



## The Camel Club

*David Baldacci*

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## **The Camel Club** David Baldacci

Existing at the fringes of Washington D.C., the Club consists of four eccentric members. Led by a mysterious man know as "Oliver Stone," they study conspiracy theories, current events, and the machinations of government to discover the "truth" behind the country's actions. Their efforts bear little fruit --- until the group witnesses a shocking murder ... and become embroiled in an astounding, far reaching conspiracy. Now the Club must join forces with a Secret Service agent to confront one of the most chilling spectacles ever to take place on American soil --- an event that may trigger the ultimate war between two different worlds. And all that stands in the way of this apocalypse is five unexpected heroes.

## **The Camel Club Details**

Date : Published September 1st 2006 by Vision (first published October 25th 2005)

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Author : David Baldacci

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# **From Reader Review The Camel Club for online ebook**

## **Alcatraz Dey says**

The Camel Club is a political thriller that opens in Washington, D.C. (well, not quite. The opening chapter is not in D.C.), where we meet four eccentric, once-upon-a-time effective fellows who make up a group they call The Camel Club. Each has some kind of experience and/or brilliance that makes him essential to the small assembly; and each has been successful at one time or another in his life. Now, they are only reflections of what they once were. There's Oliver Stone (his assumed name), Caleb Shaw, Reuben Rhodes, and Milton Farb, conspiracy theorists all. They meet once a month in the middle of the night to discuss recent conspiracy theories and reflect/update those they've held for years. There are other interesting characters introduced in the early pages, including Secret Service agent Alex Ford who's on the downside of his career, and Kate Adams, a Department of Justice lawyer who works as a bartender at night. Go figure that one out! We are also briefly introduced to U.S. President, James H. Brennan, and to National Intelligence Center Director, Carter Gray, among others.

Stone has a tent near the White House where he watches what goes on there. His goal is to find out the "truth" of things. He believes the American people have been denied that most desirous of tenets. On the evening of the beginning of this story, the Camel Club meets as arranged, but in the course of their meeting they unwittingly see a terrible crime committed on Theodore Roosevelt Island. Now, they must decide what to do about it...and I'm only on page 70! More later.

October 29, 2005: It's later. Life sometimes gets in the way of finishing a good book, but it's been worth three nights up too late to do it in this case.

The Camel Club members find themselves in the middle of a mess, having witnessed the murder of a Secret Service agent. Another Secret Service agent, Alex Ford, angers his superiors by deciding to investigate the death further than they had planned for this intended puppet. Stone and Ford end up working together to find out what's going on as a myriad of characters come and go, some with nefarious plans up their sleeves (there may even be a traitor in the club). It seems there are traitors everywhere and it's one of those times when one doesn't know who to trust. If you are into political intrigue, conspiracy theories, espionage, terrorism and/or assassination plots and all-around political paranoia, you will love this book. It is also very clearly and very well written. I can only say I hope there are many more Stones and Fords around than Captain Jacks and, well, others.

Give yourself plenty of time to read The Camel Club. There are several subplots and lots of interesting facts about many things included in the story. The primary plot is very intense and you won't want to find yourself forgetting pertinent details leading up to the "game." It's enough to make the reader want to bolt the door and never leave home. I'm just glad it's fiction!

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## **Jonetta says**

The Camel Club is comprised of a group of men who are sort of a counter culture of their own after having served the country in some form or fashion, enough to be suspicious of the publicly fed information from the government. They lead an odd existence, each with unique quirks and eccentricities, and meet each month to compare notes on what they're hearing from various inside sources. On one of these evenings, they

unfortunately become witnesses to a stunning event that puts them in the middle of a situation that threatens the safety of the country and the world.

There are several stories going on here that ultimately converge, which is an approach I happen to love for this genre. While it presents a challenge to keep up with all the characters, it certainly heightens the mystery, suspense and intrigue. There are quite a few twists and surprises that make it even better, ultimately leading to a pretty exciting climax, though I had some issues with some things in the ending. Political perspectives are also rampant with multiple points of view to keep it provocative.

I highly recommend this book and plan to continue the series.

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### **Helen says**

A tense thriller with some fascinating twists.

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### **Stephen says**

2.0 stars. Probably would have given this 3 stars except for my extreme annoyance with the "heavy handed" political tone of the book. As far as I can tell from the authors depictions in the story, America is responsible for ALL of the evil in the world (especially in the Middle East), 9/11 was a justified response to American foreign policy and Americans are ignorant and racist. Great, thanks for that, now can we get on with the story. Oh, that is the story. Terrific!!!

Apart from the tone, this was a fairly fast-paced read with competent writing. I may check out the next book in the series at some point as I thought the basic premise of the Camel Club was intriguing. I just hope the author focuses more on story-telling and less on rhetoric in future books.

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### **Johnnie says**

Same fun, eccentric characters from Baldacci's The Collectors, however, this book came first. Intricate plot, however, a few characters are used as mouthpieces to give long dissertations on the peaceful nature of Islam and the greed of Americans. Though his points may or may not be valid, it was delivered heavy-handedly and got tiresome. After all, I'm reading a novel, not a slanted history book on Middle East politics.

Aside from that, though, I enjoyed the story and the main characters. I'll read future adventures of the Camel Club as they are published.

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### **Margitte says**

I'm just blabbering about this read:

- how insignificant we are. Why fight/appose/criticize/object to anything when we're simply not important?

Depressing;

- some Americans will approve of the criticism in the book, other will be furious and frustrated;
- this book proves a point. How democracy is used as a weapon to control countries, a well done and straightforward explanation; sadly true as well;
- a cliffhanger ending; don't want to indulge in the series, so I'm unhappy;
- I liked, as in really liked, the big *WHAT IF* scenario in the book, not preposterous at all;
- a political plot with eccentric interesting anti-hero, conspiracy theorist characters. A spy thriller with the usual James Bond, over the top, plot. Robert Ludlum, Tom Clancy, Fredrick Forsyth, John Le Carré fans will love this book.
- there's a confusing 'message' in the book. Should Americans be proud of their weaponry? Sure. Should they be proud of the reason why they need it? uhummmm...if I was an American, I would be scared to death, instead. An angry world is an ugly enemy - is my humble opinion.

Everything is too predictable. We've seen these kind of heroes in too many self-soothing/ self-congratulatory, slap-on-the-back kind of books. I'll go for four stars, but actually would have liked 3.5.

Anyway, the book stirs thought, and that's a good thing. So I will stick to the four stars and be done with it.

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## David Highton says

An introduction to the Camel Club, a group of conspiracy theorists led by the mysterious Oliver Stone who see a murder and get led into a major attempt against the US president. A monster book nearly 700 pages and I found the first 150-200 pages very slow in the set-up to the main story

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## Franco Santos says

*Un grupo terrorista ha pedido a los secuestradores que exijan armas nucleares a cambio del presidente. Por Dios, el mundo se ha vuelto loco. ¿Por qué la gente no se sienta, lee y se comporta con normalidad?*

Primer libro de la saga Camel Club. Yo ya tengo leído los siguientes, ya que esta serie la había empezado por el segundo, solo me faltaba el primero por leer. En parte estoy feliz por haber hecho eso porque no sé si la hubiera seguido leyendo en caso de haberla comenzado por este. Es el más flojo de los cinco libros que conforman esta saga. Por el otro lado, esta es una buena introducción de personajes, que ayuda a formar un fuerte vínculo con sus protagonistas.

Camel Club la recomiendo muchísimo. A todo aquel que le guste el misterio político, espías, secretos y pasados turbios le va a encantar. Y quizás a quienes no les interesen ese tipo de temas también.

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## **Sarah's Reviews says**

The Camel Club - a rag tag team of friends led by the "past-less" Oliver Stone - is a strangely capable group who's purpose is to discover the truth about what's really going on in the government. When they stumble upon a murder that smells of corruption - it becomes a lethal race to discover the murderers' identities and silence them before the Camel Club is the one to get silenced.

The Camel Club combines mystery, suspense, and action in a moderately paced adult read. Readers should be aware that it contains non-graphic killing (references to blood and method of death), profanity, sexual banter, and numerous debates of Islamic and Western cultures.

Although The Camel Club is the first book in a series, it can be treated as a stand alone book.

See this and more content based reviews at Sarah's Reviews

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## **Pat says**

How wrong can you be. This started ok. I wondered why the treatise on the nature of Islam, was prepared to accept that somehow the relevance of that would make itself apparent.

Wrong again

20% read and starting to find it tiresome, but this was an author recommended by a friend so I ploughed on.

What a lot of characters and acronyms and superheros and who the hell is this book written for? Seems to me the target audience is an adolescent youth the author is hoping to 'educate' Yet I'm thinking it more a 'Mills & Boon for boys. I never thought I'd ever see "educate" and Mills & Boon in the same paragraph, but there you go.

The fact that I think this book has a target audience doesn't go down well with me. A book written specifically to sell rather than an outlet for the tale needing to be told.

By the time I had managed to get 50% read I really couldn't take any more.

I really didn't like all the extra information - seemed to me the author was trying to prove he'd done some research. Not impressed - he may have read a few things but I never got the impression that he really understood the 'research' he'd done, he merely wanted to impress the reader. Didn't work - not impressed.

A book gratefully abandoned. I have to admit there were some bits I liked ... but not many. If I was desperate to read something and no other options I might read this to the end.

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## **Dash Garabetovitch Kassakhov says**

I feel cheated that I even had to assign a single star to this pathetic excuse for a book.

Let me describe this book like this... this is the kind of book that comes in only two forms - paperback and audio. It's excrement smeared on paper and then bound and placed in airport bookstore shelves.

It's your basic Tom Clancy bite off of the terrorist plot to bring down the free world. The author has watched a couple of National Geographic Videos, maybe had lunch with about three or four guys who used to work for the State Department, NSA or CIA and spent a year or two in the Middle East and maybe read a Barnes & Noble edition of the abbreviated history of the Middle East as research for his big political thriller.

The book is utter crap and is an insult to anyone who likes political thrillers, knows anything about the Middle East and the politics of the region and anybody who just likes to read.

Lesson Learned: Never buy a paperback book from an airport bookstore no matter how bored you are or how long your flight's been delayed.

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## **Sheyla ✍️ says**

“Why can’t people just sit and read books and be nice to each other?”

The Camel Club started very slow for me. I had issues keeping all the characters straight. There were so many! I did enjoy the last half of the book once I was clear on who was who. By the end, I was reaching out for the second book.

The Camel Club begins with the apparent suicide of a government agent but this is far from the truth. Four men are witness to this "suicide". The four men are conspiracy theorists who seek the truth behind the conspiracies. They called themselves the Camel Club.

Oliver Stone, Milton Farb, Caleb Shaw, and Reuben Rhodes have been meeting in secrecy for many years. Unluckily, their last meeting place makes them a witness to this crime. Their lives will be in grave danger and if found, they might not live the week and perish at the hands of some very powerful people.

As the story progresses, we get to discover who Oliver Stone is and his past ties to the USA government. We also meet Agent Alex Ford who's a secret service agent who has had a good honest career. When Alex starts digging into the murder, he's demoted to White House protection detail. Unbeknownst to Alex, the stability of the USA is about to be challenged. Alex and the Camel Club are the only hope to prevent war.

The last part of the book is action-packed. The pages flew fast in a race to know the outcome. I couldn't wait for all the pieces to fall together.

My favorite character was Oliver Stone. A close second was Alex Ford. I was left wanting to learn more about the other three remaining Camel Club members. They all seem to have a very interesting past.

Cliffhanger: No

3/5 Fangs

MrsLeif's Two Fangs About It | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)

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## **Julie says**

Good read. Oliver Stone aka John Carr. Middle East history: Replacing dictatorships that America helped foster and support. In most cases the democracies coming to power hate America more than the dictators they replaced. We entered Iraq not understanding its history or culture. Great Britain took Mesopotamia and artificially created a country, Iraq. Its population is composed of Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds & dozens of other groups that are not know to get along. One cannot “bomb” people into a democracy. That comes from the ground up. Muslims going to voting booths pass the craters that took their families. Is it possible to have an American-style democracy will make them forget who killed their families. Africa has more dictators that the Middle East yet no American tanks are blasting their way through that land. No oil. 50 years ago Iran had a democratically elected prime minister who had the effrontery to nationalize the petroleum industry. American oil companies weren't pleased so the CIA helped overthrow the government & reinstall the puppet shah. His love of Western ways led to the Iranian revolution and ended all hope for a real democracy

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## **Mish says**

Extremely bad

I read this book because it was chosen by my book club - I don't think I would have bothered to finish it otherwise.

The plot is ridiculous and lunges around especially towards the end - it felt like a badly written James Bond movie. The nuclear strike was averted by just 1 second - that sort of timing is not dramatic - it's just annoying.

The characterisation was quite two dimensional and, in the case of Hemingway, quite nauseating - his accomplishments are just too unbelievable - standing on a 1 inch ledge in a gale force wind for 6 hours and being able to kill people with your fingers? Hai-ya!

I don't think these extremes are necessary to make an interesting character or story and the use of them just makes the book seem ridiculous.

I also found the writing very clunky and badly phrased. Some of the dialogue perhaps is accurate for the characters but the same inarticulate leaden style is in the narrative - I just found it to be very naive.

As for the educational aspects - I found that, at times, patronising. Worse though is that it spoiled the



continuity of the writing. Perhaps if the elements were less convoluted then it may have made the going a bit easier? I really don't want to wade through so much instruction whilst reading escapist fiction.

On the whole I thought it was very poor and I would encourage anyone else to leave it well alone.

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## **Rita says**

Since I'm feeling better, I decided it was about time to write the review for this fantastic book. The only other David Baldacci book that I had read was Absolute Power which I enjoyed very much but it was quite a few years ago. I decided to find out what all the fuss was about this author. The next one I tried was Zero Day. I ended up throwing that one in the DNF file. The lead character, John Puller, completely left me cold. He struck me as a cardboard caricature of a military lifer would be but with no emotions. Definitely not a Jack Reacher. So on to the next one.

The Camel Club was a breath of fresh air after Zero Day. "Oliver Stone" was a man who had been to hell and back and still cared about wrongs being done to people and his country. Despite the fact that an agency of the American government took away everything he held precious in his life, Oliver Stone still loved his country and was willing to do everything in his power to protect it. I was hooked.

Milton Farb, Caleb Shaw and Reuben Rhodes comprised the remainder of "the Camel Club" with long term Secret Service Agent, Alex Ford, an unofficial member. They are conspiracy theorists who discovered the truth behind the theories. They know all too well that government agencies sometimes crossed lines that shouldn't be crossed.

It starts with them witnessing a murder that is not just a murder. The victim was killed to make sure that something that is happening at the most powerful government agency and shouldn't be, is kept quiet. But Oliver and the rest of the Camel Club are detected in their wooden boat, and a hail of bullets put a hole in the boat and grazes one of the club members.

Oliver Stone convinces Agent Ford to look into the matter and he ends up being demoted back to White House protection detail for his trouble. He stepped on toes that did not like being stepped on and were in a powerful position to get back at him for his audacity.

The real point of this book, I believe, is that it is very easy for a person who believes he is a force for good to be manipulated by those who do not have good intentions. Believing that it's OK to overstep boundaries because of the greater good, will usually not work as planned. You are putting yourself in the position of being an omnipotent being while in fact you are only a human being. You mean no harm but that is usually what you get. So it seems that at times the worst enemy of the USA can be one of the bureaucracies put in place to protect it, simply because the person in charge thinks that they know what is best for the country. I really enjoyed this book and look forward to the rest of this series. I'm glad that I gave David Baldacci another chance.

Posted to Goodreads and Amazon 1/20/2018

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## **kartik narayanan says**

Read the review of the entire Camel Club series at my my blog

The Camel Club has an interesting premise in the action thriller genre. It consists of four washed up, eccentric senior gentlemen who want to make the world a better place. This premise intrigued me and made me pick up this book.

Now, I have read Baldacci's Will Robie before and I liked that series. The review of the series is available here. The Camel Club is different since it does not rely on one individual to move the plot along though some members of the club are more equal than the others. This book takes the standard islamic terror plot and gives it an interesting twist. For the most part, the US is portrayed more as sinners than as being sinned against. The outlook here is far more international than I would have expected, which is good in a way. As a result, all the characters are interesting - both the protagonists and antagonists.

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## **Mike (the Paladin) says**

### **Updating just to correct some typos and grammatical problems.**

Well....here I go. I can't really recommend this one. You know there are books by Mr. Baldacci that I enjoy greatly. I have noted before that he can be...that's "can be" one of those authors who can get very heavy handed about their political beliefs.

I find that the case here. He pretty much had me feeling he was really (really) **mostly** interested in making a political point. This is obviously a point to be agreed or disagreed on as I see some reviewers agree with me and others don't. Possibly it depends on how much you agree with him (Baldacci) and therefore how much that part of the book...sticks out or overwhelms the plot and characters. I don't know. You'll have to decide for yourself.

Now that said, this is not the primary problem with the novel for me and it's not why I give it a low rating. The novel starts out with an idea and a cast of characters we are to get to know. The primary protagonist is *Oliver Stone*. No not the movie maker. We have another refugee from the world of secret, black ops, covert...stuff. His having taken the name of the movie maker who's interest in conspiracies is sort of legend may just have been part of the reason why the name was chosen as our hero's nom de plume. Sadly however from the very first things spin out in several directions and the story gets not so much laid out with lots of threads...as it seems to fray out in all directions with the threads lashing about in the wind.

It wasn't that I couldn't keep track...I just came to the point where I didn't care to.

So, I don't plan to follow up with any more of the series and really can't recommend it. I just found myself too often losing interest and wanting to move on to something...interesting.

Oh and as I and others have said, Mr. Baldacci's politics quickly become the only true point.

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## **Benjamin Thomas says**

Four societal misfits and conspiracy theorists living in the Washington DC area have banded together to form what they refer to as the Camel Club. Led by Oliver Stone, a 60+ year old man with a mysterious past, they find themselves accidentally witnessing a murder. That launches them into an adventure beyond their wildest expectations involving a complex and bizarre terrorist plot.

I've been a David Baldacci fan since I read *Absolute Power*. His books don't always quite live up to that one

in my mind but I can pretty much guarantee a good read. To be honest, I wasn't expecting as much from this one due to some less-than-positive- reviews from my Goodreads friends whose opinions I greatly respect. But I will say now that I enjoyed this one quite a lot. The characters were engaging, not only the four members of the Camel Club but the Secret Service, the terrorists, and even the politicians. The plot required some suspension of disbelief but was nevertheless interesting and moved along swiftly. Most of the novel ticked along fairly predictably but it was evident that something else was unfolding that I needed to be patient for. The payoff was worth it as the nature of the terrorist plot turned out to be anything but predictable and was one of the most unusual I have yet read.

Looking forward to reading the rest of this series.

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### **Freda Malone says**

Across the street from the White House, tells a story of a man, dead and alive, Oliver Stone. Old and homeless, he and a small group of friends known as The Camel Club, witness a murder on Roosevelt Island.

I read this book many years ago, but for the life of me, I could not remember very much of it. Except for the fact that Oliver Stone lived homeless across the street from the White house and was a mysterious old man. Now that I have re-read this first novel in the series, scenes and characters have come back to me, though I had to finish the book because I still couldn't remember the ending! Explosive, to say the least and so many characters involved, you really have to pay attention.

A topic that stands out in this novel is the amount of veteran characters who were betrayed by their own government and the people high up in it. The president is a pompous ass who loves the cameras and doesn't seem to care much for 'the people', just his looks and his image. Carter Gray, the nation's intelligence chief, struck me as some kind of snake and had his own agenda and I wasn't wrong about that in the end. Alex, a CIA agent, gets a rookie partner, Jackie Simpson, who is also the daughter of a Senator. Jackie Simpson should never have transferred from beat cop to CIA, she was dumb as a door nail and I really didn't like her. She was like an annoying fly buzzing around your head and wouldn't figure things out on her own. Then of course we have a few CIA characters who were corrupt, some deranged Muslims, and some Korean ninjas.

The conspiracy itself was creative and well thought out. As always with the government, things aren't what they seem. The Camel Club characters were memorable, mainly because of their atypical personalities and behaviors. Hard to picture a few old men trying to save the world though. We find out who Oliver Stone really is and he is interesting enough to continue reading the rest of the series, because my first question is, where did Oliver Stone come from? All we know in this first novel is that Oliver Stone is a force to be reckoned with and I want to read more.

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### **Anita Laydon says**

Some people follow sports teams, other people follow actors or rock bands. But me, I follow authors. And while some people fantasize about celebrities they'd like to dine with, I have a list of rock star authors I dream of interviewing.

Recently, one of my dreams came true when David Baldacci agreed to an email interview with me. Upon hearing the news, my impulse was to jump and kick in a manner my legs haven't experienced since the late 1980s, when I was a high school cheerleader. I quickly discovered my body is no longer qualified in jumping and kicking. It is, however, perfectly fine sitting at a computer conducting research on a favorite author. So that's what I did. And here's what I learned:

Before becoming an internationally-acclaimed bestselling author, Baldacci practiced law for nine years. He hit success with his first novel, "Absolute Power" and hasn't looked back. He's written more than a dozen best sellers. Baldacci's works are translated into more than 45 languages and sold in more than 80 countries. And over 60 million copies of Baldacci's books are in print worldwide.

Even I, an ardent Baldacci fan, was surprised by those statistics. And if I wasn't a fan, upon learning those stats, I'd feel inclined to read a Baldacci title.

A good place to start is with Baldacci's "The Camel Club." This book is the first in a series which follows a club of D.C.-based truth seekers. The club consists of an unusual mix of four members: a man without a past currently called "Oliver Stone"; obsessive computer genius Milton Farb; blue-collar laborer Reuben Rhodes; and Library of Congress reference specialist Caleb Shaw.

In "The Camel Club," the members witness a shocking murder in a D.C.-area park. While secretly trying to unravel the crime, the foursome is slammed into a plot that threatens national security and world stability.

If that's not enough to get you reading Baldacci, perhaps a taste of my interview will do it. (The full interview is available on my blog, address below.)

Question: An enormous amount of research must go into your writing. Is there a particular research experience or discovery you'll always remember?

Answer: Listening to incessant gunfire at Quantico while I was down there researching "Last Man Standing." I felt like I was in the Middle East. Being nearly arrested by the FBI while toting around a German film crew in D.C. Ranks right up there. And then my experience on the Acela train after two passengers overheard me talking to a medical expert about poisoning someone for research for a book and summoned the police. That was fun too. Now whenever I travel, I duct tape my mouth shut just to be safe.

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