



Liar's Key

Carla Neggers

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An FBI legend, a mysterious antiquities specialist and a brazen art thief draw top FBI agents Emma Sharpe and Colin Donovan into a complex web of blackmail, greed and murder in the eagerly awaited new novel in the highly acclaimed Sharpe & Donovan series

Emma Sharpe is suspicious when retired Special Agent Gordon Wheelock, a legend in FBI art crimes, drops by her Boston office for a visit. Gordy says he's heard rumors about stolen ancient mosaics. Emma, an art crimes specialist herself, won't discuss the rumors. Especially since they involve Oliver York, an unrepentant English art thief. Gordy and Emma's grandfather, a renowned private art detective, chased Oliver for a decade. Gordy knows Wendell Sharpe didn't give him everything he had on the thief. Even now, Oliver will never be prosecuted.

When a shocking death occurs, Emma is drawn into the investigation. The evidence points to a deadly conspiracy between Wendell and Oliver, and Emma's fiancé, deep cover agent Colin Donovan, knows he can't stay out of this one. He also knows there will be questions about Emma's role and where her loyalties lie.

From Boston to Maine to Ireland, Emma and Colin track a dangerous killer as the lives of their family and friends are at stake. With the help of their friend, Irish priest Finian Bracken, and Emma's brother, Lucas, the Sharpes and Donovans must band together to stop a killer.

No one creates exciting, action-packed romantic suspense and international intrigue like New York Times bestselling author Carla Neggers.

Liar's Key Details

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From Reader Review Liar's Key for online ebook

Marlene says

Originally published at Reading Reality

I've read this series from the very beginning, all the way back to the prequel novella, Rock Point. (But don't read Rock Point first. It makes more sense if you start with Saint's Gate and meet ALL the characters. Not that you need to read ALL of the previous books to enjoy this one, but this entry in particular deals with so many previous threads (and people) that it helps a lot if you've read at least some of the earlier books.)

In this mystery series, the detectives are FBI Agents Emma Sharpe and Colin Donovan, even though they find themselves working apart as often as they work together. Emma is an art specialist, and Colin, at least up until now, has usually worked alone on deep-cover assignments.

They are also originally from neighboring small towns on the Maine coast. But while they grew up a few short miles apart, they didn't meet until an assignment threw them together. In the even smaller world of coastal Maine small towns, they knew of each other's families, but just never met.

So as they count down the final days to their wedding in Emma's home town of Heron's Cove, there are plenty of intrusions from friends, family and old cases to keep everyone on their toes to the end.

Colin's family are law enforcement in their little town, but Emma's family are world-famous art detectives. And this time around it's Emma's family and their connections that cause all the trouble, as well as solve the mystery.

It all begins when a retired FBI Agent shows up in Emma's Boston office. Gordy Wheelock is on a fishing expedition, looking for something to make him feel relevant a year after his sudden retirement. While Emma isn't hooked enough to give Gordy any information, she is concerned enough to connect the dots and figure out that there is something going on that there shouldn't be.

Whatever Gordy thinks he's involved in, it ties into his last, unsolved case. And it also ties into the seemingly accidental death of an art expert and to Emma's family's business. There are too many loose threads. They all tie into something, but Emma isn't quite sure what.

But as she investigates, and waits for Colin to make it back from his undercover assignment, she learns that at least some of her family are plotting more than just her wedding. And that someone is working, either for her or against her, to figure out not just whodunit but exactly what they done, before she does.

And Gordy Wheelock gets tripped up by his lies.

Escape Rating B+: I read this one on a plane, and completely lost track of where I was or just how much turbulence we hit. I got a copy of this last year when it came out, but for some reason lost track of it at the time. Now that the next book in the series, Thief's Mark, is due out, it felt like time to pick this back up. And I'm glad I did.

Like so many mystery series, a big part of what makes Sharpe and Donovan isn't due to Sharpe and Donovan, but rather to the group of people who surround them, and occasionally (or not so occasionally)

help and/or hinder them in their investigations. They are smart and interesting people to follow, and they surround themselves with equally smart and interesting people. And as usual, while the wedding and the investigation are proceeding, some of those people have separate crises of their very own to add to the mix.

As families do. Because that's what these people have become to each other, family.

The case is really all about Gordy Wheelock's last hurrah. He made a hell of a mistake before he retired, and it's cost him. Perhaps not enough.

But part of what Emma is investigating is cooked up by her grandfather and her frenemy Oliver York. Wendell Sharpe and Oliver are on the trail of someone who is stealing ancient mosaics and getting them onto the market with fake provenance. Basically, someone is money laundering, with mosaics substituting for money. The comparison is to "conflict diamonds" because these ancient artifacts are being expropriated from places where they shouldn't and putting the money into the hands of people who underwrite terrorism.

But Wendell and Oliver are playing a dangerous game, particularly since they, as well as Gordy, leave Emma and the FBI out of their loop. It's a misstep that will result in more bodies, more disruption, and less trust. Not a good combination. But it is a fascinating one.

In the end, the criminals do get unmasked, and Emma and Colin manage to get married. I am very happy to say, however, that this is not the end of their adventures. Thief's Mark is coming in August. After all, Emma and Colin could not possibly have expected to have an uninterrupted honeymoon, could they?

Fiona Forthe says

This book was slow to get to action, and (I'm leaving it vague so as not to provide any spoilers) the shady character ends up not doing much of anything, so it feels a bit like a violation of Chekhov's dictum (if there is a loaded gun in the first scene, it must go off by the third.) Also, I had not read previous books in the series, and so some of the relationships were not at all clear and did not make sense in the context of this book.

Amy says

An amazing, intense, suspenseful story. Neggers has a unique way of moving a story slowly but surely, and never letting the reader put it down. Her main characters, Emma and Colin, are excellent FBI agents with a calm control that keeps you engaged more than a shoot out or high-speed car chase could. In this story, a series of coincidences puts Emma on edge and alert at the beginning of the story but it's not until the end of the book that she (and Colin!) are finally able to get enough pieces to put the whole puzzle together. I was so frustrated in this book by the lies, half-truths, and omissions from everyone Emma came into contact with-- but that was part of the fun and what made the story as suspenseful as it was. And on top of all of these goings on, Emma is trying to plan her wedding to Colin. I love that Emma and Colin are together in these books but it feels like a natural extension of the story and the romance doesn't try to take center stage over the mysteries they find themselves embroiled in. I think this series is great for anyone who enjoys a good mystery or suspense novel.

M. says

Read 1/2 this book. I have not read this author before and this book reads like an epilogue to some other storyline. Nothing has occurred to encourage the reader onward. Lots of talk about past history. Thus, as a stand-alone novel, it's a flop and I have been left with no desire to read any others in this series.

Teresa says

* e-Arc provided by publisher via Edelweiss *

Pamela Humphrey says

3.5 This one was slow for me. I like the characters, and the end was good, but getting there was long.

Andrea says

I am finding that reading a number of books by the same author is like watching serial dramas on television. Mostly same characters with a few added.

This is not criticism of this style; it is something that has occurred to me.

The Sharpe/Donovan series uses multiple locations in Ireland and Great Britain to make be the story along. In addition a recently retired FBI agent is murdered and 3/4 of this book leads up to the murder and resolution. If we met the victim or the murderer in a previous novel that I have not read, that explains why the story only loosely held together for me. Not enough info to put it together.

There are two previous books in this series that I have not read. The answers I was looking for may be in those volumes.

Nancy says

Good book. Not a lot of action, but nice story....

Emma Sharpe is suspicious when retired Special Agent Gordon Wheelock, a legend in FBI art crimes, drops by her Boston office for a visit. Gordy says he's heard rumors about stolen ancient mosaics. Emma, an art crimes specialist herself, won't discuss the rumors. Especially since they involve Oliver York, an unrepentant English art thief. Gordy and Emma's grandfather, a renowned private art detective, chased Oliver for a decade. Gordy knows Wendell Sharpe didn't give him everything he had on the thief. Even now, Oliver will never be prosecuted.

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conspiracy between Wendell and Oliver, and Emma's fiancé, deep cover agent Colin Donovan, knows he can't stay out of this one. He also knows there will be questions about Emma's role and where her loyalties lie.

From Boston to Maine to Ireland, Emma and Colin track a dangerous killer as the lives of their family and friends are at stake. With the help of their friend, Irish priest Finian Bracken, and Emma's brother, Lucas, the Sharpes and Donovans must band together to stop a killer.

Anita says

ARC provided by the Publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Honest review? I loved the plot. I hated the execution. Repeat and then repeat it again using different ways to change, but still saying the same thing. That was how I used to write legal briefs. I hate that in a novel. Throw in the angst level and the backstory of every character ever to appear in the series, except the baddies, and you have a horrible mess of a novel. Lots of skipping and skim reading. This would have made a great Harlequin Intrigue book at 1/2 the page count.

Rumors are circulation in the antiquities world that there are stolen mosaics floating around and their sale is funding terrorist activities. It is suspected that these are conflict antiquities that have been stolen or looted from the dangerous areas in the world and their sale funds terrorism. No one knows where the items are stolen from or from whom. Very vague rumors. A retired FBI agent, Gordy Wheelock, is drawn into this mess and ends up attacked and blackmailed. Also drawn into this is Oliver York, art thief turned James Bond, and Wendell Sharpe, grandfather of Emma and founder of Sharpe Fine Art Recovery. Of course, Emma and Colin are dragged into it too along with Father Finian, his sister Mary and other assorted characters, one of which has used murder as a means to cover their tracks.

Emma and Colin get married and they live happily ever after.... The End. At least for me, anyway.

Robin Brennan says

A novel set between Maine and Ireland, with stops in other major cities. It involves the art market and the funneling money to terrorist. FBI, MI6 and a wealth of local characters complete the supporting cast, with Colin and Emma the main characters. The supporting characters are colorful and unique. This is a sequel to other Carla Niggers books, but this time Emma (once studying to be a nun, now an FBI agent) and Colin (an undercover FBI agent) are front and center. It is fast paced and an enjoyable read. I would have liked a bit more explanation of how the funneling worked and Isabel's motives.

Donna says

Romance between FBI agents that leads to marriage is always interesting. Add to that the retired agent that starts off the book and appears again at the end, the return of stolen art and antiquities and you've got quite

the story. The author does a great job describing scenic Maine as well as Ireland, and the characters are described colorfully as well. I enjoyed this book, and hope you do too! I was lucky enough to receive this copy as a result of a giveaway.

Lena says

Carla Neggers is back! After a shockingly disappointing book five, this story has that soft, well paced, light romantic suspense groove that distinguishes Neggers work.

Despite the addition of characters, Mary Bracken, Claudia Deverell, and Sam Padgett, there are no new couplings in this book. The center romance is back to Emma and Colin, I was fine with that. Secondary characters like Lucas Sharp and Oliver York have expanded roles.

Looks like the next book in this yummy series will feature Englishman Oliver York and could be bloody good. I will be recommending this to my mom.

Three and a half stars rounded up based on my love for the previous four books.

Debra says

Always a great book by Carla Neggers, especially when FBI Agents, Emma Sharpe and Colin Donovan are on the case. A must read.

Joanie says

I like the series and the characters but this was not one of my favorites. I realize that when you have a series you need to rehash previous storylines so that old readers remember previous events and new readers can catch up on the who and what and whys from the past. However in this novel the author seemed to not only retell past events but she kept repeating the same thoughts over and over again. It took a very long time for the action to happen.

I did in enjoy the previous books so I will continue reading the series and hope that Miss Neggers gets back to her normal smooth story telling

Jessica Bronder says

There are rumors of art from war torn countries being stolen to fund terrorism. Retired agent Gordon Wheelock is looking into these rumors when he is warned off of them. Emma and Colin start looking into these rumors when Gordon is discovered murdered. From Boston, to Maine and to Ireland, Emma and Colin follow the rumors about the missing mosaic.

Emma and Colin are getting ready for their wedding when they go on the hunt for the stolen mosaic. I liked the different settings, especially Ireland. I liked the plot of the book, you were constantly wondering where Emma's loyalty lay with her own family's involvement.

This is the first book in this series and I was hesitant if I would be missing parts of the story. I fell into place quickly with the notes of the different characters so I know who was who. But I will admit that there is a large cast to keep track of and I think if I would have read the previous book that might have helped me.

I am torn on this book. It was interesting when it finally got to the story. I am curious enough by this book to read the first book in the series, Saint's Gate. I will let that be the deciding factor to if I keep reading the series.

I received Liar's Key from the publisher free of charge. This has not influenced my opinion of this book.
