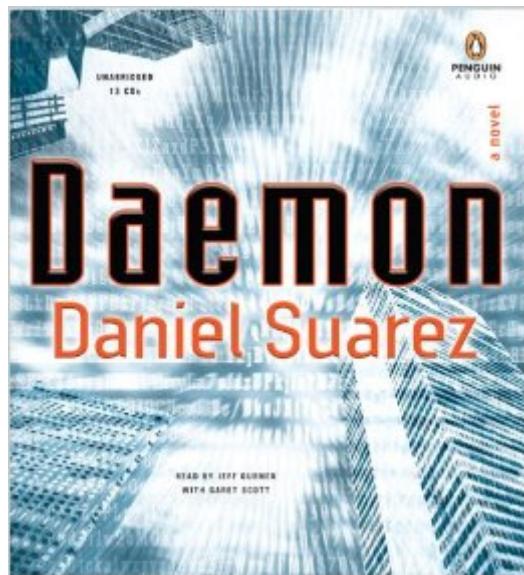


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# Daemon



## **Synopsis**

Matthew Sobol, programming genius, founder of CyberStorm Entertainment, one of the richest and most powerful of Silicon Valley's elite, is dead, but his final creation lives on to execute his last will and testament. At the moment of Sobol's death, computer programs around the world burst into life, creating an entity known as the Daemon. The Daemon infiltrates our hyper-connected society, gathering secrets, stealing identities. Soon it has the power to change lives as well as the power to take them: those who serve the Daemon are rewarded; those who defy it are eliminated. Recruiting acolytes from the dispossessed and disaffected, the Daemon secures a growing stranglehold on the world's most precious commodity: information. And once you control information itself, how easy would it be to remake the world? It is up to an unlikely alliance - a computer illiterate detective and a white-hat hacker with secrets of his own - to challenge the monster that Sobol unleashed from beyond the grave. But before they can confront the Daemon they must discover what it wants...

--This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

For a first novel, this one is pretty good. Others have summarized it, but there are a few details missing, so I will make a few points. This book is about few really central characters, but a cast of a dozen or so important characters, including the titular Daemon. It tells the precautionary story of what can happen when a very bright person gets very angry with society. Or perceives it to have outlasted its usefulness. Choose your poison. Matthew Sobol, the best game designer in the world, has died. With his death, a stunning series of events begins to take place, starting with the deaths of

a few programmers, and extending to the endangering of the entire world. Very few people can hope to stop his plan. These include Tripwire Merritt, "Jon Ross", Natalie Phillips, and a certain police detective you meet at the beginning of the book. There were a number of thoughts that went through my head as I read this book. First, it is paced to within an inch of its life. There are no slow parts, there are no parts where the plotting moves too fast and loses detail. Second, this is like Michael Crichton, only better. More accurate stories, more realistic, more detailed, more interesting characters (and more of them). Third, this compares well to *The Stand* and *The Matrix*, two of the epics of our time. Like the latter, technology plays a central role in this story, and like the latter, it doesn't end here. The only reason that I don't give this book five stars is that the ending is not complete enough. The last discussion in the book lacks the details, the philosophy, and the explanation, to raise this even further above the bar for techno-thrillers. Instead, it is left for later.

Few readers were more saddened by the premature death of Michael Crichton than I was. Ever since his death (and truthfully even before it) I'd read any novel that promised to introduce "the next Crichton." Invariably, I'd come away disappointed. Until *Daemon*. Daniel Suarez's debut novel gave me hope for the future of smart, complex techno-thrillers. What a read! What a find! Thank you, Vine! *Daemon* is the story of... Well, it's a little hard to summarize. The catalyst of this novel is the death (from brain cancer) of Matthew Sobol. Sobol is the young, multi-millionaire genius behind a computer gaming empire. Specifically, he made his fortune designing MMORPGs, and if you're like me, you're a reader who doesn't know squat about Massively Multi-player Online Role Playing Games. That's okay, you'll get educated along the way. So, Matthew Sobol spent a lot of time thinking about society and the world we live in as his death approached, and apparently he found it lacking. Or, perhaps, the tumors in his brain drove him mad. Take your pick. In either case, Sobol set in motion an elaborate plan that would be kicked off, only after a computer read of his obituary in the news. That was the catalyst that released the eponymous computer daemon into the world. For those that don't know (i.e. me), a daemon is a process that runs in the background and performs a specified operation at predefined times or in response to certain events. And that's precisely what Sobol's *Daemon* does. The obituary triggers the murders of some of the programmers that took part in the daemon's creation--in quite creative ways, I might add. And that is literally the start of the novel, and how we get introduced to homicide detective Peter Sebeck.

If you know even just a little about AI, encryption, computer networks, gaming and internet technology you're going to LOVE this book. This is one of those books that's a wild ride right from

the beginning, a page turner that you can't put down even late into the night when you really should be sleeping. This WILL keep you awake. Every time you start to put it down, the next 'big thing' occurs and you just have to find out the outcome. It starts out with an obituary on Matthew Sobol, a top computer game designer who's designed a half dozen games and he leaves behind kind of a super game in the form of a daemon that scans internet obituaries and news articles for keywords that trigger a world changing sequence of events. A detective, Peter Sebeck, who is investigating a pair of Internet-related homicides and Jon Ross, who is trying to help his company battle a virus become involved in trying to stop this destructive force from causing irreparable damage to the world. Anyone involved or interested in online gaming and virtual environments should find the technology aspect of this book especially intriguing. The plot revolves around an online game where it becomes a fine line between a virtual world and the material one. I understand that this is the first book by Daniel Suarez and that he published it under another name, Leinad Zeraus, a little over a year ago. He's an amazing writer and has another book in the works for next year. This one reads like you're watching a movie. You know how you can see the characters interacting and watch the action unfolding as you read some books? This is like that. It reminded me of a high tech Michael Crichton novel.

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