



The Innocent

David Baldacci

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America has enemies--ruthless people that the police, the FBI, even the military can't stop. That's when the U.S. government calls on Will Robie, a stone cold hitman who never questions orders and always nails his target.

But Will Robie may have just made the first--and last--mistake of his career . . .

THE INNOCENT

It begins with a hit gone wrong. Robie is dispatched to eliminate a target unusually close to home in Washington, D.C. But something about this mission doesn't seem right to Robie, and he does the unthinkable. He refuses to kill. Now, Robie becomes a target himself and must escape from his own people. Fleeing the scene, Robie crosses paths with a wayward teenage girl, a fourteen-year-old runaway from a foster home. But she isn't an ordinary runaway--her parents were murdered, and her own life is in danger. Against all of his professional habits, Robie rescues her and finds he can't walk away. He needs to help her. Even worse, the more Robie learns about the girl, the more he's convinced she is at the center of a vast cover-up, one that may explain her parents' deaths and stretch to unimaginable levels of power.

Now, Robie may have to step out of the shadows in order to save this girl's life . . . and perhaps his own.

The Innocent Details

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From Reader Review The Innocent for online ebook

Paul O'Neill says

What a ride! Baldacci is turning into one of my favourites.

This is a fast paced, non-stop thriller with a few twists and turns, some that I saw coming, others I didn't.

Superb audiobook narration.

D.B. Woodling says

Will Robie, a highly skilled U.S. government assassin, has a pang of conscience for the first time in his long career and is unable to pull the trigger on an assigned target. Soon after his handler disappears. Which can mean only one thing: Robie is now in an equally talented assassin's crosshairs. His contingency plan: to assume one of his many aliases and make an urgent and stealthy escape on a hackneyed city bus.

Fourteen-year-old Julie Getty believes her parents when they declare they have successfully battled their chemical demons for the last time. Confident the recent rehabilitation will stick, she makes a clandestine break from a creepy foster family and strikes out for home. While packing her suitcase, per her mother's earlier instruction, she hears her parents arrive, accompanied by an unfamiliar guest. An escalating argument ensues and Julie bolts downstairs to discover her father shot dead. Obeying her mother's plea, Julie backtracks upstairs and escapes through her bedroom window. Her mother's last words to the killer, *She doesn't know anything*, continue to haunt her as she boards the same hackneyed bus where a second killer waits to finish the job.

Is their chance meeting merely a coincidence? Robie doesn't believe in coincidences or becoming an easy target. And now it's not just his life on the line.

Baldacci paces the action and backstory with the proficiency one would expect from a multi-title author, though many readers have expressed dismay over his compulsion to humanize the protagonist, stating these efforts are not only unconvincing but also bog the story down. I would suppose ? even though Robie believes his targets "deserved killing," ? as the bodies stack up and the road ahead becomes much shorter than the one behind that even a stone-cold killer might feel remorse. Despite the occasional lull, I would recommend *The Innocent*. On to your next rousing adventure, Mr. Baldacci!

Suzanne says

An assassin for the US. Of course this is interesting! Pretty good start to this series. I am going to read The Hit tomorrow if I have the time. I'm completely into these Baldacci books right now. Still reading the Alex cross series and my YA addiction but it's nice to have these Baldacci series on my nightstand also!

My quick and simple overall: interesting and not easily predictable at all. Very good start to a series!

***TANYA* says**

Very entertaining. Full of plot twists, I listened to this on audio and it was great. Sound effects, his and her voices, and music. Quite enjoyable.

Sean Peters says

How can you become even more addicted to reading ?

Well after 3-4 brilliant books that's how I have become even more addicted.

The Innocent and The Hit with Will Robie are both great.

The Innocent is the first of the Will Robie books, and David Baldacci has created a great strong character.

This is a gripping, tense, fast paced, action packed thriller, keeping you on your toes all the way.

I started to become suspicious of one character, and right to be.

David Baldacci brought a new hero matching Jack Reacher, and Will Robie will return later on the year for The Target.

I also do enjoy the young fiesty character Julie Getty and FBI Agent Vance.

Highly recommended, as is The Hit.

What I find difficult is I read a author, like David Baldacci, love his books then want to read all of them, but then given so many other recommendations, then I love to read all of another author.

Oh why do I have to work for eight hours a day and fit so many other things into my day.

Susan says

I listened to this book on a long road trip, and would have bailed after the first chapter if I had not been trapped in the car for hours. My first Baldacci book, I found the writing in The Innocent comically sophomoric. Really, I laughed out loud several times and found myself predicting the inane dialog aloud while hurtling down the highway. It was impossible to suspend disbelief listening to this over the top ridiculous plot and cartoonish characters. Clearly, many people love this book, but I just could not find a single reason to recommend this book to anyone for any reason.

Matt says

Baldacci hits another one out of the park with THE INNOCENT. He takes his fast-paced thriller genre and applies it to this great independent book, keeping the reader interested from the get-go and not releasing them until the final page has been turned. His apparently newer major male and female characters make this book quite exciting, especially if listened to, as I did.

Baldacci applies what may seem a quasi-cookie cutter theme to this novel; pinning an independent male together with a non-suspecting (or at least less 'rough') female main character. In this case, a forty-something assassin of the US Government with a teenager on the run from a crummy life in foster care. What begins as a jilted friendship explodes into the discovery of an evil web of terror and deceit, implicating both of them in something horrific. Baldacci peels away the layers of the story while moving the characters ahead in such a way that you can't, as the reader, help but feel for them. Add some romance and agency jockeying, and you have the crux of the Baldacci recipe for a successful novel.

While I am always a sucker for his series, Baldacci has done an excellent job of leading the reader through the pages of this well crafted book.

Kudos, Mr. Baldacci. Keep turning out these great books!

Bibi says

3.5 stars

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

Rereading on Audiobook 2/18-

I wanted to listen to this book because I have come to love listening to action/adventure books, and this one impressed me so much when I read it. I still love Will Robie on the second listen. He's all business, but he's also a moral person. That's a very important balance for a man who kills at the will of the US government. He's enigmatic in many ways, his history not explicitly spelled out. The reader is left to wonder what led Robie to this life. Also the reader feels his sense of disconnection. He's much too self-possessed to come off as emo about it, but there's an underlying sense of loneliness that he feels living the life of a killer who has to jet about to parts around the globe to take out targets. Killing changes a person, and the effect it has had on Robie is clear.

I reread this after reading the first two John Puller novels, and I can discern what is part of Baldacci's narrative style. Having said that, Robie does feel distinctive from Puller. Robie doesn't color in the lines like Puller does. Robie's work puts him outside of the discipline of the military and makes him more of a loner who has to make split second decisions to accomplish his task. But both have a sense of honor, well-honed instincts and survival skills.

As before, my favorite aspect of this book was Robie's interactions with Julie. Julie helps Robie

remember what it's like to be human and to reconnect to people. In some ways she saves him as much as he saves her.

I bumped this up to 5 stars.

The Innocent is perfect for fans of the enigmatic, laconic, capable action/thriller hero. Will Robie has already been added to my list of kickbutt artists. Robie kills people for a living on behalf of the US government. He's very good at it. He has never failed a mission yet, until he is hired to kill someone who clearly doesn't need killing. He has to flee the scene to stay alive, and ends up on a bus out of DC with another runaway, a young girl named Julie. When he observes that someone is trying to kill her, he takes out the assailant and gets Julie off the bus, seconds before it explodes. Normally Robie is a loner, but this time he has to take on a partner, a person to keep safe while he figures out why their paths have crossed and people seem to be gunning for them both.

I enjoyed this book a lot. Baldacci develops a story of obvious complexity with great skill. He makes it look simple with his straightforward writing. However, layers keep getting pulled away to reveal something very multifaceted as the two various characters' lives intersect in a way that seems random initially. I liked how he conveys Robie's expertise at what he does. He's the real deal, Robie is. He's very observant and skilled, but understated about it. I loved the dialogue between Robie and others, particularly Julie. This book had me laughing a lot. A big, tough guy like him finds out just how mouthy a teenage girl can be (and they can be very mouthy). She's almost like a chip off the block with her own set of survivor skills. She's had a tough life and is just as much a survivor as Robie is himself. Although this game they are in is high stakes and playing for keeps. She needs a protector who knows a lot about getting the bad guys dead and keeping alive.

I'm really glad my library had this book. I practically devoured it. I would love to read more books about Will Robie, and hopefully Julie will show up as a cameo. I can't believe they will see the last of each other.

Definitely recommend this to fans of literary tough guys.

Overall rating: 4.5/5.0 stars.

Jim says

I enjoy reading books by David Baldacci and have read many of them. He has some great series, Camel Club; King & Maxwell; John Puller; and Amos Decker, as well as stand alone novels. This is the first book in the Will Robie series. It did not start out well. Very short sentences that all started with "He". He this; he that; he did; he didn't. I found myself hoping that this would change and change quickly or I would never be able to finish. Fortunately it did and the remainder of the book was an action packed tale of suspense.

Will Robie is an assassin for a clandestine United States government agency. The first couple of chapters are about assignments Robie is on. A drug lord and a Middle East terrorist. The next assignment is not as clear cut and Robie does not follow through. Fleeing the scene he crosses paths with 14 year old Julie Getty who ran away from her foster home only to witness the murder of her parents. Now they are both on the run and in danger. But who is the target? Robie because he did not carry out his mission? Or Julie who witnessed her parents murder? As the story unfolds it could be either one of them. Or both. Could they be linked? That would be a heck of a coincidence. The two of them fleeing separate events and are now targets of the same

bad guy(s). As deaths mount they team up with FBI special agent Nicole Vance in the investigation. The story is not very believable but it is certainly entertaining and this is fiction and being entertained is what I look for in a story.

Will Robie starts out as a loner. He is after all an assassin and a loner by nature. Julie Getty may be fourteen but she is very mature and intelligent. There was a scene when Will and Julie first crossed paths that made me laugh. Will was thinking Julie was going to be killed and he would have to step in to prevent that from happening. No need for the professional. Julie manages quite well ... this time. As the story unfolds we start seeing a transformation in Will. He bonds with Julie and feels some responsibility for her welfare. He is also attracted to a woman who lives in his apartment building. Dating is not something he is familiar or comfortable with given his occupation and he has mixed emotions.

Overall this is an enjoyable story. It did not start out that great but picked up as the story developed and kept you guessing trying to figure out what was happening and who, if anyone, could be trusted. I plan on reading the other books in this series, The Hit; The Target; and The Guilty.

Michael says

This started out as a pretty thrilling and fun ride and promising for my first experience with a Baldacci tale. But ultimately the trope of someone trained to be killing machine slowly learning to become more human wore a little thin. That and the somewhat sappy role of a female FBI agent and a scrappy teenage girl in this process leads me to rate it modestly.

Right away Baldacci sucked my tense attention in pretty good as we follow CIA agent Will Robie through a series of thrilling and crafty assassinations of worthy targets around the world. Back on the home front in D.C., he balks on a domestic hit and becomes wary of some form of treachery within the U.S. powers-that-be. Soon thereafter he has a close call on an event I will not disclose, in the process saving a 14 year old runaway girl, Julie, who may have been a target. Though the rest of the book, Robie bonds with the smart and brave teen and the lady FBI agent while working to figure out a fiendish conspiracy. There is a long gap of paranoid ignorance and an accumulating body count before the puzzle is solved near the climactic close. Fairly satisfying for escapist reading, although in the end the book left me with the same sense of empty calories as I used to get after reading books of the Ludlam Bourne series back in the 80's.

Alex is The Romance Fox says

The Innocent, is the 1st book in David Baldacci latest Will Robbie Series featuring the new character Will Robbie.

Will Robie works for a secret clandestine US agency and is one of their top operatives. His life revolves around his job and missions and is portrayed as the perfect operative.....

His employer decided who among the living and breathing would qualify as a target. And then they turned to men like Robie to end the living and breathing part. It made the world better, was the justification.

The book starts off with some back-story of some of Robie's previous missions which gives us a bit of an insight into his character and his life.

Robie is somewhat surprised about his latest assignment. The target is a Washington DC female government employee with a family. His instincts are telling him that something is not right and as he hesitates to carry out his orders, some other sniper finishes the mission instead. He realizes that you don't play around with not completing a mission, so he leaves town under the radar and heads off to New York City until he finds out more about his failed mission and the possibility that he may be the next target.

Julie Getty, 14 years old, smart, tough and street-wise is on the run after witnessing the murder of her parents.

Robie and Julie's paths cross when they both board the same bus. When he saves her from an assassin that he recognizes, they team up to solve the reason for both being targeted. Their meeting at first seems unrelated to each other's dilemma but the events that follow show a connection between his mission and her family's murder. Joining forces with a local FBI agent, who offers to help them. A race against time to find the people responsible for the crimes and not knowing who they can trust.

The plot reminded me a bit of the movie, *Leon: The Professional*, where Jean Reno, a hit man, saves and helps his next door neighbor, a young girl, Natalie Portman, after she witnesses her parent's murder and how she makes him a more humane person.

Engrossing, good pacing, tense, believable characters, action packed twists and turns and humor...

“Any spies work there? Doubtful. While lucrative, corn subsidies don’t really get bad guys all that excited.”

“He has twenty-nine friends, which isn’t a lot, but I don’t know how long he’s been on Facebook either. And he’s a really old guy.” “he’s only fifty,” Vance pointed out. Julie shrugged. “Like I said, he’s a really old guy.”

A great introduction to a new series and a strong, intriguing and likeable hero.

I liked this quote:

“You had to take life as it came. It gave no quarter, spared no feelings. Limited no pain. Put no ceiling on happiness.”

♥Rachel♥ says

Really liked Will Robie, and I'm looking forward to more adventures with him. This one was heavy on action and some of the plot seemed a little implausible, but entertaining even so.

This narration was different from what I'm used to with some sound effects. Kind of added a fun layer.

Loved that there were male and female narrators and they played their parts throughout the story.

Janebooks says

Last August when I wrote a review of *THE TOURIST* by Olen Steinhauer, I said a few things about some other spy/thriller writers...

Lately, my favorite spy, espionage, thriller writers have gotten a bit boring. Vince Flynn writes thrillers after the fact which makes them alternative history, Tom Clancy has forsaken Jack Ryan, David Baldacci is writing cute (last one was a Nicholas Sparks with a happy ending). The only thing Alex Berenson wrote that I enjoyed was his 2008 review in NY Times of *THE GIRL WITH THE GOLDEN TATTOO*. I only read Daniel Silva's Gabriel Allon series when stolen or forged art is involved, and Brian Haig has stopped writing his Sean Drummond series at the bequest of his publisher BUT I found a new author that I'm currently reading and enjoying...

Ten months later I'm a happy camper again having just finished the second of the last two thrillers by David Baldacci....and he's forgiven: no more Camel Club nor summer romance "stuff..." DB has created two new hero spies.....John Puller in *ZERO DAY* and now Will Robie in *THE INNOCENT*.

In a way Will Robie of *THE INNOCENT* is the more exciting hero! He's a clandestine assassin for the USA who falters on his last kill. He teams up with a 14-year old bright kid, a runaway from foster homes...and an attractive FBI agent...and seriously considers dating a lovely gal who lives in his apartment complex in Washington, D. C. Quite a change in lifestyle for a spy who's always been a loner!

There's a bus explosion, a run at some Gulf War vets, several foiled assassination attempts by the other side, and a heavily armored government black SUV with no-flat tires and tinted windows that's chasing Robie and the young girl. Lots of action, a nice twist for the ending but...

Stop tying up loose ends at the end of your thrillers, Baldacci, that aren't loose. You had me satisfied about twenty pages before you ended both books.

May we have another helping of John Puller and Will Robie, please?

4.25 stars out of 5 stars.

VaultOfBooks says

By David baldacci. Grade A

This is the first time that I have gotten my hands on something written by David Baldacci, and now I regret not having read anything by him before.

As is often the case, I try to guess the plot by looking at the jacket. The first one was: a common American who turns against some extremely powerful System to save his daughter. The blurb cleared that

misconception. This was the first of many; Baldacci is good at that – flawlessly leading you to believe something without actually saying it, and then doing just the opposite.

An assassin with a mission. But whose side is he on?

Another action-packed thriller from one of the world's most popular writers.

Back in DC after successful missions in Edinburgh and Tangier, assassin Will Robie sees his latest assignment, to eliminate a US government employee, go badly wrong. What had she done, or what did she know? Robie is now a wanted man.

But it seems that he's not the only one on the run. Young teenager Julie Getty is devastated by the inexplicable murder of her parents in their home. Who wanted them dead, and why, is a mystery. But Julie is smart enough to believe that their killer will come after her. Robie and Julie meet when he saves her from an attempt on her life as they were trying to leave town.

The police investigating the hit start to take an interest in Robie. He's particularly attracting the interest of Special Agent Nicole Vance, who believes that the two cases are connected. Robie finds himself in a dangerous position as he is tasked to investigate a crime at which he was present. Does he need to change sides to save lives – including his own?

So, the synopsis made it clear that the central character is Secret Agent Will Robie, who is actually an official assassin of the US government's secret services. He is trained to kill people without questioning the reason and he is the best at his job. Initially he comes across as ruthless and cold-blooded, but redeems himself when the reader learns his "victims" were international terrorists or national threats. During one such assignment his Still-Human side overcomes his Cold-Blooded-Killer side and gives him pause. For the first time in his career, he disobeys the agency's orders and runs from the kill site. What happens during his run is interesting. He finds Julie Getty, a fourteen year old girl running from her killer's parents and still in the throes of his Still-Human side, he lets her join him. His plan is simple: keep both of them alive.

Now Julie is the real star of the story. Not only is she talented beyond her age, she is fearless and sensible as well. She saw her parents die right in front of her eyes and now she is beyond any emotion, suffering or pain. But she knows whom to trust and she trusts Robie. She also makes him feel. Under Julie's tutelage, Robie discovers a new side of himself. He even develops a semi-crush on a White House Staffer named Annie Lambert, which is really not his natural behavior.

The story takes a turn when Robie's agency finds that his 'handler' has turned up and deceived the country by sending Robie on an innocent's kill. At this point, I started to feel that everyone was a convict, be it the FBI or DCIS.

It's proof of the author's terrific storytelling capabilities that he drew me in from the very first chapter and retained my attention till the last. Baldacci has a natural capability to make the reader visualize things by describing every minute detail in a way that isn't tedious. Sometimes I felt as if I was an eyewitness to whatever was happening.

The story is like a puzzle but every piece is placed at a location where you can start thinking of next possible match. I am still amazed with David Baldacci's capability of scattering the plot into million pieces but putting it back together with so much precision. At the end of every chapter my mind was working faster than usual by trying to guess the next event. I am also awed by the perfect sync of the chapters. Baldacci didn't miss even a single time frame, something that made the book a One-Sit read for me, which is applause-worthy seeing how long the book is. The twists and turns of the story kept me enthralled throughout the book and even after that, I kept on thinking about them over and over again.

The language was simple yet very gripping throughout the book. I consider it a Visual Book instead of just a novel because you will actually see what you read. 'The Innocent' is a book that will keep your brain engaged all the time, so make sure you don't have anything else worth doing when you're reading it. ;)

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