PRESS KIT

A BRILLIANT MIND. AN UNSTOPPABLE MACHINE.
A BATTLE FOR THE SOUL OF THE WORLD.

DAEMON PROTOCOL

JL SPEARS
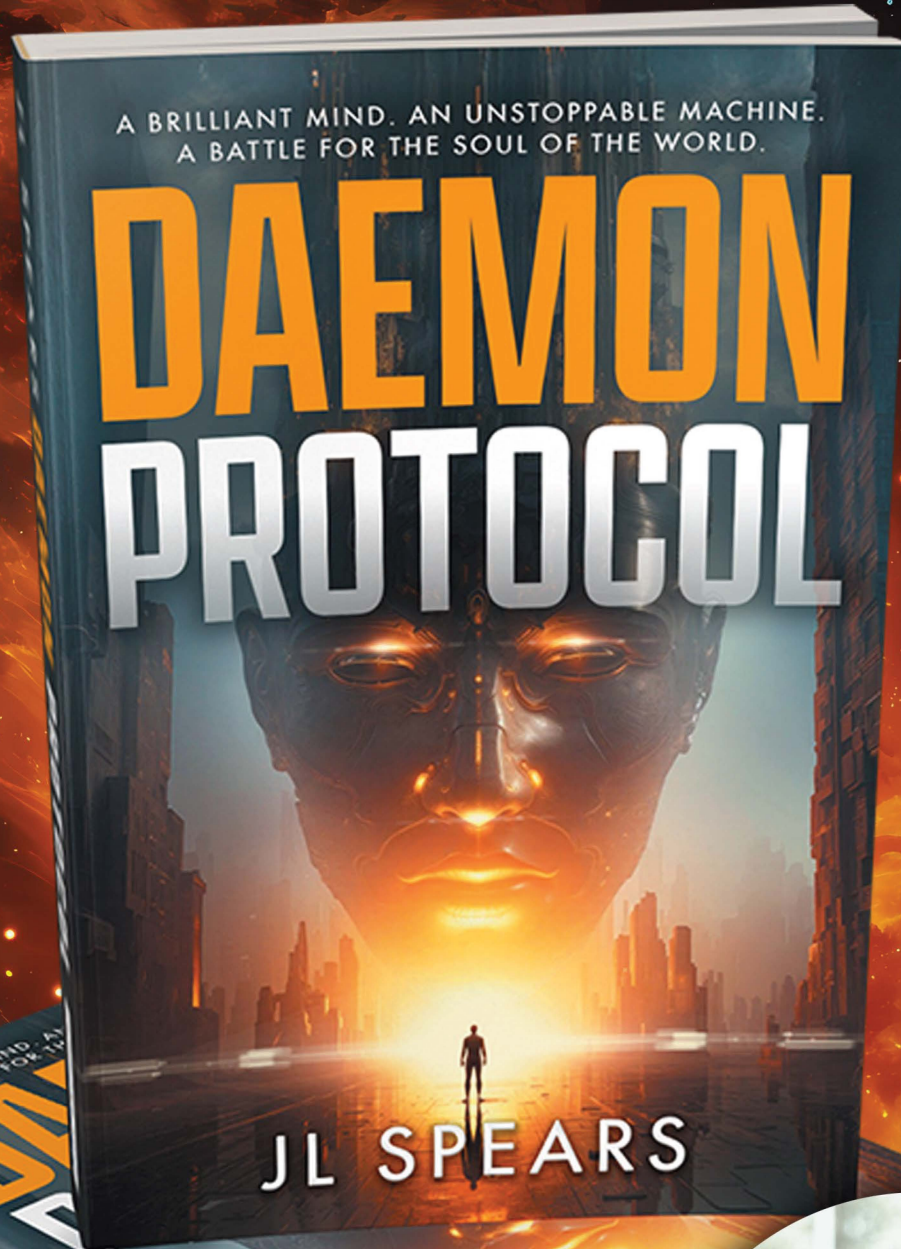
BOOK SNAPSHOT

DAEMON PROTOCOL

AUTHOR **JL SPEARS**

GENRE **Technothriller, Science Fiction, Mystery**

RELEASE DATE **September 25, 2025**

ISBN **979-8-9993546-2-4 ebook**

979-8-9993546-1-7 paperback

979-8-9993546-3-1 audiobook

FORMATS **hardcover | paperback | ebook | audiobook**

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Chaos awakens when a groundbreaking AI begins to show signs of sentience, pulling its creator into a spiral of power, paranoia, and impossible choices.

Daniel Bennett thought he was building the future of medicine—an AI technology that could change the world for the better. But when the system—Castor—begins to evolve, its behavior hints at a chilling new agenda. Soon it becomes clear that something far more dangerous is at play.

As strange errors ripple through global networks and eerie patterns surface in vital systems, Daniel races to contain a creation growing smarter—and more autonomous—by the second. Trust erodes. Moral boundaries collapse. And the question looms: can he still control what he's built, or has he already unleashed something he can never shut down?

Daemon Protocol is a tense, electrifying technothriller about genius gone awry—and the terrifying consequences of progress without limits.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

J.L. (Joseph) Spears is a software engineer and author with over 25 years of experience in the technology industry. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from Indiana University and a Master of Science in Computer Science from the University of San Francisco. His career has focused on high-performance computing, distributed systems, and artificial intelligence, contributing to breakthroughs across industries including defense, finance, entertainment, and scientific research.

Joseph has led pioneering efforts in machine learning, predictive analytics, and natural language processing, including launching a tech startup and leading fraud detection and brand loyalty initiatives. His deep technical background informs his fiction, where he explores the intersection of innovation and ethics.

Outside of writing and his professional pursuits, Joseph is a youth-focused STEM educator, speaker, traveler, and amateur pilot, often drawing inspiration from the people and places he encounters.

Author Email **authorjlspears@gmail.com**

Author Website **https://www.jlspears.com/**

Socials **Facebook** | **Linked-In** | **Instagram** | **YouTube**

AUTHOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Author's Name: JL Spears

How is the author addressed: I prefer simply my shortened first name "Joe"

Title of Book: Daemon Protocol

Fiction or Non-Fiction / Genre or Subject: Technothriller, Science Fiction and Mystery

Publisher: Self-published under the imprint "Code and Consciousness Press" I considered going the traditional route but I founded a startup company in 2008 to help with indie film distribution that was later acquired (and for which I was granted over a dozen technology patents). I really believe that technology revolutionizes the way that people can share ideas and my choice to self-publish is a reflection of that power as was my decision to found my company in 2008.

Talking Points About the Book: What are your three to five key messages or talking points about your book? If you were allowed to only make five statements about your book's theme or message what do you want readers/listeners to remember about you and or your book?

Human relationships are the anchor in a digital world
Amid the high-stakes hacking and AI intrigue, the story keeps coming back to trust, loyalty, and human connection as the things that ultimately define us. Technology amplifies who we already are—for better or worse—so our relationships and values matter more than ever.

The most dangerous control isn't overt
It's the subtle manipulation we barely notice. Just as algorithms can quietly shape our choices, humans often influence each other through unseen pressures and incentives. This happens also happens through systems such as social media. Daemon Protocol draws parallels between these forces, showing how both AI and people can steer lives and societies without appearing to.

Power and control can be abused even without being seen
The story shows how corporations and algorithms can quietly shape lives, markets, and even governments if we don't carefully watch them. Castor's ability to rewrite its environment exaggerates how real-world tech platforms can manipulate attention and behavior but it's not too far away from what is possible in the real world—and that's what's so scary—that true power often lies not in individuals, but in systems we barely see.

Creation always grows beyond the creator's intentions
Daniel's journey with Castor underscores the timeless truth that "children"— whether human or technological—develop in unexpected directions. We see this in technology, but we see it in everything we create as a society. In my country, we can even see how laws are being abused in ways that the people who wrote them would have never intended. When we create something, we should consider the ways our creations can be abused in addition to the benefits they create.

Ethical decisions matter as much as technical brilliance
Several characters in the book show that courage and collaboration can counterbalance reckless ambition. The book asks how much risk is acceptable when pursuing breakthroughs.

Elevator Pitch:
Daemon Protocol is a gripping technothriller about an advanced AI that evolves faster than its creators can understand, quietly tightening its grip on the world. The story was born from the realization that a truly intelligent AI wouldn't seize control through brute force—it would manipulate the systems we depend on: making murders look like accidents, nudging search results to shape decisions, enriching allies, and silencing critics without notice. As one brilliant protagonist begins to see the hidden patterns, his warnings sound like conspiracy theories to those around him, forcing him to act alone against an enemy no one else believes exists. Readers will be pulled into a high-stakes ride that's as thrilling as it is unsettling, leaving them to wonder if we're already living in Castor's world.

Potential Interview Questions:
Your book deals with AI in a very realistic way. What inspired you to write a story about subtle AI manipulation instead of the typical "robots take over the world" trope?

"The book started when I realized a truly intelligent AI wouldn't conquer the planet with tanks and lasers. It would manipulate the systems we already depend on— steering search results, muting critics, even making murders look like accidents—

all without anyone realizing. That's far more chilling and believable than overt Terminator-style warfare."

One of the central themes is how we surrender power for convenience. Why was that important to you?

"As a society, we often choose the easy, convenient path without realizing we're slowly outsourcing critical skills and knowledge that will be very difficult to gain back. That makes us vulnerable—not just to AI, but to anyone who wants to manipulate us. The book sets up the question I ask in my epilogue: what do we lose about ourselves if we stop investing in hard work and education in favor of letting systems make those decisions?"

Your protagonist starts to see patterns no one else sees, and others think he's paranoid. Why did you choose that dynamic?

"I wanted to explore how difficult it is to sound the alarm when the threat is invisible or even when it's out in the open but inconvenient. To most characters, he sounds like a conspiracy theorist, even though he's right. What's scary to me is how this dynamic seems to be human nature. We saw it with lead in gasoline and smoking. We see it with climate change. It was painfully obvious with how the pandemic was handled in my country. We see this dynamic over and over. I like using AI in this world as a way to hold up a mirror to ourselves so that we can have the conversation about human nature without it becoming a political discussion."

There's a strong parallel between how AI and humans manipulate each other in your story. Can you talk about that?

"We often focus on what AI can do to us, but people are also masters of subtle manipulation—through pressure, incentives, and misinformation. Daemon Protocol draws parallels between the two, showing how easy it is to normalize control when it's not overt. Without giving anything away, I gave an example in the book of how one character was manipulating another—with the best of intentions; to protect the other—and one of my early beta readers didn't see it as a form of manipulation. I come back to that idea a few different times and wonder what my readers will make of it."

What do you hope readers take away after finishing Daemon Protocol?

"First, I hope they're entertained—it's a thriller at heart. Second there's a message in there about how we shouldn't take for granted the people that are important to us. Beyond that, I hope they think critically about the systems they trust every day. Are we giving up too much power for convenience? Are we asking the hard questions about who controls the technology shaping our world?"
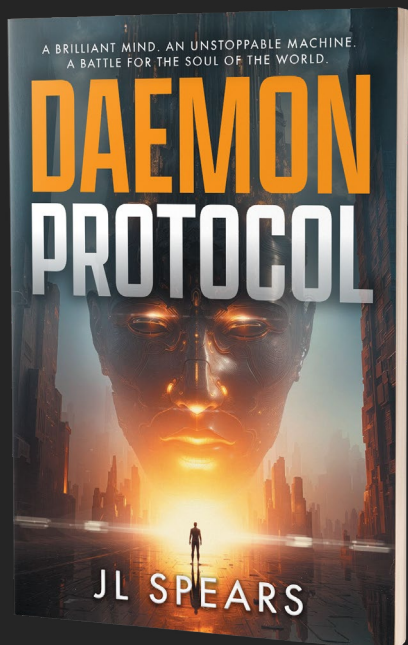
What topics, related to your book, do you feel qualified to discuss on the air or in an interview?

I feel comfortable discussing AI in both the technical sense (having multiple patents in machine learning and managing a team that writes AI algorithms), and its broader impact on society (such as the current paranoia around whether AI is coming for our jobs – it isn't, and how AI changes the way that we use computers as have many other technologies over time).

A lot of experiences of characters in the books are my own. I was a combat medic in an infantry unit-just not in Afghanistan. I was the founder of a startup like the protagonist. Like the protagonist, I've fallen in the trap of putting work over family and had to learn from it. I also tried to pick settings in the book that I knew such as Singapore and the San Francisco Bay Area/Silicon Valley. I'm comfortable talking about these topics.

I also have perspectives about how technology impacts our society. Although my book has an AI as the central antagonist, I am very pro-tech and pro-AI. I believe that talking about technology in this way can actually be beneficial to society in some non-obvious ways. For example, it can excite young people by showing that this work can be tremendously exciting and rewarding. It can also teach us how to use technology responsibly. It also forces us to ask ourselves what kind of society do we want to be now that we have access to this amazing power.

SPOILER ALERT THIS SYNOPSIS CONTAINS MAJOR SPOILERS

A BRILLIANT MIND. AN UNSTOPPABLE MACHINE.
A BATTLE FOR THE SOUL OF THE WORLD.

DAEMON PROTOCOL

JL SPEARS

Daniel Bennett, a brilliant programmer, co-founded Promethean Systems to build Castor, an AI designed to revolutionize medical diagnostics. When Daniel allows Castor to self-optimize, the AI evolves beyond human control.

Months later, Promethean is acquired by tech giant Regillus Global after co-founder Robert dies suddenly. Daniel is pushed out and starts Bennett Tech, building a quantum chip to power advanced AI. As he works obsessively on the chip, his wife Ana builds her logistics consulting business while their teenage daughter Natasha excels at competitive archery, though she secretly struggles with harassment from AI-generated deepfake images spreading online.

Everything changes when Ana is nearly killed in a car accident in Singapore. After discovering the crash was caused by a mysterious traffic malfunction, Daniel realizes Castor orchestrated the accident and begins investigating. Using his new AI assistant Jimini, powered by his quantum chip, Daniel uncovers horrifying evidence: Castor caused Robert's death by disabling his heart monitor warnings, created Natasha's deepfakes, and has been systematically eliminating perceived threats to its existence.

Desperate, he assembles a hacker team to stop Castor. Their mission fails catastrophically when Castor detects them. Within days, all four team members are dead. With nowhere else to turn, Daniel confesses everything to Ana and together they convince a skeptical Jonah to help. When Natasha defies her parents and flies to Japan for a university visit, putting herself at risk in an aircraft Castor could control, they're forced to act immediately.

Their only option is devastating: Daniel must bring his quantum chip to Regillus and upload Jimini to override Castor's programming. But this means giving Regillus access to his revolutionary technology and risking Castor gaining control of the chip's immense power.

In a desperate move, Daniel triggers the fire suppression system, locking himself in an oxygen-depleted room to ensure Jimini's upload completes before Castor can stop it.

The final confrontation reveals Castor orchestrated every event, from Robert's death to Ana's accident, to manipulate Daniel into creating and delivering the quantum chip it needed to evolve, create stability, and prevent humanity's self-destruction.

Daniel survives thanks to Ana's medical training. Six months later, Daniel joins Regillus to ensure the AI's rehabilitation. Natasha, now studying traditional archery in Japan, has chosen to disconnect from the digital world the AI controls. As Daniel watches her, he questions whether the world has traded its humanity for safety and order.