



Book Review: One Summer

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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David Baldacci is a bestselling author who has published in more than 45 languages and 80 countries. "One Summer" is the beautifully told story of a four-generational family who have to face a number of traumatic difficulties.

Jack Armstrong served time in the military and not only survived but was awarded medals for his service. His wife, Lizzie invested a great deal of her time raising their three children, Michelle, Cory and Jack Jr. and therefore knew each of them intimately.

When Jack returned home, he resumed his work as a building contractor but began to experience poor health. In fact, his condition deteriorated to the point that the hope of the family was that he would live until Christmas.

Lizzie's parents came to support the family during this difficult time. Jack was so sad to leave his wife and children and decided to write a series of letters in which he described his love for them which Lizzie to open after his death.

No one would ever have guessed that it would be Lizzie who would die first. She went to the store to purchase medication for Jack and was in an automobile accident. Her parents decided to develop a plan for the children and, although Jack was horrified by it, he agreed that each of the children would be sent to live with different relatives.

The house was sold and Jack was left to die by himself. The only real support he had was his friend and co-worker Sammy.

But there were more unexpected surprises to come.

Jack's health began to improve and he used his passion to reunite the family as motivation to become strong. With Sammy's help, he not only build his physical body but also was able to leave the hospice. Now he was faced with the fact that he didn't have any money, tools or income. His major goal was to be able to set up a home where he could care for the children.

Just before her death, Lizzie had stated that she wanted to take the children to her grandmother's South Carolina property because it had been such a good home base for Lizzie during her own childhood.

Jack was surprised to find out that the grandmother's will specified that he was to have the property.

Reuniting the family, repairing the property and earning a living were formidable tasks. Dealing with the issues that each of thee children were experiencing as well as his own loss was even more demanding. And it didn't help that his mother-in-law seemed to always be sabotaging the idea of him raising the children. In fact, she filed for custody of the children and Jack was then faced with a Court case in which everything he had worked for was at risk.

This book was a fascinating read. It included so many of the thrills and tragedies that most families experience. Jack and the other characters are portrayed in a realistic manner and it is easy to connect with them as though they are good personal friends.

I recommend "One Summer" to those who love fiction.