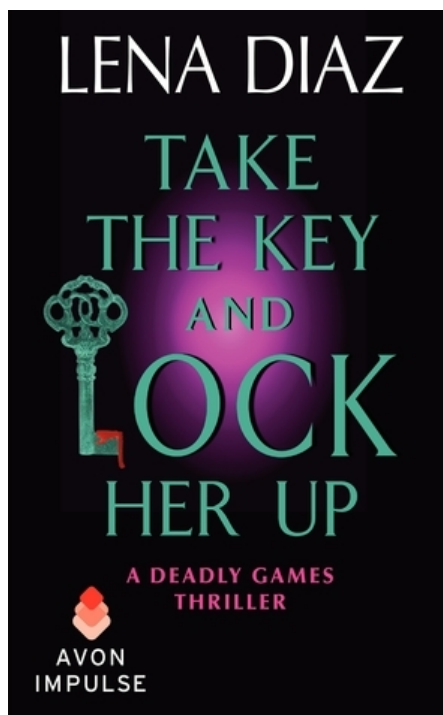




Take the Key and Lock Her Up

Lena Diaz

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Take the Key and Lock Her Up Lena Diaz

Lena Diaz returns with another sexy, thrilling Deadly Games novel and the darkest question of all: What do you do when your freedom could cost you your life?

Detective Emily O'Malley just stumbled upon a killer's lair—and the remains of a woman he kept locked away for years. But this killer isn't done yet. More women are missing, and all clues point to Devlin Buchanan—the man who seems to know just a little too much. Emily's instincts are rarely wrong, and now they're telling her this sexy, mysterious man is hiding something big ...

As a trained assassin for EXIT Inc—a top-secret mercenary group posing as an international tour company—Devlin "Devil" Buchanan isn't afraid to take justice into his own hands. But when the hot new detective on his trail gets too close to the organization and a contract is placed on her life, Devlin does the only thing he can: he turns rogue agent and kidnaps her to save her life.

With EXIT Inc closing in and passions running hot between them, Emily and Devlin must work together to find the missing women and clear both their names before time runs out ... and the key to freedom is thrown away.

Take the Key and Lock Her Up Details

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From Reader Review Take the Key and Lock Her Up for online ebook

Marica (The Book Chick) says

I have not read that much by Diaz. Only this series and this book is the last one (as I understand it) in the series Deadly Games. I loved the first three books and they all got top score by me. These books are old fashion, romantic suspense that makes you want to stay home from work, sit in your reading nook and do nothing but read all day and night. That is how good these books have been. I must, however, say that I was a little disappointed on Diaz with this one. The story is awesome as always but I do not like the ending.

You can read a complete and a more detailed review at my blog.

Cristina says

It had potential to be a good story but it was just too rushed and it had the dreaded insta-love/lust, which I absolutely loathe reading about. The mystery was lousy. I figured it out long before the midpoint; the characters were one dimensional. I made it half way and stopped. Sorry.

Diana Davidson says

Fast paced high octane story!

This book was so good! Started off fast and never stopped. Devlin was a complicated character and was written so well. And Emily's struggles with the gray areas of right and wrong were a joy to read. This is a must read for romantic suspense lovers. I thoroughly enjoyed and highly recommend this book.

Carmen Pacheco says

...here she was, once again forced to do what she did not do best – make life-and-death decisions under pressure.

When Emily's own partner helps her pass the detective test, ensuring she's off the streets, "to keep the public safe", your faith in that person is rather shaky. A profound evolution is about to take place, my friends. True to her penchant for rich, intense storytelling, Take the Key and Lock Her Up by Lena Diaz will insert you into Emily's head, gauge options in heady situations she confronts, and suffer through doubts that have lived for too long. This is my third Diaz thriller and she never ceases to wreak a little havoc in my life – the consequences of reading till the early hours! This is me not complaining. :)

When Emily tracks an abductor to a basement more akin to an abandoned prison, she falls prey to a diversionary tactic (he literally locked her inside a cell and got away with his victim), but Emily's life (and fate) is irrevocably changed by Devlin "Devil" Buchanan (older brother of the swoon-worthy Matt from Ashes, Ashes, They All Fall Dead – available here). Devlin's presence isn't immediately questioned at the

crime scene, weird, but even more interesting is his lack of interest in the police investigation. Oh, he was happy to make Emily's acquaintance (her unforgettable soft curves), but cooperating with law enforcement doesn't appeal to his sense of civic duty. Still weird, right? Devlin's a hard one to figure out (and very good at hiding things), but I remember him as a background character and Ms. Diaz just makes him irresistible here. His initial approach might be crude, but it's soon tempered by genuine vulnerability and charm (it runs in the Buchanan family).

An incidental, but impactful discovery of a gruesome, years-old corpse where Emily was locked up seizes Devin and thickens the plot.

"Holy sh**," he whispered.

"Ditto." She lowered her phone. "Who gets to tell Devlin Buchanan that this skeleton is what's left of his mother?"

Far from a doting mother, Carolyn was the love of Devlin's father's life, even though she divorced him (and abandoned the whole family) when Devlin was only 13. The knowledge of Carolyn's forced captivity suddenly changes impressions and throws the Buchanan men into upheaval; a loyal force to protect their father. To add fuel to the fire, the first victim saved relays she's only one of three women who were kidnapped by the mad man. So much going on, right?! The case progresses and expands; infiltrates what once was safe. Emily is swept up by the emotions and swears to bring the fugitive to justice alongside Devlin to repay him for saving her own life. Maybe it's time they shake hands and call it a day because Devlin's methods of apprehending fall way outside the police scope:

If Devlin had talked, he would have used the term enforcer, his actual job title. Enforcer was somewhat synonymous with agent at one of the alphabet agencies like the CIA or FBI, but without the shackles of laws and political policies to tie him down. The assassin role was only part of what he did, and only when absolutely necessary.

I couldn't even begin to explain the twists and connections linking Devlin and his family. It is marvelously layered and worst of all, a real threat. I wouldn't dream of spoiling that for you let alone capsulize or tiptoe around key clues. That's the thrill in thriller and it's wicked! What I can expand upon is the building sexual tension that stays unexplored for far too long, IMO, lol. Undeterred, but mostly out of insane, implacable desire, Emily vows to maintain ethical standards in the midst of hot pursuit (and that has little to do with the perp!) I'm not downplaying the chemistry because Ms. Diaz delivers shivers, but the beauty lies in watching Emily and Devlin begin to trust one another, develop strong feelings for one another, and recognize that they're stronger together.

"Maybe you're right that I shouldn't have forced you to come with me in the first place. And maybe I shouldn't have locked you up. But I did what I thought I had to do at the time to keep you safe. If you come with me now, we can be a team, find the missing women together. That way I'll be able to protect you from my enemies and you'll be able to do what you want to do – solve the case. You won't be my prisoner. But don't ask me to leave you here to die, Em. I can't do it. I won't do it."

There were moments, several in fact, where I found Emily to be downright inept and a liability to her profession. Be it inappropriate, illegal interrogation or brandishing her gun on unarmed Devlin, it really got under my skin. In all fairness, due to time constraints (constant attacks and a general reticence on his part), Devlin has only skimmed the surface of his job description to Emily. Based on opposite sides of the spectrum, I suppose it's natural to form an opinion, but never was there a couple more in need of a sit-down than these two. Devlin's brash confidence and/or lone wolf mentality was a bit off-putting, but when their disparities leveled, so went their judgments and an innate strength, possessed by both, rose to the occasion.

Take the Key and Lock Her Up is a complex story made up of unfolding details, misinformation and transformation. While I wouldn't call it a cliffhanger (you don't see frown-y faces of utter frustration), the story is not over. Is there a way to embrace HEA on the run? Please read this story and let me know your theories! Or better yet, can I get a spoiler, Ms. Diaz???

Cindy ~ SnS Reviews says

Dark and twisted best describe this latest in the Deadly Games series. The bonus with this book is it also kicks off a new series.

All the Buchanan's from the previous books are back with Devlin being the main hero of this one. Devlin's job is a little darker than his brother's. He is an assassin for a group called EXIT Inc (which is also the name of the new series). The author waste no time throwing you in the middle of chaos and you're hanging on for the rollercoaster of a ride from start to finish.

This book is filled with so many twists and turns that giving away too much of the plot I fear would ruin it for other readers. All I have to say this is a very intense romantic suspense and soo worth the read. With as dark as things got in this one, my curiosity is piqued for the new series.

John W. says

I received an early copy of "Take the Key and Lock Her Up" in exchange for an honest review.

It will be up to the readers to decide the genre of Lena Diaz's "Take the Key and Lock Her Up." Diaz adds romance, mystery, suspense, and intrigue to create romantic connection between two people even if they are exact opposites of each other. Diaz's intense romantic plot is full of twists and turns and unpredictability. Diaz introduces her two key protagonists detective Emily O'Malley and Devin Buchanan. Diaz introduces well developed support characters bringing them into the story as needed giving readers their history. These great support characters, both good and bad, come alive to help readers embrace Diaz's story.

"Take the Key and Lock Her Up" is a complex story transitioning between the unusual history of the two protagonists. The first meeting of Diaz's key protagonists Detective Emily O'Malley and loner Devin Buchanan was like mixing oil and vinegar. O'Malley is chasing a suspect who has a terrified Virginia Hawley as his captive in his truck. Driving on a rural road the suspect stops and runs into a building with his hostage. Diaz explains O'Malley's lack of self-confidence and her dislike for making life or death decisions. Diaz introduces her second protagonist as Devin Buchanan arriving on the scene offering O'Malley assistance after hearing on his police scanner O'Malley's call for back up O'Malley's low self-confidence collides with Buchanan's attitude and his reminding it was O'Malley needing help from him. The chemistry between O'Malley and Buchanan jumps off the pages for the first of many times in Diaz's story line.

Diaz does a wonderful job describing the development of the chemistry of her two protagonists to her readers. O'Malley is a good detective with exceptional investigative skills who reacts slow to crisis issues. Buchanan is a member of an influential family whose father is a successful self-defense attorney, brother and sister with the FBI, a brother is a private investigator and his younger brother confined to a wheel chair. Devin Buchanan has a mysterious history working for a firm handling problems others couldn't solve. O'Malley thinks he is a paid assassin.

Readers see Diaz delivering sudden changes of direction to the plot challenging both O'Malley and Buchanan. O'Malley strains to follow her ethics in her investigations. Buchanan's methods are so unorthodox O'Malley doesn't see how they could help each other. O'Malley's investigation seems to trip over Buchanan's efforts to locate the person responsible for the missing women. Buchanan's secrets keep O'Malley digging into his past and asks one too many questions sharing her theory of Buchanan being an assassin to the wrong person. Buchanan finds O'Malley's life is in danger and he discovers his boss has put a target on his back.

Diaz's story heats up and events start unfolding so fast readers barely have time to catch their breath. The level of danger and ruthlessness increases as Diaz helps readers understanding how much is at stake. Even with all the danger and attacks on people Buchanan cares about, Diaz shows her readers she can keep romance in the air. Diaz strengthens the romantic connection between Buchanan and O'Malley. Diaz's readers will not be able to predict the ending of "Take the Key and Lock Her Up" nor who is responsible for all the betrayal and manipulation. The only way to learn how Lena Diaz's , "Take the Key and Lock Her Up" ends is to read Diaz's book. I recommend Lena Diaz's book and consider this a must read. Diaz's book earned 5 stars.

Nicole Laverdure says

A real page turner! I really loved Lena Diaz's Deadly Games series and discovered that TAKE THE KEY AND LOCK HER UP is my favorite one, it's also a great introduction to her new series EXIT. I loved her two main characters Detective Emily O'Malley and Devlin Buchanan, a sexy trained assassin. Be ready to sit on the edge of your seat or bite your nails, because it's a great suspenseful mystery filled with romance and intrigue. Both, Emily and Devlin, team up, to find the murderers of women, in particular one member in Devlin's family. It's really really fast paced, so much, that I could not put it down, to find out more clues to help me find the person responsible for killing the women. Devlin is a sexy man with a complicated family history. Emily is a detective who always went with her gut feeling, will her instinct prove her wrong about this man? Lots of twists and turns, with a touch a humor! I had fun reading Ms. Diaz's mystery romance! I recommend her book and looking forward for her next suspense.

Monique says

If you're in need of a terrific action story, look no further!

TAKE THE KEY AND LOCK HER UP is an absolutely fantastic book! Ladies, beware: your manicure might be ruined! Emily O'Malley is a young detective in Savannah. One day, while in her car she spots what seems to be the suspect in a kidnapping case, she follows the car and ends up in a house where she finds, not the abducted woman, but skeletons. That's when a man enters the house. After being scared to death, she notices he doesn't meet the abductor's description; after a scuffle, she somewhat accepts his answers. He has a police scanner in his truck for his job and had heard Emily's call for reinforcement and went to her rescue. He's Devlin Buchanan and works for EXIT, Extreme International Tours Inc., officially a company that arranges dangerous tours where the tourists need expert guides, and bodyguards, but there is much, much more to EXIT. And to Devlin. After some events, Emily and Devlin eventually work together in trying to find who is abducting and killing women.

I don't even want to say any more, because trying to condense the story would spoil future readers' pleasure

at reading this fabulous book. The plot is extremely tight and every detail has a reason. Lena Diaz has woven a gripping, complex story where everything converges to a logical and, literally breathtaking conclusion. It's fast-paced, exciting, and wonderfully written. In fact, the story is so beautifully crafted you don't notice the author: the characters breathe on the page, the surroundings come alive; you become completely immersed in the story.

And Devlin Buchanan is my kind of hero: he's a real take-charge man, not a bully, not arrogant nor conceited. He might well be my favourite character of the sort ever. I just love him! Emily is a wonderful counterpart: she is a bit clueless, because she has little field experience; she is scared, but fearless as well. And the chemistry between them is electric! Such wonderful characters, all of them; the Buchanan family feels real, so do the villains. I LOVED this book so much and if you like suspense novels, you will love it too! It was a gift from the author and if I had bought it myself, I would not change a word of this review! Absolutely fantastic! And I am so happy there will be a next one!

Christine Mize says

When you pick up Take the Key and Lock Her Up, I would highly recommend clearing your schedule for the next 24 hours because this is a book that you cannot put down. This book is action packed from the very beginning, and contains some incredible twists and turns, with an ending I did not see coming.

Once again, we meet Detective Emily O'Malley of the Savannah-Chatham Police Department. Devlin "Devil" Buchanan steps in to provide backup to Emily while she is hunting for a kidnapper and victim. He works for a covert organization under the guise as an extreme travel guide to the wealthy. In actuality, he is a trained covert operator.

I enjoyed seeing Emily again – it was like visiting an old friend and catching up. She is a stronger character in this book and is finally finding her sea legs as a police officer. Devlin is a complex character and I enjoyed learning more about him (which I will not give away). You learn from his character than things are not always as they seem.

I highly recommend this for fans of romantic suspense. This book will keep you on your toes and glued to the page.

Diana Belchase says

There isn't a book by Lena Diaz that isn't a winner -- and this is no exception. Her writing is really compelling and keeps you turning the pages. I'm a huge fan.

Heather Duff says

Thank you to Avon for providing me with a copy in exchange for my honest review

So Take The Key and Lock Her Up, what did I think of it, well I can honestly say I enjoyed every minute of

this fast paced novel, it contains the perfect ingredients for a thrilling read, feisty heroine, hot but damaged hero, secret organisation, amazing chemistry and a didn't see it coming twist at the end.

Detective Emily O'Malley, a detective better at solving crime puzzles than thinking on her feet comes across an abducted woman and her kidnapper whilst driving home one night, she follows them to an old house where she sees them go inside but once in she finds not only no trace of the woman and her abductor, she finds herself trapped in a cell.

In that cell she makes a gruesome discovery, skeletal remains lie inside, but she doesn't have too long to dwell as what she thinks is the kidnapper comes back, aiming her gun she gets ready to attack and finds herself face to face with....Devlin Buchanan

Devlin is instantly pegged as the kidnapper but he is coming to Emily's help, hearing her call for back up on his police scanner, he has come to help her. Little do they both now that they are about to get involved in a huge web of deceit and betrayal.

The body in the cell is identified as Carolyn Buchanan, Devlin's "Mother", a woman who he loses no love for, taken in for questioning by Emily, she realises that he may have nothing to do with this woman's murder but he is definitely hiding something from her.

Devlin is an enforcer for EXIT, an organisation that is extremely shadowy, he is a bad ass assassin pretending to be an adventure tour guide, Emily does not trust him but she also can't stop thinking about him and before long they both find themselves flung together as Emily starts asking the wrong questions and repercussions are felt by them and their nearest and dearest.

Devlin takes Emily at first against her will, as he sees the danger that she is in, together they run from EXIT, and they run for their lives, will they solve these crimes that have them watching their backs and will they succumb to the amazing chemistry they have?

There is so much going on in this novel that I haven't mentioned (no spoilers!!), it is a great read and at no time did I find myself getting bored as the story is extremely fast paced, each page exudes danger as the story progresses plus you have the extremely sparky chemistry between Devlin and Emily which just makes the perfect addition to this amazing novel.

This book reminded me a lot of the awesome In Death series by JD Robb, a series that I totally love and in that I really want to hear more in the future about Devlin and Emily!

The only thing I didn't like about this book was the cover, it is probably that books of this type I am used to seeing a half naked man with a large gun on the front, this one looked like it belonged more on a supernatural book than a thriller.

This was my first Lena Diaz novel and I am excited to see there are a whole series of Deadly Games thrillers out there, I may just have to treat myself!

Take The Key and Lock Her Up is awarded 5 out of 5

Sarah Andre says

Spectacular thriller that I couldn't put down! Twist after twist kept me guessing about villains and motives

until the very end. This is hands down my favorite of the Deadly Games series. Devlin is masterfully woven in a razor fine line between courageous hero and dangerous assassin, a mix that kept me riveted. Emily displayed refreshing spunk and wit, a pleasant change from today's contemporary characters who rely on snark. Great dialogue, chemistry and tension kept the romantic pace at a white hot blitz. Highly, highly recommend this romantic suspense, and I can hardly wait for this author's next series!

Amy says

Awesome read, kept me turning the pages!

Emily O'Malley doesn't think of herself as the best cop in the department but she is determined to do her best as a detective. When she spots a woman reported missing some time ago in a truck, she follows the suspect to a house off the beaten track. She calls it in and requests backup but when she hears screams, she knows she must act fast or the woman may die before help arrives. The last thing she expects is to find herself locked in a cell with a dead body, and then rescued by another man who may or may not be involved in the abductions. Now she's caught up in an investigation, which puts her own life on the line and changes her life forever.

Devlin Buchanan just wants to spend some time with his family before he goes on his next mission. When he hears a female cop put out a call for backup on his police scanner, he knows better than to get involved with the police, but can't leave a damsel in distress. Now everything that can go wrong has and he now finds himself in the middle of a murder/abduction case, and he's the prime suspect. Not only does he need to protect the company he works for, EXIT Inc., his family, and himself, but now the cop who he can't seem to stop thinking about is in danger too. To say his world has been turned upside down is an understatement.

Lena Diaz writes amazing, page turning, edge of the seat suspense blended with just the right amount of romance filled angst and attraction to keep any reader thoroughly content but in TAKE THE KEY AND LOCK HER UP, I think she takes us to a whole new place.

TAKE THE KEY AND LOCK HER UP by Lena Diaz is exciting from page one, captivating in how deeply developed the storyline is, and we can't help but fall for the hero bad boy, Devlin Buchanan. She puts us knee deep into the action right from the start and I wouldn't want it any other way. This is a keep-you-up-reading-way-past-your-bedtime good read. I have to admit to reading until I actually dropped my reader because I couldn't keep my eyes open another moment, that is until I was so close to the end I could taste it, and then I pulled a I'm-going-to-read-till-I-finish night. I finally closed down my reader at 4 AM. Of course, that was after I read the teaser from Lena's next series starting with EXIT STRATEGY, where - There's more to EXIT Inc. than meets the eye... I can't wait!!

I highly recommend TAKE THE KEY AND LOCK HER UP by Lena Diaz if you love a fast-paced, action-packed thriller, which guarantees to keep you on the edge of your seat and turning the pages all while trying to figure out whodunit. By the way, I figured out who the killer was, but Lena caught me on the motive. Good one, Lena. There's nothing better than a thriller that really does keep you guessing. Loved it!

Purchased this one for my own personal reading but sharing an honest and unscripted review.

Maureen ~Bitch Can Write A Book says

Again...my good friend told me to read ASAP. I did...in less than 24 hours I devoured this book. This same awesome friend is the one who recommend Lena to me. I LOVE this series. LOVE. AND this book was my favorite so far. Dev...aka Devil is hot, sexy, and a badass bad boy. Emily was a perfect match for him. Did I mention...she is a cop. Devil is not a big fan of...cops. Besides the awesome love story the mystery and action in this book were edge of your seat awesomeness. I'm chopping for the next book, CANNOT wait. I'm a big fan of coming back to a series and getting to touch base with past family and characters. The Buchanan clan are some of the hottest, badasses around. As I said I'm dying for more. There were some things left up in the air, such as Austin...eek. And EXIT's demise. Lena has set us up perfectly for the next book.

If you have not read this author...RUN! She is a must read, if you love suspense, mystery, sexy with plot twists to keep you on the edge of your seat turning pages for hours!!! READ Lena!!!

Laura Hannaway says

Couldn't take to this one at all. He was far too dark a character for me to like and she kept making me roll my eyes at her stupidity! I'm not sure about the spin off series either, but I guess I'll probably try the first one and go from there.
