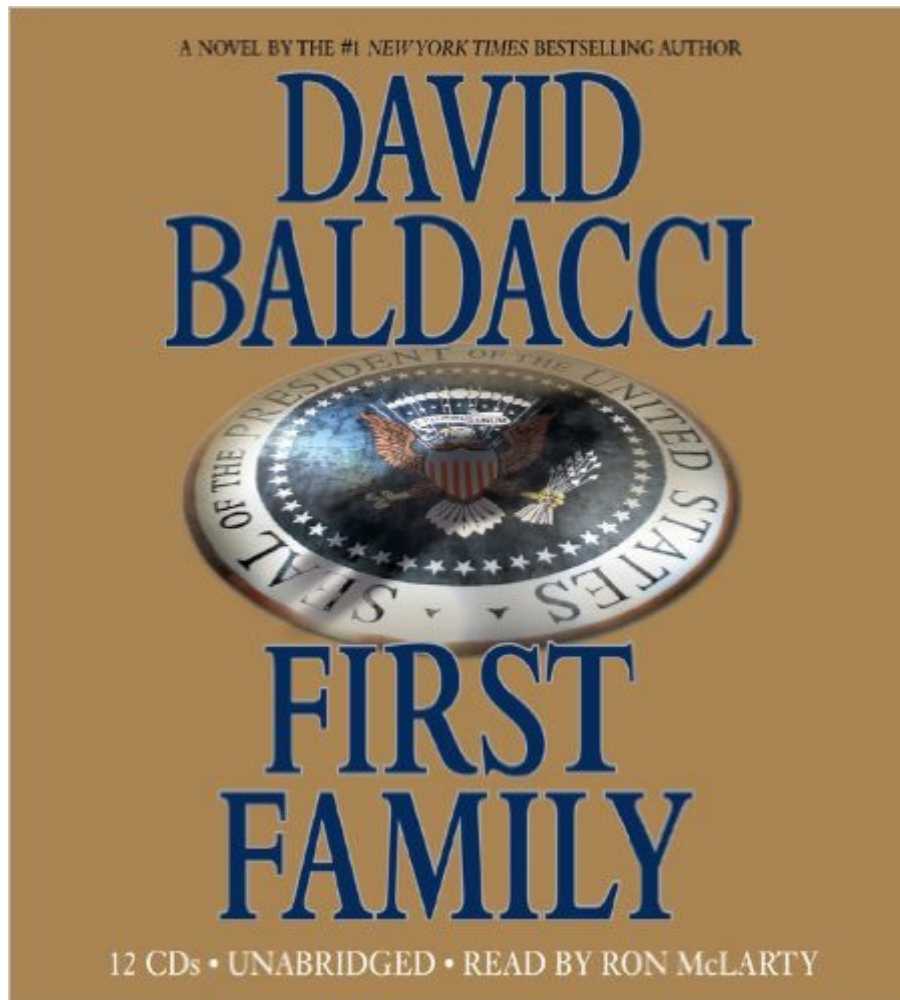


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# First Family (King & Maxwell Series)



## Synopsis

Following the instant #1 New York Times bestsellers *Split Second*, *Hour Game*, and *Simple Genius*, Sean King and Michelle Maxwell return in David Baldacci's most heart-pounding thriller to date . . .

**FIRST FAMILY** A daring kidnapping turns a children's birthday party at Camp David, the presidential retreat, into a national security nightmare. Former Secret Service agents turned private investigators, Sean King and Michelle Maxwell don't want to get involved. But years ago Sean King saved the First Lady's husband, then a senator, from political disaster. Now the president's wife presses Sean and Michelle into a desperate search to rescue a kidnapped child. With Michelle still battling her own demons, the two are pushed to the limit, with forces aligned on all sides against them--and the line between friend and foe impossible to define . . . or defend.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

First Family is David Baldacci's follow-up to *Simple Genius*. Sean King and Michelle Maxwell are summoned by Pam Dutton to instruct them on their next case. Before they can meet with her, however, they notice two men running from the scene firing their guns. As they investigate the house they notice Pam is dead, but, Willa, her eldest daughter, is missing. Subplots are plenty as Michelle, who is still struggling to come to terms about her mother's death, returns home to be with her father. First Family is a beefy book with twists and turns reminiscent of a roller coaster. Its politics and scandals are so complex that the reader stays in tune with the book from page one, and doesn't blink until the book ends. David Baldacci has once again delivered a novel that will captivate

its readers....I would also highly recommend: S is for Sirens a novel that ranked one of the best this year.

I have read all of David Baldacci's books; and yes, some are better than others. I don't think that First Family was his best book, but I thoroughly enjoyed it. I like the characters of Sean and Michelle and hope to see them again in future adventures. The "all charm but can't keep his pants zipped" President and his manipulative, powerful first lady were very believable (due to our own country's past history). Sam Quarry was a stereotypical redneck and somewhat extreme example of how some picture Southerners. Since I am from MS / AL, Sam was insulting, but plausible. The story line was, at times, stretching the reader's acceptance; but that is one of the appeals of Baldacci's writing. He pushes the believability factor to the absolute limit and then just a little beyond. But after all, that's why I am reading, for the entertainment factor. It's not supposed to be anything more. I'm anxiously awaiting his next book.

I'm not a kindle user, so am not involved in the controversy that makes up most of the reviews based upon it's Kindle price. This is simply a review of the book after reading it. And, I found it to be a decent thriller with one major flaw. Here's the upsides and downsides of it for me:Upsides:- I love the characters in this book: From "superheroes" Michelle, the blunt damaged secret service agent and Sean, her big more laid back partner to the evil-or-is-he-so-evil Quarry.- Even though Michelle and Sean are from his previous book Simple Genius - this works just fine as a stand-alone thriller.Downsides:- The beginning was a little slow, though it picks up in the middle. (There's an interesting side-plot with Michelle in the middle that picked up the pace, but I expected it to connect more with the total story).- The overall plot is mildly implausible, but that's alright given it's thriller nature and that there's Baldacci's writing to compensate. But, the ending just gets outrageously implausible. There's about 70 pages of it that go from one completely unbelievable action to another. I would just get through one thing that happened that I'd had to convince myself that "alright, maybe it's a little believable", before something even more outlandish would occur! The size of the "holes in the story"- just grew wider and wider!BOTTOM LINE: A good page-turning premise and characters brought down to a just average thriller(and below what I expect from Baldacci) by some completely implausible action at the end.

David Baldacci creates an impossible situation with believable characters. When the president's niece is abducted after attending a birthday party at Camp David, the question is why? Why are

private investigators Sean King and Michelle Maxwell hired to locate the missing child? And what does the abductor want? Why has he kidnapped another woman along with the child? So many questions, which all get answered as the story unfolds. This book had me on the edge of my recliner as I read each chapter wondering where it was headed and why. Great book.

Quite frankly, I don't remember if the violence was "graphic", nor do I remember if there was no, some or explicit sexual content, which tells me that to whatever extent there was any, it didn't disturb me enough to discourage me reading David Baldacci's books. They are also, like Flynn, page turners. First Family was one of his better books, in my opinion, but I have enjoyed them all. I have eclectic taste in reading; the most important thing for me is that the writing be good. Yes, there are holes in these books, but they are easy reading and hold my attention.

King and Maxwell are such a good team. Of the 3 - 4 books I've read involving this team, I like this book the best. It was so interesting and I liked much of the dialogue between Sean and Michelle. They're so comfortable with each other. Their banter is fun to hear and occasionally they ribbed one another - particularly in this book. We also sometimes know their inner thoughts - including dread or fear at times. Very near the beginning, King and Maxwell come across Tyler - a teenager - who was thinking about running away from home. Initially, almost against their better judgement, they take to him and become involved in helping him with what turns out to be huge; at the same time, they know he can't really pay them. As they become more involved, and some threats were made against them, Sean quipped to Michelle: "In for a dime, in for a dollar." Michelle replied dryly, "I'm just wondering when we're going to run out of change." Eventually their sheltering Tyler and their wanting to understand more about some mysterious events unfolding led them in several different directions. The plot kept going and going: in the first third of the book it seemed as if nothing was really going to happen. Plus at times too much explanation was given about what they were doing. Then it suddenly picked up. I'm so glad I continued the book. Of course some bad guys were involved; we're kept in the dark for quite awhile about how exactly are the "bad guys".

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