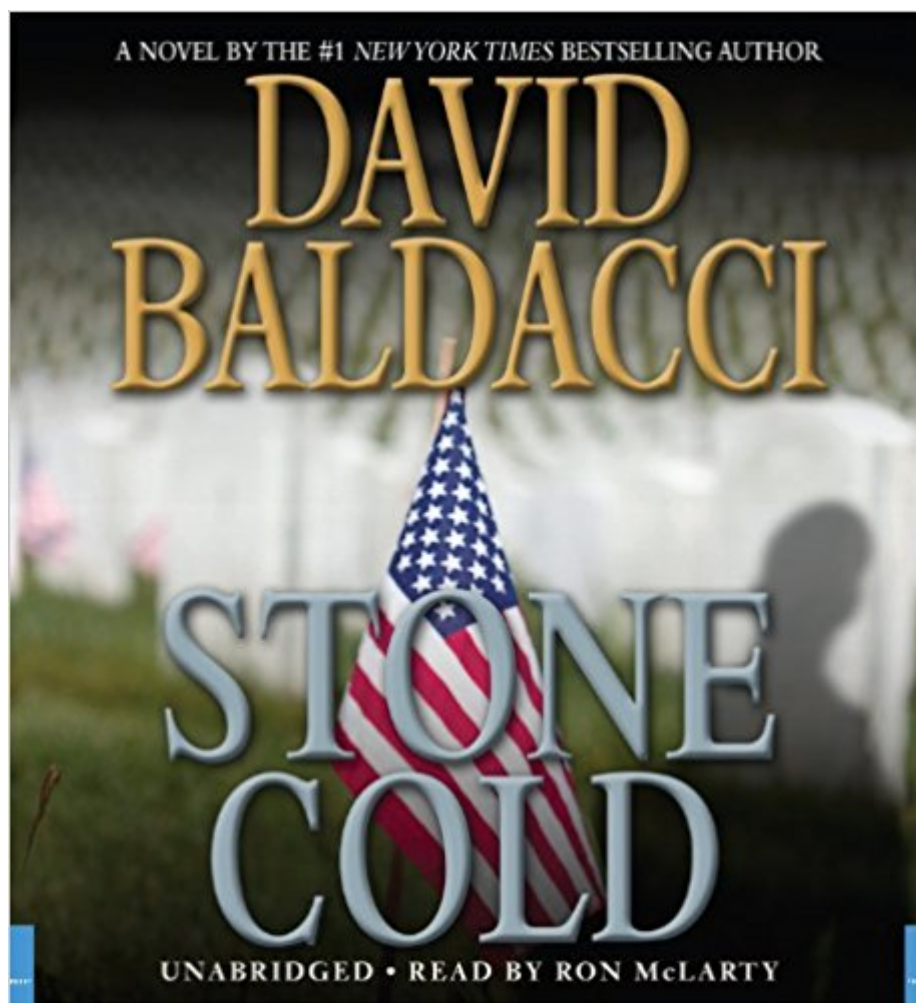


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Stone Cold



Synopsis

Oliver Stone and the Camel Club are back in their most dangerous adventure yet, a war on two fronts. Casino king Jerry Bagger from *THE COLLECTORS* is hunting Annabelle Conroy who conned him out of millions. Stone and his colleagues Reuben, Milton, and Caleb marshal all their resources to protect Annabelle. Yet all their skills may not be enough when a deadly new opponent rips off the veneer of Stone's own mysterious past. Bagger's menace pales next to newcomer Harry Finn's lethality. Seeming a normal family-man, Finn has already killed three men with more targets to come. When Finn also sets his bulls-eye on Stone, his reason why will be the greatest shock of all, making readers reconsider their beliefs in good and evil. As bodies and institutions topple, the story rockets toward a shattering finale that will leave the survivors of this explosive tale changed forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. The modern-day paladins of the Camel Club are back in their third exciting adventure (after 2006's *The Collectors*). Justice-seekers Milton, Caleb, Reuben and honorary member Alex Ford, a Secret Service agent, are led by feisty Oliver Stone, aka former CIA assassin John Carr. Their associate, Annabelle Conroy, is a slick con artist on the run after stealing \$40 million from lunatic casino owner Jerry Bagger, who killed her mother. Oliver's CIA past distracts him from Annabelle's cause: his old unit, Triple 6, was responsible for the death of Raymond Solomon, branded a traitor during the Cold War, and now Solomon's son, DHS security expert Harry Finn, is picking off Triple 6 members. Oliver could be next if Carter Gray, his former boss,

reveals that John Carr isn't really dead. Gripping, chilling and full of surprises, Baldacci's latest reveals the anarchy that lurks under the slick facade of corrupted governments. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Baldacci may not be a literary stylist, but he really knows how to spin a yarn, and with McLarty he gets a narrator who adds emotional depth to his characters without slowing down the breathless pace of his prose. McLarty uses his distinctive, almost avuncular delivery to excellent purpose in this action-packed thriller that finds the Camel Club members attacked by three tough customers seeking revenge... Aged baritones offer no great challenge to McLarty's talent, yet his subtle shifts are admirable, from the thoughtful, slightly rough-edged Stone to the rougher-edged Bagger to Gray's sneeringly perfect locution. But his art becomes more apparent as he effectively captures the voices of Annabelle, Finn and a gallery of other characters, including a bitter elderly Russian woman and a world-weary Irish-American man, providing them all a dimension not always on the page. The author brings back Oliver Stone, with his old friends and older enemies. Baldacci's adept character development coupled with deft narration from Ron McLarty makes for an enjoyable listening experience. Once again, Baldacci creates unique parallel stories that evolve and eventually intertwine. The expert McLarty gives clear and recognizable voices to all the characters. In particular, his consistent accents for the old Russian woman and for the acerbic Irish man capture the story's emotions and help bring home the plot. A whiny rare books expert and a bitter gangster round out the colorful cast. Hidden secrets, political espionage, and personal trust all clash in this fast-paced story. M.B. © AudioFile 2008, Portland, Maine [Published: APR/ MAY 08] Baldacci weaves the strands of his plot flawlessly, with an attention to detail and character that set this book above the normal run of Washington thriller. McLarty, the actor-author who grew up in East Providence, assists with a fine set of accents (his Irish brogue for Annabelle's father, Paddy, is particularly good) that let listeners easily distinguish among the many characters.

This is a good, page-turner read. I enjoyed this book even though I have not read the other Camel Club books in the series. I read this book for a Book Club discussion, and I was worried I would not understand the characters since I did not have the Camel Club background. But, that was not the case. Baldacci does a good job of getting the characters' traits and dimensions across even for the first-time reader. Plot, setting, and action are all well developed. The reason I chose 4 stars instead of 5 is that the novel seems to have one too many "twists" toward the end. Most of the reverses and

surprises were thoroughly fun and heightened the reading experience. Overall, this book offers reading time well spent.

I've been a Baldacci fan since time began and just recently discovered this fourth novel in the Camel Club series, which I have thoroughly enjoyed. This novel returns protagonist Oliver Stone (John Carr) to government service to halt a nefarious plot to spread drugs through the US and kill a bunch of people initiated by the Russians.... or was it the Mexicans or the RussiansDetermining who the bad guys are working for and exactly why they want to blow things up and kill the president is Stone's job, He solves it of course, despite government interference, and catches the bad guys with help from the Camel Club, but it's a wild ride. Oh, and the Camel Club gets a new member. Go for it!

This series is the first I have read of David Baldacci's writing, and the characters, plot, pacing, etc. are very good. This book does keep your interest right to the end, and there are a few unexpected occurrences. What is not unexpected, and begins to be a little monotonous, is the graphic violence surrounding our deadly-assassin-with-a-heart-of-gold main character. Likewise the recurring theme of evil people rising to the top, having basically run amuck with the power they have been given. While there is a measure of revenge that may satisfy some sense of justice, it does little to relieve the depression brought on by the situation as a whole. That the characters in the book are drawn to each other and are unfailingly loyal to each other in spite of the knowledge that they easily engage in behavior that is reviled by most civilized people (the end always justifies the means, each person is their own judge of right and wrong, life and death) is vaguely heartwarming but mostly disturbing. So the quick summary is that the writing is technically good, the story gripping - but you don't want to think too deeply about the world view embraced by these characters that we are supposed to like.

This is the first novel I have read by David Baldacci and I am definitely going to read more. "Stone Cold" has a little for everybody and a lot for anyone who is a fan of this genre. Mobsters, spooks, secret societies within secret societies, black-clad assassins, a serial killer on a mission and, of course, The Hero and his moll (in this case). I had a lot of fun with this book. My only reason for not giving this a five-star rating was that the main characters are so well-developed that it is at the expense of the secondary characters. One of these characters (I won't mention who) is killed in the process of doing good. However, there was not much given to him, in terms of character development, that I didn't feel like much was taken away. I had the feeling that he was only killed off

to (a) show how bad the bad guys were and (b) to show that Oliver Stone isn't so stone cold. Does that mean you should not buy the book? Of course not! There's so much else going for this book that any reader will enjoy it.

Lots of blind turns, but each looked like a possible solution. Enjoyed the character development and the surprising twists. I've read 2 of the 5, I think there are 5, and I missed the one where a member of the Camel Club is killed...going to go back and read the ones that I missed. I'm familiar with Washington D. C. and the surrounding area, so it was fun to recall many of the places I once visited. I'm looking forward to the players in the Camel Club to be more active in the next book ... enjoy each of the personalities and what they contribute to the whole. Wonderfully written "who done it" with many dead-ends and characters. I found it difficult to put the book down and I looked forward to picking up where I left off.

I am 3/4s of the way done with this book and to tell you the truth, I want to finish it because at this point it is the last book in the Camel Club series. But I don't want to finish it because it is almost as bad as book 2. This one is long and drawn out 200 pages could have been cut out. The real person behind everything is so apparent as the book goes on that you just want it to end already. It is a run on of similar situations throughout the book, and gets repetitive like I am right now LOL. The New Head of CIS is an insecure version of Carter Gray. It just infuriates me that I have to read this just to get to the end. I hope it gets better. I will write a final review when I am finished. Books 1 3 and 4 are great. 1 and 4 very quick reads and keeps you interested. 3 almost as good. 2 I would use as TP. 5 somewhere in between 3 and 2. I am hoping that the next five books that I read are going to be better overall than these five books of Baldacci. I had finished the book and all that I can say is that it is not worth the read. It is one Hell of a bad book to read. Stay away. The only critics (reading through kindle) that made any comments about the book were minor reviewers. Never heard of reviewers. SAD. The twists and turns of this book were so bad. He had to make up for the 500+ pages the book is. Soooooo he put in those twists and turns which were boring totally boredom of this book. I could use it for TP

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