



Devil in the Details

L.J. Hayward

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If there's one thing assassin Ethan Blade knows, it's how to plan a job. How to study a target, find the weak spot, and strike. He keeps his guns clean, his knives sharp, and his heart sealed away behind more locks than his precious cars. Alone but safe. Until Jack Reardon burrowed his way into Ethan's life, his car, and his heart. This may just be the deadliest mess he can't plan his way out of.

Jack wasn't sure he'd see Ethan again—not after the less-than-stellar ends to their previous hookups. Even finding the assassin skulking about his apartment isn't as reassuring as it should be, especially when he works out Ethan's motive for being there might not be personal. That said, Jack will take any chance he can to salvage their relationship, assuming he survives whatever plan Ethan is cooking up.

Ethan and Jack had a bargain, but the parameters changed and neither are certain how to move forward—together or apart. But before they can start to renegotiate, lives, trust, and hearts are endangered by ghosts from the past. Even if they dodge their enemies' bullets, there's a risk of friendly fire, and when you let someone get too close, even small knives can cut deep.

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From Reader Review Devil in the Details for online ebook

? Marco ? says

I really like how all these novellas move the overall storyline along, but why the author decided to not release a full novel instead remains her secret.

Rach says

This series keeps on getting better and better. I love these novella's in between while we are waiting for the 2nd book in the series.

In this book we get Ethan's point of view which really adds to the book.

Jack and Ethan end up in different countries in this one. Ethan always seems to be one step of Jack and who Jack works for and

The personal relationship between Jack and Ethan is moving forward. In their minds they have admitted their feelings but not out aloud.

I can't wait for the next book as we still don't about Ethan's past and when will we get that kiss.

Simone says

5+++++ I wish I could give more stars

Jack was caught by the contrast between their skin. The stark delineation of his darker tone against Ethan's paleness, even as it flushed hotly with blood in the wake of Jake's hand. It was nearly enough to make him blow then and there, but when Ethan put his own hand over Jack's, sliding his fingers between Jack's - brown, white, brown, white, brown, white - the pressure moved from his dick to his chest. Then they curled their fingers down together, unconsciously sharing the same desire for closeness, for unity...

After the ending of the previous novella which left their relationship hanging in a more than doubtful future, Ethan is back. In truly Ethan shoot-first-and-ask-for-forgiveness-later fashion. For once his plan of sneaking back into Jack's life without getting caught fails, though, and despite still feeling hurt, Jack will always remain his biggest weakness. A weakness to which he will always surrender. A weakness he finds his own comfort in. A weakness that lets him be a man, not just a ruthless killer. A man who wants to cave in to his vulnerabilities and let his guard down, to just let himself feel. But Ethan also still feels a bit overwhelmed with the whole situation and way in over his head, so with him being more a man of action than of words, his

way to help Jack solving his current case is bound to backfire. Big time. So much so, that Ethan is prepared to loose Jack for good...

With their bargain apparently in a shambles, Jack already resigned himself to never seeing Ethan again. Leaving work early can sometimes pay off, though, and finding Ethan in his home brings buried feelings and revelations about their relationship bubbling up to the surface, only to feel betrayed again in the end. When their paths cross again and something bad happens that makes Jack need Ethan more than ever before, old doubts are back with a vengeance to send his emotional state into a tailspin. But Ethan wouldn't be Ethan without concocting a plan to get them back on track...

Gahhhh, you can't imagine how much I loved this!!! For me, this was without a doubt the best of the novellas so far. And I knew it right from the beginning. How come? Well, after reading the first two sentences I already squeed. Loud. For the very first time we get Ethan's thoughts told in first person POV and being in his head was *everything* I could have hoped for. Before you get overly excited now, though, it's just in the first of three short stories included in this novella, the rest is once again told from Jack's POV, but the insight I got here was staggering.

Devil in the Details has everything I want in my books. It is centered around emotions and even if it's still not all sunshine and roses between these two...

"We all have knives." Anger bubbling up again, Jack shouted over him. "All of us! That's all any of us are. We're just a bunch of knives waiting to cut anyone who gets too close. Our insecurities. Our weaknesses. prejudices, arrogance. Everything that makes us who we are is a knife you can use to hurt someone else. God fucking knows I've hurt everyone around me. Family, friends, lovers. You. And they've hurt me. Stabbed me in the fucking heart."

... I'm still amazed how far Jack and Ethan have come and every fight and argument and tenderness brought them to this moment, so I totally agree with the author that these novellas where absolutely necessary for the relationship development. There's also quite some action here which made my inner adrenaline-junkie happy and hot and steamy sex scenes that made my hormones do this funny little salsa again. But it also made me cry big, fat and ugly tears, so you better surround yourself with everything that makes you happy and some tissues will be needed as well.

L.J. Hayward's unique writing style catapulted me once again right into the story and I always love the setting she chooses for these books, so from the Australian Outback over Singapore and the Gold Coast to the Vietnamese Jungle here, it makes for quite the round-the-world trip for me. ;-)

Overall, this novella answered a lot of questions I had and I will definitely reread the whole series again at some point to connect all the hints and clues we got in the previous books with the knowledge I have now. It ends on a HFN, but I guess the next book will put the guys and us readers through the wringer again, since the author promised more tears to come. Highly recommended to all fans of this series!!!

ARC generously provided to me by the author in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!

fleurette says

I rarely do short stories, even those in the series I truly enjoy. But I have read all the stories in this series impatiently waiting for the second addition to this series.

And I have to admit that there is a lot going on in this book. Some things are really crucial for the whole story of Jack and Ethan. I'm even surprised that these short stories are not included in the second book, since they are very important for the development of the dynamics in these guy's relationship. I'm so glad I read this book and now I'm even more eager to read the second book in this series as soon as possible.

Christelle says

****Rawhhh**** ...Can the adventures of Ethan and Jack get better and better ? Rhetorical question ?
The answer is yes..because we get Ethan's POV, yeah !!! Granted, not for long, but it was perfect. And we get more tidbits about Ethan, I mean the person, not the ruthless assassin.
And here I come with my big feet : Ethan is perfect but how can it be different as he's...French !! Sorry, couldn't help it ??

These guys are so deep into this relationship while keeping it to themselves...It works wonder on me. Gosh, I love both Jack and Ethan, their thoughts, their building coziness, their tip-toeing.
A little bit more of action, here, but just enough to compliment Ethan and Jack's particular relationship.

And now, ready for book#2 and maybe get a kiss !!!. I so love this series ?? and recommend it.

PS : Thank you so much, Elf Hazmerso undercover avenger : yep, a fantastic gift !! ?

Fabi says

There was A LOT in this one. You cannot skip the novellas in this particular series as they actually move the plot along. This one isn't even all that short.

haletostilinski says

Wow!! Wow wow wow, I love this series SO MUCH.

This books aren't full books but they were SO necessary for Jack and Ethan's story - and also this one felt like a full length novel. The location amount in kindle was over 3000, which has to be close to 200 pages or well over 200 pages. That's a full length novel to me, compared to the other short stories.

In this last short story before the next full length novel, we FINALLY get one of the short stories in Ethan's

POV, and getting insight into his mind and his feelings for Jack was awesome and amazing and so fun. I hope we get some POV from him in the second book. That would be awesome.

And no, Jack and Ethan STILL HAVE NOT BLOODY KISSED! ARGH! I'm going to scream with how long it is taking. But they are so fucking close to it and it better be fucking explosive and amazing and passionate when it happens because we all have been technically waiting for 5 damn books now.

I also hope we get to learn so much more about Ethan's past. My biggest thing is why he has to wear socks basically at all times. Like what happened with his feet that he wants them covered all the time? I'm curious about the giving a blowjob thing to, if Ethan really doesn't like to give it or if it's more. And if Paul is really his real name, and so on and so forth. So much we still don't know!

And okay, despite the no kiss (yet!) it came soooo fucking close to happening several times and they do get to a much more solid place, relationship wise, in this one. That made my heart sing and I felt giddy. Also these two finally talking about real shit was awesome.

There was one thing that made me so freaking sad (view spoiler)

GAH! I can't wait for the next book. And I am so happy for these novella's that got Jack and Ethan's barely there relationship to a much more solid, secure place, and (view spoiler).

Two massive thumbs up from me. Loved this!!! <3

Ariana says

5 stars+++

What is it about Jack and Ethan that reduces me to gooey jelly? Every. Single. Time!?

I start sounding like a stuck record saying it again - but this instalment of their story even tops the previous one (Which I whole-heartedly loved.)

First of all this starts with a huge surprise - the prologue is from Ethan's POV.

I read it twice. First I zoomed through it because OMG, and then I read every single line again, leaving 31 highlights up to 13%. If you think I may have gone a teeny bit overboard - just you wait and see!

I debated which quotes I should add at this point. As you can see there are none because I would hate to spoil the whole pleasure of you finding out what's going on in Ethan's head. His feelings, his insecurities, his heart-breaking defeatism when it comes to Jack and their relationship.

All I will say is - despite who he is on the outside, on the inside he is the most vulnerable, most insecure and lovable guy.

And Jack? He clearly wants 'more', but we have learnt that communication with his loved ones is NOT his strong point. He still regrets holding back from declaring his feelings in novella 1.4 and is determined to go for it when the bad guys (I chuckle every time the author calls the bad guys just that ...) keep them busy again.

The action is full on for a good part of this 'novella' (my fingers actually do not want to type that word because it is so much more!) and we do get a nasty shock at 55% which left me pretty teary eyed. That event was totally unexpected and it hurt!

So the suspense rises on all levels - will Jack 'out' his real feelings? What is Ethan up to that would compromise him so much? And what major conspiracy is going on that puts either Jack or Ethan in the crossfire of the bad guys (again)? To mention just a few!

But for me the biggest tension comes from ... the elusive kiss on the mouth.

You are a right tease, Miss Hayward! I gasped once, twice, even three times, but ... no.

I can see how this kiss is taking on a deeper and deeper meaning as we go along. Both men want that kiss, but somehow, somehow ... maybe? ... they are not ready for it.

Saying that, I was stunned at how much Jack and Ethan resolve about their 'being together'. A couple of HUGE steps forward are taken which made me whoop with joy. But knowing that two more whole novels are in the pipeline, I expect not everything going according to plan.

LJ Hayward has created two immensely interesting, compelling characters who, together with a good thriller plot and lots of action, make me swoon and ache with them every single step of the way.

Awesome writing on all levels!

Highly recommended!

Teal ??specializing in the DNF?? says

**** 3.5 stars ****

For most of the book I expected to be doling out 3 stars -- but a good, solid, no-regrets-for-preordering-this 3 stars. Spy stuff happens, things blow up, grown men struggle to communicate with each other, another attack helicopter makes an appearance (yay!), a good time is had by all.

But in the 600-ish m/m romance books I've read, how often have I been able to watch someone fall in love? Sounds like a stupid question, I know. Surely that's what m/m romance is all about, right? You'd think so. But you know what?

(view spoiler)

Good job, LJ Hayward! I'm really looking forward to the next book.

Ky says

Jack and Ethan are here once again!

This novella is mainly suspense, action, gunfights and thriller. Everything that has been happening so far to the characters seem to click together somehow in one big, complicated case. It took me a little bit to remember who was who from the previous stories and what role they had played so far, but the author did a very good job in helping along. The case doesn't seem like it's going to get solved any time soon, since it gets more and more complicated as the months pass. That's a good thing though, because the bigger the case gets, the more books with Ethan and Jack we'll get!

The romance takes a second place here, something that everyone following this series should be familiar with, but at the same time the MCs' relationship moves along in some big ways. Nope, I won't tell you what I mean by that.

I love the way these two communicate, the way they connect, the trust they have formed between them. It's an unconventional relationship, but it's an honest and a very real one.

In less than two months we get the second full-length book of the series and I'm very excited about it! The novellas play a crucial role in the story and they are a major part of it, not just extra scenes. They take part in the development of the plot as well as the progression of Jack and Ethan's relationship. They gave the author the chance to explore the connection between the MCs in a slower pace, to take her time with them and advance their relationship in a moderate pace.

I don't know what comes after the second book, but it's still early to start asking, seeing as this novella isn't even here yet. So I'm just going to be impatient about #2 for now and start being impatient for whatever comes next as soon as I have that one in my hands!

4.5 stars

Oh, I almost forgot: we also get Ethan's POV this time! Woohoo, exciting times!

An ARC of this book was kindly provided to me by the author in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!

Renée says

I was expecting a novella, but over 3000 locations? I'm a happy girl!

Meep says

Before: A little wary of these novellas weakening the dynamic set in the book, but I also like to read all of something!

....

After: Perhaps 2.5 rounding up as I preferred it to the previous instalment.

Unusually for a 'extra' ficlet this had events with consequences, no rule that says that's not allowed but still, not sure how I feel about that; 'extras' aren't compulsory reading. In fact if I wasn't the type to get caught up on reading all, could have happily skipped these myself. There's a risk any who do skip these will reach for the next book and feel they've missed several steps. Unfortunately instead of whetting my appetite for the second book they've somewhat doused exceptions, though pleased many other readers.

It starts with a drawn out sex scene and lots of dithering over how they feel about each other, the resolutions of which will effect the next book but aren't told in a way to give any special meaning here. The novella carries on from the previous one giving the mish-mash of half told stories some consequence - left me wondering why the two weren't combined, edited and brought out as a book. It's not a standalone. A few aspects could have been better expanded on, and there are a number of wrong used words and typing errors.

Once the action started I was more invested in the story, and there is a shock there. But it's a short story and rounded up quickly for some more emotional does he, doesn't he. Enough to remind me of the series strengths but not enough of that to satisfy.

Still getting a strong vibe of the M.Chandler's Shadow of the Templar series.

Ele says

Ethan is so damn sexy when he says *"half right, Jack"* . Who's with me?

Wendy says

I don't think this book should be called a novella...It has more pages than some of the regular novels I have read....and I love it !!!

What I also love is that this time we get to hear **Ethan's POV** and I so needed that ;)

Both men are pretty busy in this installment, working their "jobs". There is some explanation as to what exactly happened in the previous novella "When the Devil Drives" and how this affected Ethan specifically... It was nice to finally get a bit of insight into his "feelings".

There was also an event that **broke my heart** a little...I really didn't see it coming, which made it even worse, because it felt so out of the blue...

The steamy scenes were very nice, but I am getting so frustrated... I think I need them to **KISS** even more

than they do **Pucker up boys so that I can watch**

I can't wait to see what's gonna happen next with these two...

Highly recommended !!

This review has been posted on Wendy's Wycked Words

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Bibliophile says

I'm not going to lie; I shamelessly begged the author for an ARC because I couldn't wait for my pre-ordered book off Amazon to be released. If I could, I would tie LJ Hayward to a chair and yell over her shoulder, "Write, damn it. Write!" (And now she's never going to agree to meet me).

LOL. All joking aside, I listed the first book in this series (Where Death Meets the Devil) on my "Best of 2018" list because it was bold, action-packed, addictively page-turning, and a roller-coaster of a fun read. It was so clever and original! I just wanted to stand on a corner and demand that everyone read it.

But strangely enough, when news of the coda and novellas came out, I was nervous. Would I like them as much as the full-length novel? Would they be mere filler? What if they made me love this series less?! Thankfully, my fears were unfounded. I liked them as much (if not more!) than the first book. As a whole collection, they gave me greater insight into who Jack and Ethan are--both as individuals and as a couple. And each short story built on the previous one. They shared information and details that helped us understand why these two men were drawn to each other, that fleshed out their relationship, and that helped us understand how they worked as a couple. Best of all, the codas included lovely heartwarming moments featuring Ethan and Jack being more vulnerable and affectionate with each other. Gah!

This novella gives a satisfactory ending to novella 1.6--and all the short stories as a whole. The Devil in the Details is another 5 star read for me.

Without spoiling anything, it picks up after the events in coda 1.6. Given Ethan's abrupt departure in that book, Jack wasn't sure when, if ever, he would see him again. But he does! And we, as readers, are given the lovely gift of an opening scene from Ethan's P.O.V. (a first in the series!). That scene reveals Ethan is planning to do something that he knows will upset Jack. What will that mean for them as a couple? What future do they have? At this point in the series, both men have strong feelings for one another, but their relationship has been unusual from the start and they aren't sure where they stand with one another. At the same time, neither man wants to initiate that conversation because what if they get an answer that disappoints them?

In typical LJ Hayward fashion, this novella is masterfully plotted and includes several action-packed sequences, humorous dialogue, heartwarming moments, and revelations that will both surprise and delight you.

I **really** don't want to spoil this story for you, so I think that's all I'll say for now. If you've already read the other books in this series--you'll absolutely love this story, especially the ending. And if you haven't read this series yet, **WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?!** Seriously, have you seen how evangelical readers are about this series? There's a reason for that! Read book #1 and then come back to read the coda and novellas. Just don't blame me if you start getting an urge to tie-up this author to force her to write more, too. :)
