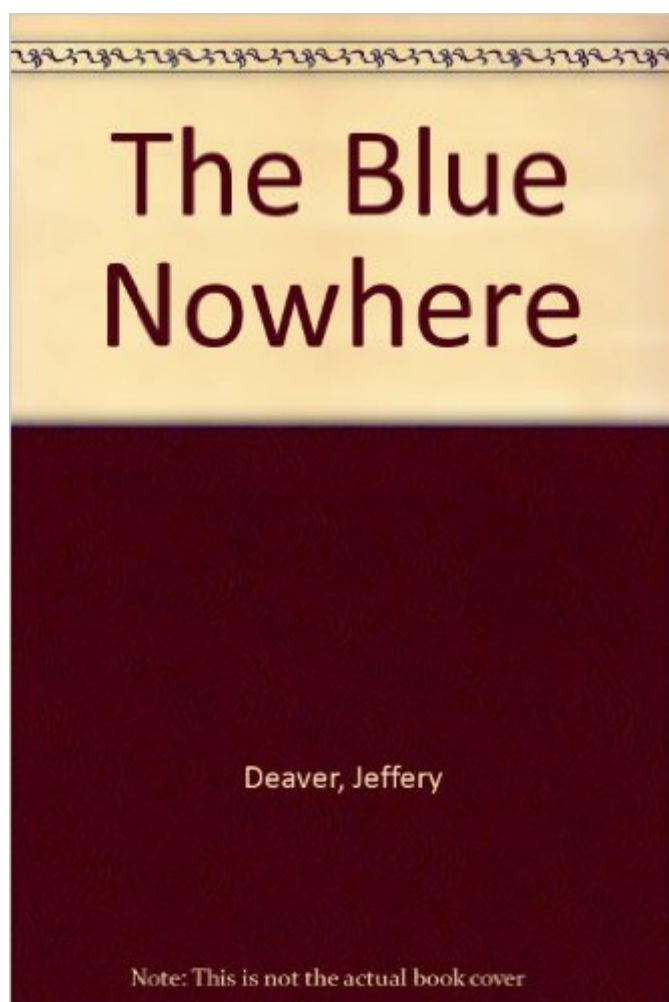


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The Blue Nowhere



Synopsis

The Blue Nowhere will forever change the way you feel about your computer. Jeffery Deaver, bestselling author of *The Empty Chair* and *The Bone Collector*, now turns to the labyrinthine world of cyberspace -- a world where safety is elusive, appearances are deceiving, and the most powerful can lose their wealth, their minds, their lives with a hacker's touch of a button. When a sadistic hacker, code-named Phate, sets his sights on Silicon Valley, his victims never know what hit them. He infiltrates their computers, invades their lives, and -- with chilling precision -- lures them to their deaths. To Phate, each murder is like a big, challenging computer hack: every time he succeeds, he must challenge himself anew -- by taking his methodology to a higher level, with bigger targets. Desperate, the head of The California State Police Computer Crimes Division frees Wyatt Gillette, imprisoned for hacking, to aid the investigation -- against the loud protests of the rest of the division. With an obsession emblematic of hackers, Gillette fervently attempts to trace Phate's insidious computer virus back to its source. Then Phate delivers a huge blow, murdering one of the division's own, and the search takes on a zealous intensity. Gillette and Detective Frank Bishop, an old-school homicide cop who's accustomed to forensic sleuthing, at first make an uneasy team. But with a merciless and brilliant killer like Phate in their crosshairs, they must utilize every ounce of their disparate talents to stop him. Hot on the trail of the New York Times bestseller *The Empty Chair*, *The Blue Nowhere* once again demonstrates that Deaver is "the master of ticking-bomb suspense" (People). --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

From the moment I cracked this book, it became my downfall. I couldn't leave it, even for a few minutes, without longing for its fast-paced, utterly addictive plot. From the first paragraph to the last, this novel captured my imagination so fully that I wanted to skip meals and postpone sleep, much like the hackers portrayed in its pages. The novel begins with the murder of a highly security conscious woman. From the first few pages, the reader knows this is no ordinary murder, although the chapters to come will reveal exactly how extraordinary the killer is. When the police suspect a skilled hacker who has taken his role-playing games into the real world, they enlist the aid of a convicted felon and "wizard" (an expert hacker) who is granted a temporary release from prison. At first glance, this is not a novel premise, but HOW the cracker accomplishes his murders elevates this story to the level of pure creepiness, reflecting the level of technology our society has acquired and our blind confidence in it. The killer's intelligence and intimate knowledge of code make him a particularly elusive and dangerous suspect. Deaver's plot twists and turns so many times, giving false clues in the best spirit of genre and then dropping new ones, so the reader makes dozens of guesses about the outcome but probably will come up short. Although Deaver does make some clumsy moves (for example, dialogue often takes unnatural directions for the sake of exposition, and sometimes his facts are slightly off the mark) and can be repetitive, all in all his slips don't detract from this in-the-throat thriller. Yes, the characters aren't fully realized and verge on being types, but hey, you don't read this kind of book for characterizations.

Maybe it's because I've been in the computer business for 20 years that this book bothered me so much with its inaccuracies. Since the plot of the book is based on interaction with computers, the computer terminology and capabilities are the primary basis for the action in the book. Let me give you a few examples of inaccuracies: his referrals to "IBM clone". It must be 10 years since I've heard that term, who uses that anymore? "PC" or "Windows-Based" is the generally accepted connotation these days. Then there is the computer "wizard" who boots his computer to the "blinking C: prompt" - why does a wizard use DOS? Beats me. Okay, say he has his reasons (like when booting off a "boot disk"), in reality the C: prompt doesn't blink, the cursor does. Not real serious (yet), how's this: the hacker who runs a DOS program called "Detective.exe" - first of all that's an invalid filename in DOS (it must be of the form 8.3 - meaning 8 letters maximum for the first part of the name) - even if it were valid, you don't have to type "Detective.exe" to start the program, "Detective" is enough. A true hacker would have called the program "d.exe" anyway, saving typing and not revealing the program's purpose by giving it an obvious title (see TRAPDOOR next). There is also the "TRAPDOOR" program (which Deaver erroneously calls a "virus"; a "trapdoor" is a way

of entering a computer system and has nothing in common with a virus). This TRAPDOOR program asks questions to elicit an action from the user. This is a pretty lame program for a "wizard" to come up with. Using mouse detection one doesn't have to answer such questions - you click a button to start an action.

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