



## **The Player Next Door**

*Kathy Lyons*

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*An unexpected catch...*

NBA star Mike Giamaria doesn't mix basketball with love. Ever. Then Mike meets Tori Williams, his cute, quirky new neighbor who seems hell bent on refurbishing her death trap of a house on her own. When she falls from her roof and into his arms, Mike knows he's just caught a whole heap of trouble.

Trouble sums up Tori's life. Despite her academic success, no one believes she can take care of herself-not her family, not her ex-boyfriend. She's determined to live her life on her own terms, and if that includes a hot summer fling with the super-sexy athlete next door, so much the better.

But when Tori's around, Mike can't keep his mind on basketball. He wants...more. And to his horror, not just more time on the court. When training starts, it's game over-it *has* to be-unless Tori can convince Mike that love doesn't belong on the sidelines.

## The Player Next Door Details

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Author : Kathy Lyons

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## From Reader Review *The Player Next Door* for online ebook

**MrsJoseph** says

<http://bookslifewine.com/r-the-player...>

My God. This was just incredibly cute and sweet but hot and funny. It is almost IMPOSSIBLE to find that kind of combination but I found it in *The Player Next Door*.

So, I saw KatieBabs reading this a few days ago and was intrigued. I was ready to start reading as soon as I finished the blurb...and that's when I found out it hadn't been released yet. O\_O I RAN to NetGalley to request an ARC and I was very lucky to receive one.

I started reading *The Player Next Door* as soon as I got my approval email. And it was glorious.

I ripped into *The Player Next Door* and devoured it like a starving woman. I thought Mike and Tori were wonderful together. They...understood each other. Which is so incredibly important. One of the things I loved the most about Tori and Mike was the fact that - unlike the majority of Tori's family - he took her seriously and he paid attention to her. He treated her like a person - unlike her previous (gigantic douchebag) boyfriend, Edward.

She had no true interest in making sushi and was well known for getting distracted while... Well, while doing anything. It was how she was made, and Edward always said it was charming in a rare, overbred toy dog kind of way. She could never survive alone in the wild, according to him, but he appreciated having a purpose in life as her owner.

Tori was known for being witless and her family treated her like a natural disaster waiting to happen. Only Mike was able to see the humor in the things Tori said and he was able to follow her train(s) of thought.

Mike's biggest Achilles heel was his hyper-intensive focus on basketball. He was so focused that he eschewed relationships so that he could stay focused - too often he felt regret when he wasn't 100% focused on his game. Tori is the exact opposite of Mike so she helped him loosen up a bit and just enjoy life.

“Can I tell you a secret?”

He grinned. “Sure.”

“I never regret anything. Ever. People try to make me regret things. They tell me how I was stupid or not thinking or something. Usually they're right, so I pretend to be sad so they'll go away. But really and truly, I never regret anything.”

He tried to imagine living like that. Never looking back and wishing you could do it all over again.

Mike didn't want to fall in love with Tori: she was a distraction from his basketball game and his achievement goals but Tori cut through all of Mike's defenses and stole his heart. And I was entranced. I loved, loved,

loved watching Mike fall in love even though that's the only thing he didn't want to do.

“You know,” Joey said, his tone conversational. “I’ve listened to every superstition you nutcases can dream up. Lucky shorts, purple socks, three green beans with a steak dinner. I’m sure one of you dances naked and howls at the moon before every game. I’m all for whatever gets you to a winning season, but, Mike, your system is straight up stupid.”

“It’s not stupid. It’s about focus and time. There’s only so much—”

“Bullshit.”

Mike dropped his arm and glared at Joey. “You don’t have to understand it. Just know that it works.”

“Fine, it works. You’re a monk. But I’m giving you until your next barbecue to get your head out of your ass or I’m moving in.”

“What?”

“I’ve got a thing for smart blondes.”

Mike rose to his most intimidating height. “You’re uninvited.”

“I’ll crash it.”

“I could pick you up and throw you across the room.”

“Not without ripping up your shoulder, you can’t.”

It was a measure of how insane Mike was that he actually considered it. But after a few furious breaths, he realized the ass was right.

So. If we're going for 100% disclosure, I was Not. A. Fan. of the ending. At all. It felt awkward and nothing like the preceding parts of the novel. It was infuriating when I first read it that I skimmed through to the end in a bit of a funk. Then I decided to re-read the ending and...it worked a lot better for me and was much cuter. In parts. There's still one thing that just drives me bananas (view spoiler). It honestly felt - to me - that the entire situation was a set up for the quirky ending. And that just killed it for me.

This would have been a 4.5-5 star read for me except for parts of the ending. That dropped the rating down to 4 stars.

All in all, this is an adorable, funny and quirky love story that really warmed my heart. I certainly recommend it.

**Note: I received this book free from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. *The Player Next Door***

and other books written by Kathy Lyons can be found at [Kathy Lyons/Jade Lee's website](#).

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### Billie says

I read this book less than 24 hours ago and I have already forgotten the main characters names. That is how unmemorable it was. There were certain things that I found annoying.

-The h was way too quirky. She had a lot of weird random personality traits that I think were supposed to be cute but seemed contrived. I felt like she became a caricature of what hard science majors think social sciences professors are like. Does that make sense? My major was cultural anthropology in college and I can tell you that not one of my professors behaved like she did. Also, and this is just nitpicking, professors aren't experts on the *whole world*. They choose a region, or language, or religion to focus on. A professor who is incredibly knowledgeable about African tribal ceremonies is not also going to be an expert on Buddhist culture.

-The H was indecisive. He wavered back and forth about being with her and she didn't seem to be all that upset about him leaving (despite believing herself to be in love with him).

-The ex-boyfriend kept popping up randomly even though he was completely useless to the story. He even showed up at the very end when the H was going to make his big move.(view spoiler) And this wasn't some love triangle thing. It was pretty clear the h had no feelings for him. Literally, no feelings. Not positive or negative. So why even put him in the book? What was his purpose?

The writing style wasn't bad so I'm tempted to give it three stars but I can't. It was bland, forgettable, and *only* okay.

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### Mandy says

4.5 stars

I loved this hilarious and fun story! NBA star Mike is recovering in Evanston after a shoulder injury he suffered in a charity game. He's trying to stay out of the spotlight and recover in time for the fall basketball season so he's house-sitting for a friends parents. Tori recently got out of a relationship with a guy who just didn't understand her. She inherited her Aunt's house in Evanston and wants to do the remodeling on her own. Everyone in her life thinks that she's incapable of doing it, that she's an airhead even though she has her PhD and is a college professor. When Mike looks outside and sees his sexy neighbor hanging upside down from her roof, he has to go save her. She literally falls right into his injured arms.

This story was really fun. Tori is super book smart but people think she's an airhead. When I first started this book, I wasn't sure what I thought about Tori but I ended up loving her. She is very ADHD at times but I found her character to be totally endearing. As much as I loved Tori my favorite thing about this book was Mike. He's a super sexy basketball star with a great personality who is incredibly sweet. I LOVED the way he understood Tori when nobody else did. Plus, (view spoiler) My only complaint about this story, which is why I would rate it 4.5 instead of 5 stars is the ending was a bit out there. I liked it but it just seemed a little too much. I LOVED the epilogue though so this is a solid favorite for me!

\*\*ARC provided in exchange for an honest review\*\*

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## Three Chicks says

Review by TrINETTE DUNGE

Don't let the title fool you...he's a player all right....a basketball player. Mike Giamaria is on the mend from a torn rotator cuff and while recuperating he's house-sitting for a friend's parents who are on vacation. Mike doesn't do relationships. During the off season he does women, women without a face, with names he will easily forget, who he doesn't even entertain the idea of committing to. Nope basketball is his main lady. That's where his commitment lies. Basketball is the only woman that completely absorbs him. That is until he meets Tory Williams, the neighbor who just happened to inherit the house next door that requires much needed work; a house fixer-upper that she's determined to fix all on her own. A task that Mike isn't convinced won't land her in the nearest ER. Just one encounter with Tory Williams and Mike knows he's about to stumble down and dangerous path.

Tori Williams is very successful academic. What she's not successful at is convincing everyone that she is more than capable of taking care of herself. Tory marches to the beat of her own drummer. She doesn't really care what people think about her. She just kind of lives day by day and handles each day accordingly. What she's having a problem handling, is this attraction to Mike or at least convincing him to handle the attraction. Then there is also the pesky ex-boyfriend who doesn't know he's an ex. All Tory wants is for the ex to go away and for Mike to agree to a summer fling. After all she's insanely sexually attracted to him and even though he won't admit it, he's insanely sexually attracted to her. This should be a piece of cake. Mike is only around for the summer until the season starts and Tory is only around for the summer until fall classes starts. Tory finally manages to convince Mike to embark on a no-strings attached, sex-filled, summer fling but as the summer comes closer and closer to ending both Mike and Tory realize that it may not be so easy to leave the summer behind.

4% into this book and I was hysterical. From the moment Mike stopped short on his jog to find Tory dangling upside down from a much frayed rope...hanging from her roof I was laughing. This book was full of humor but unfortunately I just couldn't connect with the characters. Although Mike and Tory seemed to have unlimited sexual chemistry, I just couldn't see it. I also think they had a solid friendship but as hard as I tried I just couldn't see them together a true couple. They had all the right ingredients but the finished product fell just a little too short for me. Extremely funny read though.

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## Irene says

4 stars

What a fun, heartwarming and amusing read *The Player Next Door* turned out to be.

I totally got into it and couldn't stop reading. I wanted to see how these two would get together and how Tory would handle a serious relationship.

I loved watching Mike and Tory get together, they made me laugh and I was touched with how patient and understanding Mike was with Tory's quirky personality.

I laughed out loud so many times I even had people side-eyeing me on the train while going to work  
#sorrynotsorry =D

After having said how much I loved this book there was a few things I wasn't too happy about which kept me marking *The Player Next Door* a little higher.

I would have liked the situation with Tori's so called ex to have been dealt with in a better manner. It was like he never got the memo he was no longer with Tori =/

Even though that part bugged me overall this was still a very entertaining read.

The epilogue left me with so many happy feels, still smiling...

*Thank you Entangled Lovestruck via Netgalley for the advance copy.*

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### **Carol-Ann says**

A very enjoyable read beautifully written loved the character's of NBA star Mike Giamaria who doesn't mix his love of his sport with love that's until he meets his next door neighbour Tori Williams who is refurbishing her house and it's just what she needs a hot summer fling! Loved the chemistry between these two character's loved the humour, if only Tori ex-boyfriend would leave her alone he wasn't right for her self absorbed idiot would of loved to stick pins in him!

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### **Deserie williams says**

Note to self: love triangle ,h is stupid! see CC review.

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### **Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews says**

Cheyenne's review posted at Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews

I was pleasantly surprised how much I really like *Player Next Door*. I have been in a bit of a bad streak of books that just didn't work for me and *Player Next Door* was the perfect amount of sweet, sexy, funny and drama to keep me reading and not wanting to stop. Mike and Tori may not seem to be a match made in heaven, but the way Mike balanced out Tori's quiriness and the way she helped keep him on track was the perfect match in my opinion.

Mike was trying to recover from an injury prior to the upcoming NBA season. Little did he know that his neighbor would be the best medicine there is in life. Tori was fixing up the house she inherited from her aunt and well to say that she had a lot to not only work on but to learn about house repairs was an understatement. Mike saves Tori more than once and their relationship begins from there.

*Player Next Door* reminded me to not judge a book by its cover, and I am not talking about actual books here people, I am talking about actual people like me and you, because while there may be some things that may make you originally not want to pick a certain one, it is what is inside that counts.

Review copy provided for an honest review.

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### **Bette Hansen says**

Sizzling hot, fun read that you don't want to miss! Wonderfully written, fast paced story with characters that are hilarious and endearing. Not many books have female characters that I fall in love with but Tori Williams and her wacky ways is definitely one I will remember!! With a rehabbing NBA star and a zany genius Professor both hanging out for the summer, things are sure to heat up fast! But with summer coming to an end does that mean that their fun does too?? You'll want to find out, I highly recommend it.

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### **Madison Warner Fairbanks says**

The Player Next Door by Kathy Lyons

The heroine in this story was fun, a bit sassy, but sad too in that she was so accommodating to people that she didn't get to make meaningful friendships in her life. The hero really listens to her, which is irresistible in a relationship.

Kathy Lyons can write really hot and steamy sex scenes and this book includes several. Hold onto something. It's gonna be a fun ride.

Tori Williams is renovating her inherited house in Evanston. She's incredibly smart, but loses interest in projects quickly so the house is filled with partially finished renovations throughout.

Mike Giamaria, a NY Knicks player is recovering from an injury and staying in the house next door to Tori. He is drawn to her quick mind and how what may seem to be non-sequiturs to some, are really connected in some way in Tori's mind. It fascinates him and they grow close. Plus the instant lust they both feel makes for a really "hot" and sexy summer.

I received a copy of this book via NetGallery.

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### **Katie(babs) says**

The Player Next Door by Kathy Lyons gave me so many feels! This was a joy to read. The hero and heroine are so cute together. I found myself snickering as I read, because of the heroine, who not only drives the hero batty, but ends up impressing him with her intelligence, sweet nature and sexy self. Plus the hero is a bi-racial NBA basketball player who is uber-sweet and wants to help out the heroine any way he can.

Mike, a big basketball star for The Knicks is recovering from a shoulder injury on the off season for the summer. He's staying at his friend's parents' house in a town in Illinois. While he's jogging, he spots a woman hanging upside down from a roof. He rushes to rescue her, and she falls on him, and on his bad shoulder. That's how he meets Tori, a college professor of religion and theology, who has just broken up with her boyfriend of 5 years. Tori has book smarts, and a PhD, but people think she's a blonde ditz who can't take care of herself. She's remodeling her new house, her recently deceased aunt willed to her. Mike is her next door neighbor for the next 2 months. She has made quite the impression on him, which at first isn't



the best. But there's something special about her that makes him want to see her again.

Tori is surprised how well she gets along with Mike, especially after her roof falling mishap. He's not a dumb jock or not some cocky, rich sports guy. He listens to her and gives her advice about fixing up her house. He's the total opposite of her ex-boyfriend Edward, who has strung her along and enjoys putting her down and babying her. She may say strange and bookish things, but Mike gets a kick out of it. She then decides he would be a great rebound lover, which he's not too sure of. He's only there for the summer, and then goes back to NYC to play basketball. He doesn't want Tori to get attached to him. She just wants sex with him. Mike may just have the best summer of his life with Tori, but what happens if he doesn't want it to end?

The Player Next Door is the type of book you want to hug. It has a very meet-cute between the main couple, who are total opposites, not only in personalities, but their beliefs and their physical appearance. Appearances can be deceiving, which is pointed out and taken care of right away. Tori isn't some blonde ditz. Mike isn't just obsessed with playing professional basketball and making money. Plus it's an interracial romance! The way Kathy has written Tori and Mike is golden. They're each other's perfect match. Tori is very, go with the flow, while Mike is more stable with his beliefs. He is the one who realizes how special Tori is to him before she does. Their banter and conversations are very adorable. The sex between them is a nice touch.

The ending is a bit too pat, but it's what I would have expected with a romance like this. Kathy has a winner with *The Player Next Door*. This is a must read for any romance fan!

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### **Isha Coleman says**

A heroine with something to prove meets a smooth talking athlete with more than sports on his mind. Will these two be a match in the game of love or will one call foul? I thought this was an adorable look at love. It was interesting because Tori was the pursuer and Mike the big basketball star was the wary one. Kathy Lyons' *The Player Next Door* is a winner. It supplies an entertaining spin on an age old theme. I received an ARC of this story in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Lori Meehan says**

This was a fun romance and I enjoyed every minute of it. Mike Giamario is basically hiding out for a quite no stress summer for rest and rehab for his injured shoulder. Then he meets his neighbor Tori Williams, who is all types of stress wrapped in one very sexy package. I loved Tori from the beginning. She is smart and incredibly quirky and totally adorable. Mike is very sexy and knows he needs to stay as far away from his quirky neighbor but he can't seem to get her out of his thoughts. They are both in for one hot summer!

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### **CC says**

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So anyway, we discover pretty early on that the ex (who does not kn

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## **Emily says**

It was one moment of clarity in a very unconventional way that had Tori Williams dumping her boyfriend and moving to her inherited home. A home that is a mess of projects that Tori has no clue how to do, but that is why they have books. It is one of these projects that has NBA star Mike Giamaria finding her hanging from a roof. Mike is trying to get rest from an injury so he can be back in time for the basketball season. He doesn't need a distraction but he finds he likes Tori, a lot. When she suggests they become a summer fling Mike isn't sure if it is the best idea and if he will be able to let her go.

Full review on Single Titles

<http://singletitles.com/?p=10828>

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