



Metropolis

Thea von Harbou

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Thea von Harbou's *Metropolis* is one science fiction classic everyone should read. Her visionary novel has been compared to such prophetic classics as Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*, Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, H. G. Wells' *When the Sleeper Wakes*, Karel Capek's *RUR*, and George Orwell's *1984*. Contemporary comparisons have been made to Samuel Delaney's *Triton*, Dan Simmons' *Hyperion*, Peter F. Hamilton's *The Reality Dysfunction*, and Greg Egan's *Permutation City*. "The language [of the book] is sometimes as thesauric as *Shiel*, as Kaleidoscopic as *Merritt*, as bone-spine as *Bradbury*, as poetic as *Poe*, as macabre as *Machen*," writes Forrest Ackerman.

Metropolis paints a stunning picture of the city of the future. At the top of the social pyramid, those who own the city's buildings and businesses live idyllic lives devoted to the pursuit of pleasure; while at its bottom are the workers who live a hellish existence, laboring like robots in its factories, dwelling with their gaunt, stunted children in the everlasting gloom of underground barracks. Fighting to right these inequities are two lovers: Freder, son of the master and builder of *Metropolis*, who is shocked to social conscience when he glimpses the squalor and hopelessness amid which his father's workers live; and Maria, who encourages the workers to stand united for their rights while following a path of non-violent resistance. Filled with unforgettable images from Joh Fredersen's headquarters, the New Tower of Babel, rearing high above the gleaming spires of *Metropolis* to the pleasure city, Yoshiwara, whose name flares across the skies to the factories where workers slave before machines that resemble a pantheon of the world's gods to the evil robotrix, Parody, with the eyes of a Madonna and lips of deadly sin, whose carnal dance inspires the workers to revolt ... *Metropolis* is an unforgettable, must-read book.

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