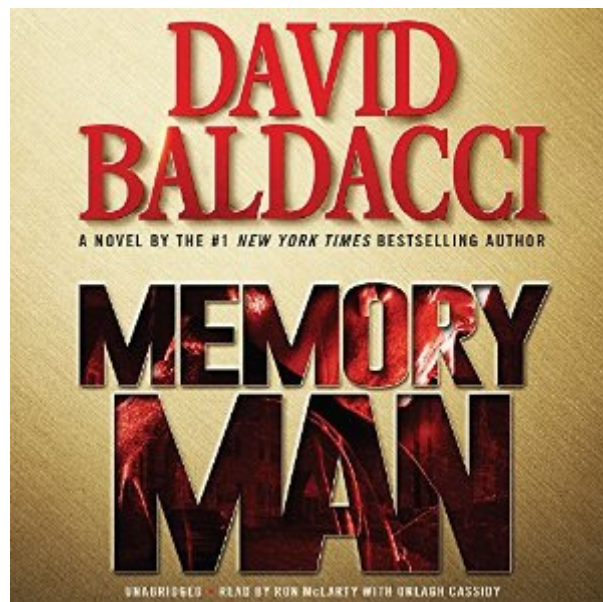


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Memory Man



Synopsis

With over 110 million copies of his novels in print, David Baldacci is one of the most widely read storytellers in the world. Now he introduces a startling, original new character: a man with perfect memory who must solve his own family's murder. **MEMORY MAN** Amos Decker's life changed forever - twice. The first time was on the gridiron. A big, towering athlete, he was the only person from his hometown of Burlington ever to go pro. But his career ended before it had a chance to begin. On his very first play, a violent helmet-to-helmet collision knocked him off the field for good and left him with an improbable side effect - he can never forget anything. The second time was at home nearly two decades later. Now a police detective, Decker returned from a stakeout one evening and entered a nightmare - his wife, young daughter, and brother-in-law had been murdered. His family destroyed, their killer's identity as mysterious as the motive behind the crime, and unable to forget a single detail from that horrible night, Decker finds his world collapsing around him. He leaves the police force, loses his home, and winds up on the street, taking piecemeal jobs as a private investigator when he can. But over a year later, a man turns himself in to the police and confesses to the murders. At the same time a horrific event nearly brings Burlington to its knees, and Decker is called back in to help with this investigation. Decker also seizes his chance to learn what really happened to his family that night. To uncover the stunning truth, he must use his remarkable gifts and confront the burdens that go along with them. He must endure the memories he would much rather forget. And he may have to make the ultimate sacrifice. **Memory Man** will stay with you long after the turn of the final tick.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Amos Decker comes home to find that his mother, wife, and child have been murdered. Decker is a cop and the beginning of his story is too familiar to be promising. He also sees numbers and colors in ways that have become too familiar among fictional characters who suffer from brain abnormalities. As if that's not enough, Decker has the memory (and empathy) of a supercomputer. When writers decide to use a prop to make a character interesting, they usually pick one. Baldacci's decision to use four (numbers, colors, memory, and loss of family to a killer) gives Amos an overdone quality that permeates the novel. Yes, it's fun to give a character some quirky traits, but Decker is quiriness on steroids. The numbers and colors and DVD-like memory all come across as gimmicks, not as humanizing traits. Primarily because I disliked the gimmicks upon which the central character is founded, I don't regard *Memory Man* as one of David Baldacci's better efforts. All of the autistic-savant stuff is just too trite. And really, the fact that he's chased by menacing 3s is just silly. The bad guys in *Memory Man* might as well be supervillains -- the unpowered kind, like Lex Luthor or the Joker -- given their astonishing ability to foresee Decker's every act and to greet his appearances by leaving threatening scrawls on walls for him to read. Other things I didn't believe: Why is the top cop inviting a reporter to tag along with Decker on a police investigation? Why does the FBI agree to let her fly on its government jet? Why, when time is of the essence, do Decker and the reporter drive from Burlington to Chicago when they could fly there in a couple of hours? I'll go pretty far to suspend disbelief when I read a thriller, but I just couldn't buy much of anything in this one.

What could be better than a new series by a favorite author? Answer: A little bit better story. Don't get me wrong, though; I enjoyed this one and absolutely will read the next one, and the next one, etc. But I was hoping for a WOW! kick-off, and it fell short (if only a tad). The hero of the series is a big guy named Amos Decker, a former police detective and football star in Burlington. As with most characters like this, Amos comes with baggage - loads and loads of it, in fact. First off, his glory days were cut short on the very first play he attempted as a member of the Cleveland Browns pro football team (I'm from Ohio and a big fan, BTW); he took a hit that curtailed his promising football career and very nearly left him dead. He survived, but not without very unusual after-effects; he has become an "acquired savant," with hyperthymesia. More simply put, he is one of two handfuls of people who remembers every single moment of every single day and can call any one of them up at

will (if you watched TV's "60 Minutes" show back in 2010 or the "Unforgettable" series starring Poppy Montgomery, you know what I mean). Decker's condition is even more rare, though, because he also has synesthesia abilities - meaning he is able to associate colors with people and objects. Accompanying all this is the loss of much of his ability to connect emotionally with other people. Those rare abilities may seem like a good thing - and they certainly can be helpful to a police detective - but for the most part they're a liability because there's no way to get the memories out of his head (seeing them in living color as well does nothing to improve the situation).

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