



## Just 2 Seconds

*By Gavin de Becker, Tom Taylor, Jeff Marquart*

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Think of every assassination you've ever heard about. For most people, a few of these major ones come to mind: Caesar, Abraham Lincoln, John Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, Indira Gandhi, Anwar Sadat, John Lennon, Israel's Prime Minister Rabin, Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto. From start to finish, all of these attacks combined took place in less than one minute. And the hundreds of attacks studied for this book, all of them combined, took place in less than a half-hour. Those thirty minutes, surely the most influential in world history, offer important insights that can help today's protectors defeat tomorrow's attackers.

### **This 650-Page Book Contains:**

An original work of new insights arising from ten years of research;  
The Five Essential Lessons for protectors;  
The Compendium - 400 pages of summarized attacks, near attacks, and incidents against at-risk persons all over the world from 1960-2007, more than 1400 entries;  
and the Appendices - More than 100 pages of additional material and resources.

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## **Just 2 Seconds By Gavin de Becker, Tom Taylor, Jeff Marquart Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

A Q&A with Gavin de Becker



**Question:** In today's world, where terror and tragedy seem omnipresent, the fear of violence never seems more heightened. Is the world a more violent place than it ever has been?

**Gavin de Becker :** Your question contains much of the answer: today's world, "where terror and tragedy seem omnipresent..." The key word is "seem." When TV news coverage presents so much on these topics, it elevates the perception of terrorism and tragedy way beyond the reality. In every major city, TV news creates forty hours of original production every day, most of it composed and presented to get our attention with fear. Hence an incident on an airplane in which a man fails to do any damage is treated as if the make-shift bomb actually exploded. It didn't. Imagine having a near miss in your car, avoiding what would have been a serious collision--and then talking about every hour for months after the fact. Welcome to TV news.

To the second part of your question, No, the world is not a more violent place than it has ever been, however we live as if it were. The U.S. is the most powerful nation in world history--and also the most afraid.

**Question:** You were just on the Oprah show discussing spousal homicide--can you talk about the show, and whether spousal homicide is a growing epidemic?

**Gavin de Becker:** Through two shows Oprah dedicated to the topic, we're conveying a great deal of new information, and most of all, Oprah's announcement that a MOSAIC assessment system developed by my firm will be made available to any person who wants to use it, at no cost, via her website. This will allow anyone to diagnose a relationship to determine if it has the combination of factors most associated with escalated violence, and spousal homicide. Is spousal homicide increasing? It is not; however, the reality is more disturbing than an increase: Spousal homicide has remained a constant in our lives, such that every four hours at least one woman is killed in America by a husband or boyfriend. That uninterrupted and sad statistic can be interrupted and changed--because as explored in *The Gift of Fear*, spousal homicide is the single most preventable serious crime in America--largely owing to that fact that it always occurs after many warning signs, and after several people are aware of the risk.

**Question:** Your bestselling book *The Gift of Fear* gives many examples to help readers recognize what you call pre-incident indicators (PINS) of violence. What role does intuition play in recognizing these signals?

**Gavin de Becker:** Like every creature on earth, we have an extraordinary defense resource: We don't have the sharpest claws and strongest jaws--but we do have the biggest brains, and intuition is the most impressive process of these brains. It might be hard to accept its importance because intuition is often described as emotional, unreasonable, or inexplicable. Husbands chide their wives about "feminine intuition" and don't take it seriously. If intuition is used by a woman to explain some choice she made or a concern she can't let go of, men roll their eyes and write it off. We much prefer logic, the grounded, explainable, unemotional thought process that ends in a supportable conclusion. In fact, Americans worship logic, even when it's wrong, and deny intuition, even when it's right. Men, of course, have their own version of intuition, not so light and inconsequential, they tell themselves, as that feminine stuff. Theirs is more viscerally named a "gut feeling," but whatever name we use, it isn't just a feeling. It is a process more extraordinary and ultimately more logical in the natural order than the most fantastic computer calculation. It is our most complex cognitive process and, at the same time, the simplest.

Intuition connects us to the natural world and to our nature. It carries us to predictions we will later marvel at. "Somehow I knew," we will say about the chance meeting we predicted, or about the unexpected phone call from a distant friend, or the unlikely turnaround in someone's behavior, or about the violence we steered clear of, or, too often, the violence we elected not to steer clear of. *The Gift of Fear* offers strategies that help us recognize the signals of intuition--and helps us avoid denial, which is the enemy of safety.

**Question:** Your latest book, *Just 2 Seconds*, has been called a "masterpiece" of analysis on the art of preventing assassination. It contains an entire compendium of attacks on protected persons across the globe. What motivated you to put together such a definitive reference? What tenets can be applied to one's everyday life?

**Gavin de Becker:** Most of all, we wrote the book we needed. My co-authors and I had long looked for an extensive collection of attack summaries from which important new insights could be harvested. Unable to find it, we committed to do the work ourselves, eventually collecting more than 1400 cases to analyze. Many new insights and concepts emerged from the study, and the one most applicable to day to day life, even for people who are not living with unusual risks, is to be in the present; pre-sent, as it were. Now is the only time anything ever happens--now is where the action is. All focus on anything outside the Now (the past, memory, the future, fantasy) detracts focus from what's actually happening in your environment. Human beings have the capacity to look right at something and not see it, and in studying such a crisp event--the few seconds during which assassinations have occurred--*Just 2 Seconds* aims to enhance the reader's ability to see the value of the present moment.

(Photo © Avery Helm)

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## Review

"A profound work of practical scholarship offers no less than a sure opportunity to interdict horrible violence at its source." --James Ellroy, Bestselling Author *L.A. Confidential* and *The Black Dahlia*

"JUST 2 SECONDS is a compelling must-read book for those who understand the world we live in, and choose not to fear it, but to survive it. A masterful work." --Patricia Cornwell, Bestselling Author, Kay Scarpetta series

"JUST 2 SECONDS is the definitive reference for protectors, authoritative and thorough, riveting and powerful. By giving so many new protective strategies, JUST 2 SECONDS also gives us great cause for hope - hope for survival of those whom the assassin would slay." --Col Dave Grossman, Author, *On Combat*

and *On Killing*

#### About the Author

Mr. de Becker is the founder of a 480-person firm that provides consultation, protective services, and logistical support to many of the world's most prominent figures in media, politics, and culture. A two-time Presidential Appointee at the U.S. Department of Justice, he is currently a Senior Fellow at UCLA's School of Public Policy. Mr. de Becker designed the MOSAIC systems used to screen threats to Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court, CIA officials, Members of Congress, and the Governors of twelve states. He has appeared many times on the Oprah Winfrey Show, Larry King Live, the Today Show, 60 Minutes, and in TIME and Newsweek. His bestselling books on violence are published in 14 languages.

#### Users Review

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##### Lynn Jones:

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**Tim Gonzalez:**

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