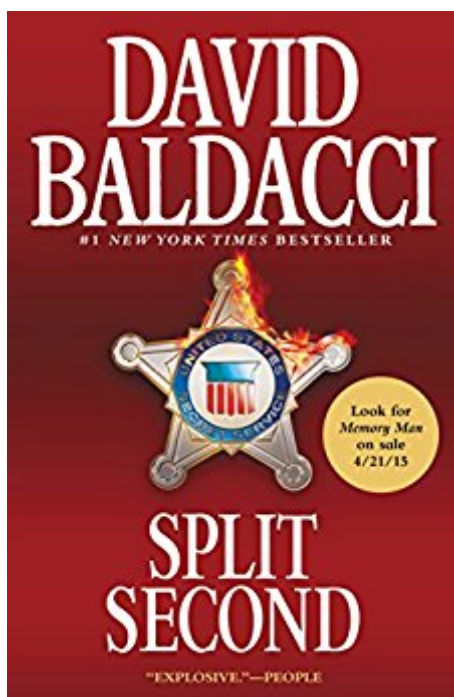


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# Split Second (King & Maxwell Series Book 1)



## Synopsis

The world can change forever in a single...SPLIT SECONDMichelle Maxwell has just wrecked her promising career at the Secret Service. Against her instincts, she let a presidential candidate out of her sight for the briefest moment, and the man whose safety was her responsibility vanished into thin air. Sean King knows how the younger agent feels. Eight years earlier, the hard-charging Secret Service agent allowed his attention to be diverted for a split second. And the candidate he was protecting was gunned down before his eyes. Now Michelle and Sean are about to see their destinies converge. Drawn into a maze of lies, secrets, and deadly coincidences, the two discredited agents uncover a shocking truth: that the separate acts of violence that shattered their lives were really a long time in the making-and are a long way from over...

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was disappointed with David Baldacci's "Split Second." Unlike his previous works it is definitely not a strong, tightly written novel, although it could have been a real winner. Throughout much of the book, the thrills, adventure and mystery are certainly present and do keep the reader turning the pages. The three main characters are interesting, unusual and well developed. So, what's wrong?

The second half of the novel falls apart. The pace slows; the tension diminishes; the characters begin to act out of character, and turn into cardboard figures without much rationale for their actions. The villain, who has such potential to be a really bad guy, is totally one-dimensional - pure evil incarnate with no complexity, more like a cartoon than a human being. There's a fascinating love triangle which should have taken-off - but falls flat. And after the terrific opening and much of the first half, the conclusion is weak. The book ends with a peep, not a bang!

Sean King, Secret Service agent extraordinaire, with great career potential, is guarding a presidential candidate on a campaign stop in Smalltown USA. King's attention is diverted for one instant, and good cause, when the candidate, Clyde Ritter, is shot dead. Agent King recovers his composure immediately and shoots the assassin. The killer dies. So does King's career. Eight years later Secret Service agent and girl wonder Michelle Maxwell is on a career fast track in a profession where only men succeed. Agent Maxwell, a former Olympic rower, is the exception to the rule. She has her sights set on White House duty guarding the president and she just might get the gig. She is presently guarding a presidential candidate, John Bruno, who is making an unscheduled stop at a funeral home to pay his respects to the deceased.

's advance billing for David Baldacci's newest book, *Split Second*, states that this "new thriller [is] reminiscent of his phenomenal bestselling debut, *Absolute Power*." I loved *Absolute Power* and some of Baldacci's other novels so on my recent vacation, I gave *Absolute Power* a read. Certainly the story starts with a bang as Sean King, a secret service agent guarding the life of a presidential candidate, is momentarily distracted by an elevator door opening. Suddenly, King finds his protectee assassinated by a lone gunman. Who was the gunman? Why did he murder the candidate? And what (or who) could possibly distract a disciplined secret service agent at the peak of his career? Fast forward eight years to another secret service agent, Michelle Maxwell, and another presidential candidate. This time the candidate is kidnaped, but no ransom is demanded. Is there a connection between the assassination and the kidnaping? King and Maxwell team up to try to solve the mystery. In the page burning mayhem that follows, one of King's old lovers shows up (another secret service agent), a potential girlfriend is murdered and (literally) hung out to dry, a witness protection person is murdered in King's office, and a former lover is kidnaped. Meanwhile King and Maxwell repeatedly narrowly escape their own murders. With such a great plot set up, and given Baldacci's immense talent, I certainly expected *Split Second* to be "pure, mind-numbing adrenaline to the last page". (Quote - ) Unfortunately the last half of *Split Second* is simply mind-numbing. It's almost hard to believe that the same person who wrote the first half of the book also wrote the rest

of the book.

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