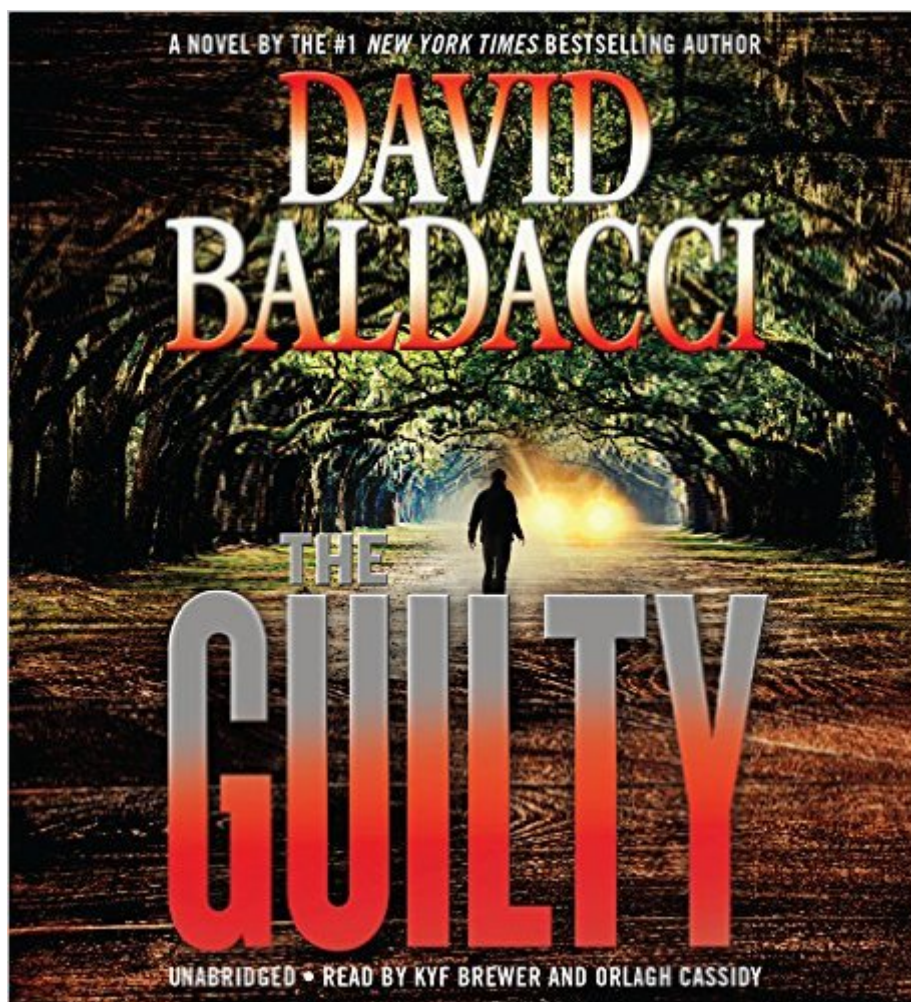


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## The Guilty (Will Robie)



## Synopsis

Following David Baldacci's #1 "New York Times" bestseller "The Target," lethal government assassin Will Robie returns! When Will Robie receives word that his father who he hasn't spoken to in years has been arrested for murder, Robie immediately heads home to investigate. His hometown is a remote, economically depressed small town where everyone still remembers him as a high school sports star who left one night and was never seen again. Dan Robie is a local judge, and he's suspected of murdering a man who appeared before him in court. Robie and his father have never seen eye-to-eye, and he pushes Robie almost to the point of leaving town. But when another murdered victim shows up, Robie realizes that there may be more to the story than just his father's vigilante justice."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is #4 in David Baldacci's bestselling series about Will Robie, the hit man with a conscience. I had wondered how Baldacci could keep this kind of series going. His answer is to make it personal and go back to Robie's early days. While a major hit by Robie is successful, the collateral damage of the death of a young girl by the same bullet is too emotional for Robie to take. He is not able to complete his next assignment where a young boy is in the same room as his target. His controller tells him to take a break and get himself together again. At the same time, he tells him that his estranged father has been arrested for murder. Reluctantly Robie goes back to the small Mississippi town that he left over 20 years ago to find out what has happened. Robie has to face up to his past

and the estranged father who physically and mentally abused him for so many years. I enjoyed the first half of the book (3.5 stars) as Robie adjusts again to life in the small deep-south town he abandoned a long time ago. Many things have changed. His father is now a Judge, has remarried a beautiful woman around Robie's age and has a 3-year-old son (so Robie now has a stepmother and half-brother). He starts to come to grips with the past and tries to work out if he can help his father - the only way to get his father released is to find the actual murderer. But his father is not very enthusiastic about his help. The second part of the book is basically a third-rate whodunit (2 stars). When his colleague Jessica Reel comes to help him the body count escalates. Robie and Reel discover more murders, blackmail, pedophilia, incest, and consanguinity. Of course along the way they get ambushed and chased by the baddies.

This is a review I never imagine posting. It actually pains me to write this about someone who had once been one of my favorite authors. There was a time when David Baldacci was my second favorite author. He slowly dropped from #2 but remained in my top 5. Then he dropped somewhere between 6 and 10. Now? Now I sadly can state I'm close to giving up on him completely. His novels have become formulaic. Characters interchangeable. It almost feels like he uses the same template and then just inserts whichever character. (Am I the only one who feels there no difference between King and Sean Maxwell and Will Robie?) I will say that, for some reason, I never got into the "The Camel Club" series. That was okay, though because I loved John Puller as well as King and Maxwell and Robie and Reel. His standalones were good. But even those always felt like it could have been one in a series. Lately, the only novels of his I've enjoyed are the John Puller books. "The Forgotten," which was the first Baldacci book I ever read, as well as "Zero Day" and "The Escape" were great novels. However, the last several non-Puller books I came across were really struggles to get through. First Family (K & M) was a big disappointment. The president's family was so unbelievable the book was almost laughable. But I suffered through it cause, well, it's Baldacci. I read "Split Second," the first K & M book. I finished it mostly due to the fact it was interesting to see how K&M started out. The story, the plot and the writing was a bit of a struggle. But I read it cause, well, it's Baldacci. "The Innocent" was the first Will Robie novel. I found it awful, especially Robie's sidekick who was 13 going on 35.

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