of the adjacent building. The Cyber Eye glasses' built-in cameras automatically zoomed in on the neighboring building, giving him a telescopic view of where he assumed the shooter had fired from, but there were no signs of a sniper anywhere.

He gulped. Just as it now clearly seemed Svetlana had attempted to kill him for the Cyber Eye glasses, the sniper apparently must have killed Svetlana to prevent her from getting the glasses and to take them for himself. But then why hadn't the sniper killed *him* as well? Justin didn't intend to stick around to find out.

He bolted for the front door, but not before his eyes caught a glimpse of the bathroom and saw himself standing in front of the vanity mirror only two hours before...

Chapter 2

Justin inspected his face in the mirror as he trimmed his facial hair with an electric razor.

Goddamn gray hairs.

He set the shaver down on the edge of the sink and reached for the tweezers, plucking unwanted graylings from his goatee. His fingers smoothed out the baby crow's feet hatching at the corners of his deep-set hazel eyes. The face staring back at him once sported a smooth brow, sharp jaw line, and a definable *single* chin, but time had creased its features and blunted the edges.

Huffing, he pulled a comb through his wavy auburn hair and scowled at the gray spreading from his temples. He reached for a box of hair dye. Things seemed to be going downhill fast. He glanced with a wince down at his bulging stomach. Jesus, he was out of shape. As if this was the first time he'd noticed. Reluctantly, he stepped on the digital scale.

247 lbs. glowed at him implacably.

At his current weight and height of five-nine he'd thought of himself as just being stocky, until a recent visit to the doctor's office pegged his body mass index as obese. *Obese?* He thought that term was just for fat people.

Short of a crash diet, a gym membership, Botox, and a facelift, no amount of poking or touch up was going to change things. But he wasn't desperate or vain enough for those solutions...yet.

“Goddammit!”

He cinched the towel tighter around his protruding waistline.

Justin Mazor, Ph.D. He had burned the candle at both ends of his academic career. Graduated Princeton cum laude at age twenty-two with a degree in computer science and received his doctorate in electrical engineering from MIT four years later. After working several years in Silicon Valley, MIT lured him back to Cambridge to help start its Wearable Computing Project in the Media Lab. He spent the next twenty years conducting research and development into ubiquitous computing with the required classroom lectures in between until he finally earned full tenured professorship and was given his own research lab and staff.

Two years ago, at the apex of his academic career and his big five-oh, his wife Cathy had filed for divorce, accusing him of caring more about his career than her. He'd admitted she was completely right, her attorney agreed, and he guiltily relinquished claims to the house and their shared bank accounts. Then he had

cashed out his entire 401k for the mortgage down payment on his pricy rehabbed riverside loft.

And now he had nothing to show for two decades of marriage and toil. No more wife. No family. No money. And no social life whatsoever.

But he still had his lab and his career. So since Cathy had left him he buried himself deeper into work and sleep, sustaining himself on fast food, coffee, and booze. The once ambitious whiz kid was now on the fast track to becoming a middle-aged burn out.

As he stood wiping off remnants of shaving cream from his face with a hand towel, Justin vowed to make up for the lost time he'd devoted to his career and a frigid wife at the expense of his sex life.

He needed to start by getting laid...today. And he had just the plan.

The natural light and bare brick walls of his spacious high-ceilinged loft welcomed him into the main open room where he donned a pair of dark green Euro-style jeans, a black Merino wool sweater and a sienna leather sport coat. On the forlorn granite-topped kitchen island, yawning pizza boxes and gaping beer cans, patiently awaiting his cleaning lady, attempted to seduce him with the mirage of a healthy home cooked breakfast suddenly materializing from the detritus. He scoffed and the mirage evaporated.

At the door, the open mouths of his supple Italian leather loafers engulfed his feet. He gave himself a last grudging once-over in the mirror, running his hand through his dyed hair just like the suave actor in the commercial.

Not too bad, not too bad.

Then his shoulders slumped. Who was he kidding? He was just a workaholic—and probably alcoholic—aging tech geek muddling into a midlife crisis with no social skills or friends. Grabbing his laptop shoulder bag, keys, and MIT faculty ID badge from the foyer table, he locked the door behind him, doubting even his prowess with computer technology would be able to get him a date with a campus coed.

But he was going to give it the ol' college try anyway.

Chapter 3

Crisp morning air gently wafted into Justin's nostrils, ushering glorious spring scents of lilac and azalea across his olfactory bulb. He set out on the four-block walk from his loft along the Charles River to his Media Lab office laboratory in the sleek tile and glass-wrapped Wiesner Building designed by MIT alumnus I.M. Pei back in the mid-80's hotshot architect days. Passing the Hayward Street parking garage, he pictured his red 1986 Alfa Romeo Spider Veloce collecting dust is its long term parking space. He rarely needed to drive anywhere. Not when everything he needed—beer, fast food, job—was all within a one-mile radius of his loft.

Bright sunshine scattered off the quivering storefront windows of Boston Baked Beans Coffee Roasters as the door slammed shut behind an exiting customer. Justin ducked in to get his morning caffeine and sugar fix. Instead of the plump barista who usually prepared his daily infusion, a petite girl with café au lait skin and dark roast eyes manned the counter. Her long straight hair, as lustrous as freshly roasted espresso beans, was pulled back into a ponytail leaving bangs to frame her preternaturally perky face.

“How can I help you, sir?” she asked, snapping her head from a biology textbook as she removed a pair of wireless earbuds.

“Uh...the other girl—”

“You mean Jen?”

“Yeah, I guess so. Kinda short and...” He gestured with his hands to indicate her sizable girth.

The girl behind the counter covered her mouth and giggled. “Yes, that’s Jen. She called in sick today so I’m filling in for her. I usually only work the mid-shift on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which I prefer since it gives me more time to study. You shoulda seen the rush we had a little while ago. I guess everybody’s now in lecture halls or at their work desks sipping their coffee. So anyway, what can I get for you?”

Justin blinked, not used to the banter. “Well, uhh...*Jen* usually makes me a quadruple-shot latte with a dash of almond syrup. Oh...and a cheese Danish to go, please.”

“No problem,” she replied, peering at him over the espresso machine as she ladled in steamed milk. “Seems you’ve got a serious habit.”

Justin chuckled nervously, like an addict anticipating the rush while anxiously watching heroin melt in the spoon. He and Jen never talked this much. Their transactions were strictly business, just like between dealer and junkie. Besides, he’d never been

very good at making small talk anyway, especially with good-looking women. Except his ex-wife. Cathy had been as socially awkward as he was when they first met in graduate school. But over the years she gradually shed her social insecurities and made many friends and went to lots of parties. Justin, on the other hand, had a difficult time relating to people outside of his lab or lecture hall, which was another reason she had left him.

“Hey, aren’t you Professor Mazor?”

Justin shuffled his feet, squinted at her. “Yes...”

“I audited your Introduction to Cybernetics course last semester. Remember when you were talking about how we’ll all have intracranial microchip implants in the near future that will give us expanded sensory abilities like x-ray vision?”

Justin crossed his arms and raised his chin, his demeanor turning academic. “Of course. But I never said ‘x-ray vision’ per se. I said infrared visual perception like some insects have, which will allow us to perceive things we normally can’t.”

“Oh...sorry, my bad. Anyway, I got to thinking that psychics and clairvoyants—maybe even everybody if they really tried hard enough—might have access to natural extrasensory abilities without having to resort to some microchips implanted—”

“I guess I don’t know much about ESP and all that pseudoscience mumbo-jumbo,” Justin interrupted sarcastically.

“Sorry, Professor.” She smiled demurely, handing him his coffee. “I actually really liked your lectures. They made me think there’s so much more potential for the human mind than most of us are currently using though. So I just wanted to thank you for inspiring me to wonder how we can tap into our own inner powers.”

He just nodded halfheartedly. “How much do I owe you?”

“Um...let’s see.” Her nails clacked on the point of sale screen. “That’ll be nine dollars and thirty-five cents, please.”

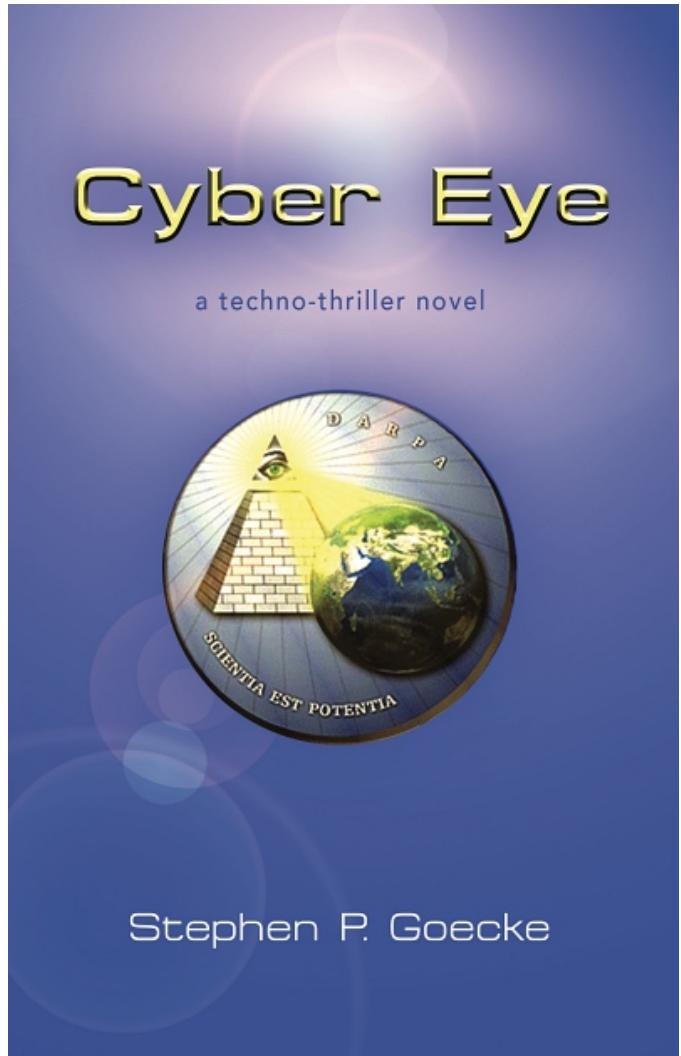
He fished into his pocket. “All I got is a twenty. You know what? Keep the change.”

“Seriously? Thank you, Professor Mazor!” she chimed. “I mean, I’m actually in pre-med over at Harvard on a partial academic scholarship, but they pay better over here at the MIT campus. Anyway, it was nice to meet you. My name is Charlotte. Friends call me Charley. You can call me Charley too, if you want.” She put her earbuds back in and waved goodbye, flashing him a coquettish smile.

“Nice to meet you,” Justin mumbled as he turned to the exit. Her singsong voice and unrelenting perkiness made him feel like a schmuck.

“Nice to meet you.”? God, that was lame. But she’s really cute and I think she was just flirting with me. Maybe she’d go out with me...Jesus Justin, you really need help. It’s her job to be friendly with everyone, for chrissake.

Outside he felt like an absolute idiot for sounding like such a dick about her idea that psychics might have access to parts of the brain that gave them extrasensory perception. He had never given much credence to the notion that the brain might naturally contain dormant capacities for extraordinary abilities. His entire career was predicated upon people needing machine assistance for such things. But he reminded himself that he was a scientist and needed to keep an open mind.



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