

Book Review: Hope Rises (Walter Nash #2)
By David Baldacci

In “Nash Falls” (Walter Nash #1), published in November 2025, readers met Walter Nash. Walter, a highly respected senior vice president at Sybaritic Investments, soon has his life turned upside down when he is recruited by the FBI to become its inside man to expose an enterprise headed by Victoria Steers, an international criminal mastermind, that has been laundering huge sums of money through Sybaritic.

By the end of “Nash Falls,” Walter, a mild-mannered individual to this point, has transformed himself into a chiseled, imposing figure with lethal skills. Under his new identity of Dillon Hope, he travels to Hong Kong to bring down Steers and her empire from the inside out.

But not everything is as it seems on the surface. Once Walter has gained Steers’ trust and become part of her inner circle, he finds himself drawn to this woman who he believes is responsible for destroying his family. Suddenly, putting a bullet in her head isn’t such a simple task. And as he gathers evidence of her organization’s operations, he finds himself tangled in a delicate web of lies and deceit.

Can Nash trust his own judgment? His own emotions? Not if he continues to grow empathy toward those who would seemingly do great harm to huge populations.

The plot and character twists and turns come quickly following a rather slow-moving first half of the book. And when they come, they tend to complicate the story flow more than necessary. Mostly because they’re not simply unpredictable; many of them are unbelievable.

The ending, I thought, was a bit disappointing. In some ways it seems Baldacci is leaving the door open to a third book in the series; in others, he leaves it to our imagination. Either way, it’s not a satisfying conclusion.

Just three stars for “Hope Rises.” It was easy to see just how far Walter had ‘fallen’ in the first book, but the sequel doesn’t rise to the level of suspense and intrigue I had hoped for.