



The Escape

David Baldacci

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THE ESCAPE

It's a prison unlike any other. Military discipline rules. Its security systems are unmatched. None of its prisoners dream of escaping. They know it's impossible . . . until now.

John Puller's older brother, Robert, was convicted of treason and national security crimes. His inexplicable escape from prison makes him the most wanted criminal in the country. Some in the government believe that John Puller represents their best chance at capturing Robert alive, and so Puller must bring in his brother to face justice.

But Puller quickly discovers that his brother is pursued by others who don't want him to survive. Puller is in turn pushed into an uneasy, fraught partnership with another agent, who may have an agenda of her own.

They dig more deeply into the case together, and Puller finds that not only are her allegiances unclear, but there are troubling details about his brother's conviction . . . and someone out there doesn't want the truth to ever come to light. As the nationwide manhunt for Robert grows more urgent, Puller's masterful skills as an investigator and strengths as a fighter may not be enough to save his brother-or himself.

The Escape Details

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From Reader Review The Escape for online ebook

kartik narayanan says

The Escape continues the upward movement of the John Puller series on the enjoyment curve. The reason is that Baldacci finally gets his act together and the book shows it. The story is good, the characters great, the action awesome and the finale fantastic (sorry, got carried away with the atrocious alliteration).

Robert Puller escapes mysteriously from prison and his brother, John Puller, is tasked with bringing him in. There is enough clandestine stuff going on to make your average conspiracy theory nut have a happy ending. I found the plot to be pretty decent with revelations coming even in the third act of the book.

John Puller and his relationship with his brother is explored quite thoroughly in this book. We can clearly see how his commitment to duty wars with his feelings for his brother. In addition, the new characters - antagonists as well as supporting - are well developed and add layers of complexity to the overall story.

So overall, I loved this book.

Ware says

Three years ago I gave five stars to the first John Puller book Zero Day. I was a bit sarcastic though and suggested that David Baldacci reads Lee Child. ("Puller...Reacher...get it? Lee Child's drifter hero Jack Reacher is a former Army MP major. David Baldacci's new protagonist John Puller is an Army warrant officer serving in the CID of the military police.")

I am so sorry Mr. Baldacci. Forgive me Chief Puller.

This series is head and shoulders better than any of Mr. Child's excellent Jack Reacher books. Baldacci's John Puller is a tour d'force-a tough investigator, perceptive interrogator, brave soldier, and al around good guy.

This plot is intricate. The action breathtaking.

We have known that John Puller's brother Robert, previously an Air Force major well on the way to stars, has been confined at the United States Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. It is not a spoiler to tell you that his departure from that high security military prison has the intelligence community in an uproar. The major is a genius and posses information which would be of great value to our enemies.

But how did he escape and more importantly why? This I will leave to your own discovery within the pages of the best thriller of the year.

Matt says

Baldacci brings his readers another great novel, turning back to John Puller and his thrilling antics. When power goes out at Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth, chaos follows. A headcount soon reveals that Robert Puller is nowhere to be found and an unidentified body lays in his bunk. Puller, convicted of treason,

is feared on the lam and the military remain baffled as to how he's escaped. Younger brother, John Puller, has been asked by the military to investigate and determine how Robert might have slipped through the cracks from a facility deemed impenetrable. While he begins his investigation, he runs into Veronica Knox, independent woman who is assigned to work with John. They iron out some of the wrinkles in their personalities before forging ahead and determine that a plot deep within Fort Leavenworth itself might be to blame. Could Robert Puller have been convicted on illegitimate testimony; his imprisonment to ensure someone else climbed the military promotions ladder in his place? Might there be a larger and more complex web of lies and treason, seeking to bury Puller and wreak havoc on the United States? After locating the elder Puller, John and Knox must work through the evidence and dodge those who have them in their crosshairs in order to save Robert and keep the US from succumbing to domestic terrorism. Baldacci ramps up the action and thrills in this high-impact novel.

Baldacci has a golden touch as it relates to his thriller novels. His ideas are far-reaching and the ability to keep the reader engaged never lessens. His continual male-female leads helps create wonderful banter sure to keep the novel's pace from waning, though the sexual tension in each appears to have a cookie-cutter effect and remains somewhat predictable. With his numerous series on the go and producing great results, I wonder about a character mix. While it was done in a recent short-story, I am curious to see if this would work in a full-length book. Perhaps something to investigate in the years to come, not that he is not busy enough.

Kudos, Mr. Baldacci for another great instalment in the Puller series. Goes to show that you are at the top of your game.

Mike French says

John Puller is getting close to displacing Oliver Stone as my favorite character in David Baldacci's books. Like fine wine, he is getting better with age! If you haven't read the previous 2 books, I feel you can still read this first. Do yourself a favor and start reading about the exploits of John Puller!!

Jacki (Julia Flyte) says

There are times in my reading life when I wish I had a time travel machine. If I did, I would go back four days in time and never start reading this idiotic book.

I am not a great fan of Baldacci's formulaic writing style, but I did enjoy Zero Day - the first book featuring Special Agent Jack Puller. It read like a shameless Lee Child rip off, but was no less enjoyable for that. Puller reappeared in The Forgotten, this time investigating the death of his aunt. Again, the writing was taut, the suspense built over the course of the book and it was a more than passable beach read.

The Escape is an entirely different style of book. It doesn't feel like it was written by the same person as the first two books in the series, though it feels very similar in style to the woeful "True Blue" churned out by the Baldacci factory in 2009. (If you share my theory that there are in fact several writers who assist Mr Baldacci, this would make perfect sense). All traces to Lee Child are gone, and instead we have wooden characters who speak in explanations, who are unable to pick up on obvious clues but can wrap their heads round complex and unlikely scenarios in seconds and who occasionally get tears in their eyes in lieu of feelings.

The book actually starts quite well, with John Puller's brother Robert breaking out of a maximum security prison. Puller is asked to investigate his brother's disappearance, presumably because the authorities hope that his brother will attempt to contact him. However as Puller starts to look into the case, he finds out things about his brother's conviction that he didn't previously know and he begins to wonder whether there is more to the break out than meets the eye.

So the first third of the book has a reasonable degree of suspense but then it just goes silly and proceeds to get sillier by the page as the coincidences fly thick and fast, the body count mounts and character motivations get flimsier than a square of cheap toilet paper. By the end of the book I simply did not care about any of these people and I all I know is that I don't want to read another Baldacci book as long as I live.

Jeffrey says

David Baldacci's latest novel, "The Escape", is a return to his John Puller series about the criminal investigative officer in the military charged with hunting down fugitives and military criminals. Puller's brother Robert, an officer in cyber command, was convicted of espionage and is a prisoner at one of America's most secure military prisons. In the two prior books in this series, Robert aided Puller's investigations, so it always seemed like Baldacci had a plan to use him in a bigger way.

This is that book, and it starts off with a bang as Robert escapes from the prison and Puller is sent to investigate. Paired up with a hot (is there any other kind) intelligence agent Veronica Knox . Puller is immediately suspicious about the break out, which involves multiple breaches of the super high security prison, and an unknown dead body in Robert's cell. In the beginning the action is fast and furious, dead bodies pile up and the action propels forward. Baldacci switching from Puller's investigation of his brother's escape to Robert's actions. Knox suggests they investigate why Robert ended up in prison, and there does seem to be some issue with the evidence -- but why would anyone care now. Robert was in a secure facility. Puller suspected nothing. Why make a move against Robert? These questions will have to be answered.

And will Puller ultimately help his brother or turn him in? That is the biggest question of all, but we know immediately what that will mean.

And that is part of the problem with this book. Its obviousness.

Plus the middle of the book is a bit of a churn. Puller suspects, then doesn't suspect , then suspects again that Knox is involved in some way with his brother's disappearance. Too many potential conspirators end up dead for no reason. The conspiracy itself, once uncovered, seems so idiotic. Maybe after reading so many thrillers, one should not expect to find a really murderous crew of monsters, ala the ex Nazi's in the "Boys from Brazil", as its too many years later to use that evilness, so Baldacci is stuck making up his villains book after book. But these conspirators - really couldn't Baldacci do a little better.

So we have an increasingly obvious book, with an obviously possible turncoat agent and once uncovered some clear villains. There are some double switches, some unexpected twists and turns, the end has a good bit of quick moves, and it wraps up very fast, but, I was left feeling robbed of my time because of the overly long middle of the book.

Will thriller fans like this book. Indubitably, but it felt too long to me, too obvious, too by the numbers.

It is a middle class thriller. Baldacci fans will buy it, but to those of us who like good new thrillers - spend your money elsewhere.

Monnie says

It's impossible to describe what a treat it is to read a well-written action thriller that kept me turning pages even when I should have been doing other things and kept me wondering how it would turn out until close to the end. Of course, it shouldn't have come as a big surprise; this is the third book featuring U.S. Army Special Agent John Puller, and I gave 5 stars to Book No. 2, *Zero Day* and 4 to the first, *The Forgotten*.

This one, though, has a major twist; Puller's genius older brother, Robert, has been convicted of treason and has been in a high-security military prison. Then one day, he somehow escapes, leaving an unidentified dead man in his cell (who, apparently, he has murdered). Then something truly unheard of happens: John Puller is invited to hunt down his brother and bring him in. On the surface, it doesn't feel right; just as an attorney shouldn't defend nor a surgeon operate on a close relative, under normal circumstances Puller wouldn't be allowed near the case. Some government big-wigs, though, seem to think he's the person best qualified to get the job done, and in part because he's never quite believed his brother really committed treasonous acts, Puller agrees.

Very early on, it becomes clear that some folks don't want Robert Puller brought in alive - and they may well be lurking among the very folks who gave John Puller the assignment. Also early on, the younger Puller finds himself stuck with a mostly unwanted female partner - also an agent, but not necessarily allied with the same powers-that-be as Puller. Who to trust, in fact, becomes an almost bigger issue than trying to find a runaway soldier whose skills and experience in the field may be sharper than Puller's - and he's no slouch in either department. The only thing that's crystal clear is that something big is afoot, and some very powerful people want to make sure the truth never gets out no matter what the human cost.

❀Aimee❀ Just one more page... says

I don't read a lot of thrillers, so I might not be the best for comparing one author to another. This one was fun for me.

Apparently this is book 3 in the John Puller series, but it was perfect as a standalone. Sometimes when you jump into the middle of a series, you feel like an outsider, or like you're missing something. I was never lost and felt connected and invested in the characters. This book also had the right amount of action for me. Nothing got too graphic, but nothing too dark or torturey for me.

John Puller is a long time loyal military man. His brother Robert used to be military intelligence, but was put in maximum security prison for charges of espionage. When Robert is found to be missing from the prison after a series of coincidences allow him to break out of the prison no one should be able to break out of.

Both brothers are trying to solve the mystery from different ends of the investigation. Brilliant Robert is trying to figure out who was trying to kill him and why. John is trying to determine what happened and where his brother is now. Initially John was bent on simply returning his brother to "justice", but the more he learns, the more he wonders whether his brother is even guilty of the charges.

Though told in third person, but the POV alternates between the brothers. Robert is very intelligent and his mind works somewhat like Sherlock, which was fun to read.

Knox was the female character working with John Puller to find his brother. I think the only thing that annoyed me about this book was that *every* time John Puller meets up with her, he describes what she is wearing head to toe in stupid detail.

"...she walked out in a navy blue skirt, matching jacket, pale blue blouse, sheer stockings, and high heels. Her hair was done up in a braid and she carried a clutch purse."

Like I care about her stockings or her *clutch* for goodness sake.

The bond between the brothers throughout the book was one of my favorite elements. There was also some touching moments that involved their ex-military, strict father who is now stricken with Alzheimer's.

Perfect action read for someone like me.

Sean Peters says

Again so good to read my favourite type of book, and one of my favourite authors. Although my list of favourite authors is always going up!

David Baldacci has for quite a few years been one of my favourites, especially with his two great characters, Will Robie and also John Puller the star of this great book.

Puller's equally virile and handsome older brother, Robert, an Air Force major, is serving time in the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, following his conviction on charges of treason. As the book opens, he performs a seemingly impossible escape from his cell. John, an investigator with the CID, the Army's investigative arm, is charged by an odd coalition of three powerful men—a one-star Air Force general, a three-star Army general and a representative of the National Security Council—with the improbable task of finding his brother. Robert, though, isn't waiting to be caught.

He's changed his appearance, hacked into a national database, bought a car and headed out to clear himself. Standing in his way is the mysterious fact that an unidentified dead body has been found in his recently vacated cell. While John and his disgraced brother go at the case from different angles, another investigator also comes into play. Capt. Veronica Knox teams up with a reluctant John, looking for his brother and piecing together the method behind his escape, even though it's soon apparent that many others are also on his trail. Not surprisingly, John Puller and Veronique Knox engage in a lot of action and some great comical moments and conversations, as well as some great action. . But though the action is fast and furious, it keeps to a great pace, keeps you guessing, with lots of great characters .

David Baldacci has given us yet another thriller that barely can be laid down for coffee, meals or sleep. With lots of great twists and turns in the novel that explains a great deal about our highly complex intelligence structure and how it deals with an increasingly dangerous world. And, of course, there is a beautiful girl or two, but are they on Puller's side or not?

We have seen the Puller brothers before, along with their father who was a famous fighting general, in previous novels. This book stands by itself as an intriguing tale even as it airs the bad laundry of America's spies. And there is danger, violence and a few dead bodies.

One really nasty villain in this book?

As always I highly recommend David Baldacci ! Five stars.

Now on John Puller number 4... No Mans Land !

Corey says

Of all the series Baldacci has written, I think the John Puller series is so far my favorite series by him, the series just gets better and better! At the end it left me wanting more, and I have a feeling it's due for a sequel. Filled with many twist and turns throughout, and awesome character development!

The Escape follows John Puller's older brother Robert Puller, who had been in a Maximum Security Prison for 2 years for high treason, and he escapes during a confusion and is now on the run, with his younger brother in pursuit. As it turns out, Puller is not the only one trying to find his brother, some others want him dead, so Puller is trying to find out the truth of why his brother was really convicted and imprisoned 2 years ago.

If you haven't read the first two books in the series, Zero Day, and The Forgotten, I don't think it will matter if you start with this book, even though it was a sequel I also thought it was a great stand-alone book. For those who like Baldacci and haven't yet read The Escape, I'll just say this, you won't be disappointed!

Alex is The Romance Fox says

The 3rd book in David Baldacci's John Puller Series, about former war hero and now one of the best military investigators in the US Army's Criminal Investigative Division.

I liked the 1st book, Zero Day <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1...> and liked the 2nd even more <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1...> and was very happy to get into book #3.

John Puller faces the most difficult and personal assignment, when he's given the task of finding and arresting his older brother, Robert, a former major in the USAF, who had been found guilty of treason and given a life sentence, and has under mysterious and dubious circumstances escape from the maximum prison he has been incarcerated for the last two years.

Fast paced, action packed and complex plot with some surprising twists and turns that keeps you on your toes.

I really like John Puller and his brother is a very interesting and complex character that I hope we get more of in future books. I enjoyed their closeness and the interaction between the two is believable and also getting some back-story of their lives when they were younger.

I wasn't crazy about Veronica Knox...the underhand way she behaved and I just never got her!!! Undercover, military, CIAa bit too cold for me!!!!

One of the things that bamboozled me....all those acronyms....after I while, I just skimmed over what they were and what they meant...because there were just LOADS of them.....

A good read and I am looking forward to John Puller's next adventure!!!

Lisa says

I have loved every minute of this series from Zero Day Now The Escape David Baldacci is my favourite author in this genre his spin on military fiction is top notch.

John Puller has just returned from an assignment & is asked to look into a case involving his older brother Robert who escapes from a high security prison there is also an unidentified body found in his cell.

general Daughtrey comes into the search & uncovers that Robert has been giving away secrets to the Russians one by one witnesses start getting killed evidence leads to Daughtrey & Robert used to work at STRATCOM as robert was a genius at his job.

Susan Reynolds is a person of interest & Puller looks into her background soon he finds evidence that puts her in the thick of things but can she be trusted?

This is a book full of espionage betrayal & Govt secrets that only David Baldacci can write.

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

David Baldacci has done it again. The Escape is a fabulous book, just like the other books I've read in this series and just like every other book I've read by Baldacci so far. I've wanted to learn more about Robert Puller and the crime he's said to have done and now I finally got to know why he was convicted of treason.

The Escape starts off with a Robert Puller escaping from prison. A maneuver that should have been impossible, but it seems that somehow everything that shouldn't be impossible to happen, happened! John Puller never knew what his brother had done to be convicted of treason since he was out of the country when it happened and the trial material is classified. Now he must persuade his brother because if there is someone that knows Robert it's John.

The Escape is the third book about John Puller and all the books can be read as standalone. Trust me, I started with the book that comes after this one and then read the first in the series. The book is action filled and you never know who to trust and I was really thrilled to read a book with both John and Robert in it. It's not an easy case for John. Robert may have committed high treason, but he's still his big brother. There is a scene at the end of the book that nearly brought me to tears. I just love how in the mids of all the action can there be tender moments. On a side note, I really want to read a book about AWOL, John's cat. I bet AWOL have a lot of adventures as John is out chasing bad guys.

?Susan? says

For me this book oscillated between 3 & 4 stars. It is the last so far in a series so I may have missed out on truly knowing the main character, however, it really did not refer back to any prior incidents. Parts were fast moving, smart and exciting and then it would fall back into a movie script like storyline. Not DB's best, I have read some of his that are much better but this was still a pretty good story.

Skip says

One of the things that always bothered me about the John Puller series was his brother Robert languishing in a maximum security prison, convicted of espionage. A wicked storm knocks out the power to the prison, the back-up generators fail, and the cell doors unlock instead of locking, allowing Robert to escape, leaving an unidentified dead man in his cell. Miraculously, CID's John Puller is asked to help capture his brother by some senior military officials. He is joined by spy sleuth Veronica Knox forming an uneasy alliance, which is tested again and again by killings and treachery after treachery. A fast-paced thrill ride. P.S. I also like that John Puller travels with his cat, AWOL.
