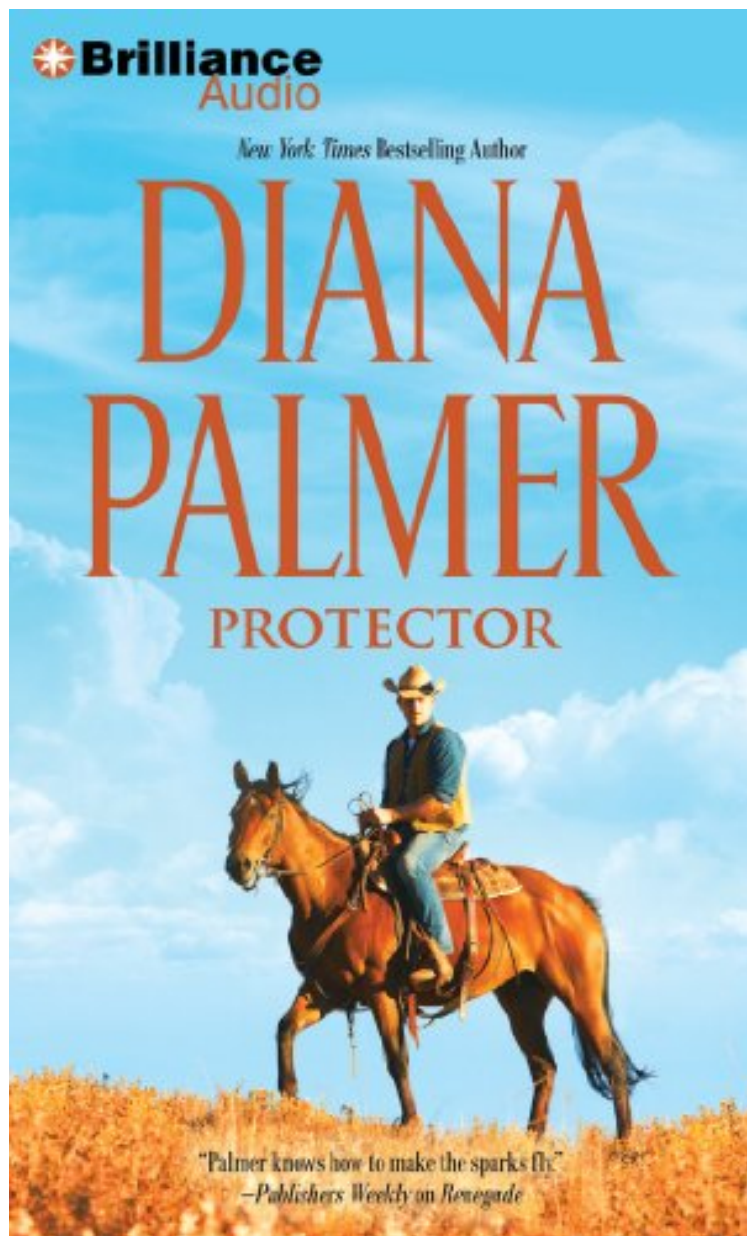


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## Protector

*Diana Palmer*

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#5650145 in Books 2013-06-25 2013-06-25 Formats: Abridged, Audiobook, CD Original language: English PDF # 4 5.50 x .38 x 5.00l, .20 Running time: 5 Hours Binding: Audio CD | File size: 16.Mb

**Diana Palmer : Protector** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Protector:

43 of 45 people found the following review helpful. Best Diana Palmer in years!By fictionalPROTECTOR is the latest "Long Tall Texan" novel by Diana Palmer. Yes, it is overpriced even at the Kindle price. I'm not sure why Harlequin publishing has taken to doing hardcovers of Palmer's books. I gave the book 4 stars because it is the best Palmer novel in years. Palmer apparently has finally listened to her readers. The hero is not a woman hater or verbally abusive to the heroine (at least in this book). Both hero and heroine aren't afraid of sex. All that said, it is still an old-fashioned romance with a virgin heroine and all the Diana Palmer hallmarks (historical trivia, gamer lingo, scaly reptiles and mercenaries who seem to be overgrown boys).Carson is a stalwart sheriff taken into the home of old enemy Minette after an assassination attempt to recuperate. They quickly overcome their differences and romance and intrigue ensue as Minette is the unknown daughter of a "nice" drug lord.I began reading Palmer as a teenager and the ongoing connected stories have been a guilty addiction. I've read them all no matter how trite and disconnected from modern reality more than a few have been. Fans of Palmer will like this one. She brings in many characters from other "Long Tall Texan" stories and the plot holds together. If it you are looking for a good old-fashioned romance with alpha heroes and women happy to provide home cooking, sit back and enjoy.9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Don't do it!!By KThis was one of the worst romance novels I have ever read. Long, lengthy dialogue that meant nothing, no real drama between the hero and heroine, overly-done lovey-dovey clique scenes.....it was terrible. At times during the book I would flip through the pages of continuous dialogue without reading a word just to get through it....and guess what? It didn't even matter. I did not miss a thing because the characters talking did not bring anything of importance to the story.I want my 9 bucks back!! (Which by the way was way too much money in the first place. How did this get published? Does the publisher even care about content???)3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A fair read!!!!By Kindle CustomerThis was not Diana's best read. I probably wouldn't have bought it if I had been able toPreview it. But as a whole I usually enjoyed her books. I only bought this one based on the series coming from this series of the town and the people I had read.

New York Times bestselling author Diana Palmer takes listeners back to Jacobsville, Texas, where Hayes Carson is a lawman on a search for justice. His brother had been the only family he had left in the world. Hayes, a long, tall and serious Texan, has long been suspicious of the blond-haired, bright-eyed Minette Raynor, who is both mysterious and beautiful. And now hes convinced that Minette was involved in giving his brother the drugs that killed him. As far as Hayes is concerned, neither her looks nor anything else will stand in the way of him righting what is so very wrong. Minette cant get Hayes off her mind, or off her back. His investigation of her is a nuisance, but as an undercover DEA agent, thats the least of her worries. Until she finds herself in great danger, and hes the only one who can save her. Can she count on Hayes believing the truth and saving her life?

"Palmer...is the queen of desperado quests for justice and true love." -Publishers Weekly"The popular Palmer has penned another winning novel, a perfect blend of romance and suspense."--Booklist on Lawman"Diana Palmer is a mesmerizing storyteller who captures the essence of what a romance should be."--Affaire de Coeur"Nobody tops Diana Palmer when it comes to delivering pure, undiluted romance. I love her stories."--New York Times bestselling author Jayne Anne KrentzAbout the AuthorThe prolific author of more than 100 books, Diana Palmer got her start as a newspaper reporter. A multi-New York Times bestselling author and one of the top ten romance writers in America, she has a gift for telling the most sensual tales with charm and humor. Diana lives with her family in Cornelia, Georgia.Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.Sheriff Hayes Carson hated Sundays. It was nothing against religion, or church or anything spiritual. He hated Sundays because he always spent them alone. He didn't have a girlfriend. He'd dated a couple of women around Jacobsville, Texas, but those dates had been few and far between. He hadn't had a serious relationship since he was just out of the military, when he got engaged to a woman who tossed him over for somebody richer. Well, he had dated Ivy Conley before she married his best friend, Stuart York. He'd had feelings for her, too, but it was not returned on her part.Besides, he thought ruefully, there was Andy. His scaly pet kept him unattached.That wasn't strictly true, he mused. The reason for the dearth of women in his life was mostly his job. He'd been shot twice since he became sheriff, and he'd been sheriff for seven years. He was good at his job. He was reelected without even a runoff. No criminal had ever escaped him. Well, one hadthat man they called El Jefe, the biggest drug lord in northern Sonora, Mexico, who had a network that ran right through Jacobs County. But he was going to land El Jefe one day, he promised himself. He hated drug dealers. His own brother, Bobby, had died of an overdose years ago.He still blamed Minette Raynor for that. Oh, sure, people said she was innocent and that it was Ivy Conley's sister, Rachel, who'd been killed a year or so ago, who gave Bobby the fatal dose. But Hayes knew that Minette was connected to the tragedy. He really hated her and made no secret of it. He knew something about her that she wasn't even aware of. He'd kept the secret all his adult life. He wanted to tell her. But he'd promised his father not to reveal the truth.Hell, he thought, sipping Jack Daniel's, he wished he could get rid of that inconvenient conscience that wouldn't let him break his promises. It would save him a lot of grief.He put the big square whiskey glass down beside his rocking chair, his long legs crossed as he stared out across the bare, rusty-colored meadow to the highway. It was chilly outside most days. Middle November brought frost even to Texas, but it had warmed up a bit today. He'd

had supper, so the alcohol wouldn't affect him very much, except to relax him. He was enjoying the late-afternoon sun. He wished he had someone to share that sunset with. He hated being alone all the time. Part of the reason for his solitude was sitting on the sofa in his living room, in front of the television. He sighed. His scaly best friend terrorized women. He'd tried to keep Andy secret, even putting him in the spare bedroom on the rare occasions when he brought a date home to ride horses. But inevitably, Andy finally got out when he least expected it. On one occasion while he was making coffee in the spotless kitchen, his pet was sneaking over the back of the sofa where the unsuspecting woman was sitting. The screams were really terrifying. He dropped the coffeepot in his haste to get to the next room. She was standing up on the sofa, brandishing a lamp at the six-foot iguana who was arched on its back, glaring at her. "It's okay, he's harmless!" he said at once. That was when his pet decided to drop his dewlap, hiss and strike at her with his long whiplike tail. She actually sprained her ankle jumping off the sofa. The big iguana was ten years old and he didn't like people very much. And he really hated women. Hayes had never figured out why. Andy mostly stayed on top of the refrigerator or under the heat lamp atop his enormous cage, and ate the fresh fruit and salad that Hayes fixed for him every day. He never bothered anybody. He seemed to like Hayes's best friend, Stuart York. He'd even let himself be carried around and petted by total strangers; as long as they were male. But let a woman walk through the door Hayes leaned back with a long indrawn breath. He couldn't give Andy up. It would be like giving away part of his family. And he didn't have any family left. He had a few very distant cousins, like MacCreedy, who had become a local legend in law enforcement for leading funeral processions into bogs before he went to work in San Antonio as a security guard. But Hayes had no close relatives living. His only great-uncle had died three years before. He glanced through the window at the sofa, where Andy was spread out with the television blaring away. It amused him that his pet liked to watch television. Or at least, it seemed that way. He kept a nice thick waterproof sofa cover on the furniture, in case of accidents. Oddly, Andy never had any. He was housetrained. He went on a small stack of wet papers in a litter box in Hayes's huge bathroom. And he came when Hayes whistled. Odd fellow, Andy. Hayes smiled to himself. At least he had something living to talk to. He stared off into the distance. He saw a flash of silver. Probably sunlight reflecting off the wire fence out there, keeping in his small herd of palominos. He had a big cattle dog, Rex, who lived outdoors and kept predators away from the equally small herd of Santa Gertrudis cattle Hayes owned. He didn't have time for a big ranch, but he liked raising animals. He heard Rex bark in the distance. Must see a rabbit, he thought idly. He glanced down at the empty whiskey glass and grimaced. He shouldn't be drinking on a Sunday. His mother wouldn't have approved. He made a face. His mother hadn't approved of anything about him. She'd hated his father and hated Hayes because he looked like his father. She'd been tall and blonde and dark-eyed. Like Minette Raynor. His face contorted as he processed the thought. Minette was editor-publisher of the weekly Jacobsville Times. She lived with her great-aunt and two children, her brother and sister. She never spoke of her biological father. Hayes was sure that she didn't know who her father really was. She knew her late stepfather wasn't her real dad. Hayes knew about her real father because Dallas, his late father and also the former Jacobs County sheriff, knew. Dallas had made Hayes swear he'd never tell Minette. It wasn't her fault, he emphasized. She'd had enough grief for one lifetime, without knowing the truth about her father. Her mother had been a good woman. She'd never been mixed up in anything illegal, either. Let it go. So Hayes had let it go, but reluctantly. He couldn't disguise his distaste for Minette, however. In his mind, her family had killed his brother, whether or not it was her hand that had delivered the lethal drug that he died from. He stretched suddenly, yawning, and suddenly bent over to pick up his glass. Something hit his shoulder and spun him around in the chair, throwing him to the bare wood floor of the porch. He lay there, gasping like a fish, numb from a blow he hadn't seen coming. It took a minute for him to figure out that he'd been shot. He knew the sensation. It wasn't the first time. He tried to move, and realized that he couldn't get up. He was struggling to breathe. There was the copper-scented smell of fresh blood. He was bleeding. It felt as if his lung, or part of it, had collapsed. He struggled with the case at his belt to retrieve his cell phone. Thank God he kept it charged, in case any emergency required his presence. He punched the code for 911. "Jacobs County 911, is this an emergency?" the operator asked at once. "Shot," he gasped. "Excuse me?" There was a pause. "Sheriff Carson, is that you?" "Yes." "Where are you?" she asked urgently, knowing that it could take precious time to seek out a cell tower near the call and identify his possible location. "Can you tell me?" "Home," he bit off. The world was fading in and out. He heard her voice coaxing him to stay on the line, to talk to her. But he closed his eyes on a sudden wave of pain and nausea and the phone fell from his limp hand. Hayes came to in the hospital. Dr. Copper Coltrain was bending over him, in a green gown, with a mask pulled down around his chin. "Hi," he said. "Good to have you back with us." Hayes blinked. "I was shot." "Yes, for the third time," Coltrain mused. "I've heard of lead poisoning, but this is getting absurd." "How am I?" Hayes managed in a raspy tone. "You'll live," Coltrain replied. "The wound is in your shoulder, but it impacted your left lung, as well. We had to remove a bit of your lung and we're inflating it now." He indicated a tube coming out of Hayes's side under the light sheet. "We removed bone fragments and debrided the tissue, now you're on fluids and antibiotics, anti-inflammatories and pain meds, for the time being." "When can I go home?" Hayes asked groggily. "Funny man. Let's talk about that when you're not just out of surgery and in the recovery room." Hayes made a face. "Somebody's got to feed Andy. He'll be scared to death out there alone." "We have somebody feeding Andy," Coltrain replied. "Rex, too, he lives in the barn." "Taken care of." "The key." "was on your key ring. Everything's fine,

except for you." Hayes assumed it was one of his deputies who was helping out, so he didn't argue. He closed his eyes. "I feel awful." "Well, of course you do," Coltrain sympathized. "You've been shot." "I noticed." "We're going to keep you in ICU for a day or so, until you're a bit better, then we'll move you into a room. For now, you just sleep and don't worry about anything. Okay?" Hayes managed a wan smile, but his eyes didn't open. A few seconds later, he was asleep. A nurse was bending over him in ICU when he woke again, taking his blood pressure, checking his temperature, pulse and respiration. "Hi, there," she said with a smile. "You're doing much better this morning," she added, noting her observations on her chart. "How's the chest?" He moved and winced. "Hurts." "Does it? We'll ask Dr. Coltrain to up your meds a bit until that passes. Any other problems?" He wanted to name at least one, but he was unusually shy about mentioning the catheter. Nevertheless, the nurse noticed. "It's just temporary, and it's coming out tomorrow, Dr. Coltrain said. Try to sleep." She patted him on the shoulder with a maternal smile and left him. They removed the catheter the next day, which embarrassed Hayes and caused him to mutter under his breath. But he went back to sleep very soon. Later, when Dr. Coltrain came in, he was barely awake again. "I hurt in an unmentionable place and it's your fault," Hayes muttered at Coltrain. "Sorry, it was unavoidable. The catheter's out now, and you won't have discomfort for much longer, I promise." He listened to Hayes's chest and frowned. "There's a lot of congestion." "It's unpleasant." "I'm going to write up something to clear that out." "I want to go home." Coltrain looked very uncomfortable. "There's a problem." "What?" He sat down in the chair beside the bed and crossed his legs. "Okay, let's review the mechanics of gunshot injuries. First is the direct tissue injury. Second, temporary cavitation as the projectile makes a path through the tissue and causes necrosis. Third, shock waves if the projectile is ejected at a high rate of speed. You are the luckiest man I know, because the only major damage the bullet did was to your lung. However," he added quietly, "the damage is such that you're going to have a hard time using your left arm for a while." "Awhile? How long a while?" Hayes asked. "Micah Steeler remember him? is our orthopedic surgeon. I called him in on your case. We removed the bone fragments and repaired the muscle damage." "What about the bullet?" Hayes interrupted. "Did you get that?" "No," Coltrain said. "Removing a bullet is up to the discretion of the surgeon, and I considered it too dangerous to take it out." "It's evidence," Hayes said as strongly as the weakness would allow. "You have to extract it so that I can use it to prosecute the." He held his breath. "Guy who shot me!" "Surgeon's discretion," Coltrain repeated. "I won't risk a patient's life trying to dig out a bullet that's basically disinfected itself on the way into the body. I'd do more damage trying to get it out than I would leaving it in." He held up a hand when Hayes opened his mouth. "I conferred with two other surgeons, one in San Antonio, and they'll back me up. It was too risky." Hayes wanted to argue some more, but he was too tired. It was an old argument, anyway, trying to make a surgeon remove potential evidence from a victim's body, and it occasionally ended up in a legal battle. Most of the time, the surgeon won. "All right." "Back to what I was saying," he continued, "there was some collateral damage to your left shoulder. You'll have to have an extended course of physical therapy to keep the muscles from atrophying." "Extended?" Hayes asked slowly. "Probably several months. It depends on how quickly you heal and how fast your recovery is," Coltrain said. "It's still going to be a rough ride. You need to know that from the start." Hayes looked up at the ceiling. "Crackers and milk!" he muttered. "You'll be all right," Coltrain assured him. "But for the next couple of weeks, you need to keep that arm immobilized and not lift anything heavier than a tissue. I'll have my receptionist get you an appointment with Dr. Steele and also with the physiotherapist here in the hospital." "When can I go home?" Coltrain stared at him. "Not for several more days. And even then, you can't go home and stay by yourself. You'll need someone with you for at least a couple of weeks, to make sure you don't overdo and have a relapse." "A nursemaid? Me?" Hayes frowned. "I was out of the hospital in three or four days the last two times." "You had a flesh wound the last time, and the one before that you were only about twenty-seven years old. You're thirty-four now, Hayes. It takes longer to recover, the older you get." Hayes felt worse than ever. "I can't go home right away." "That's right. You're going to be extremely limited in what you can do for the next few weeks. You won't be able to lift much while the damage heals and you'll find even ordinary movement will aggravate the wound and cause pain. You're going to need physical therapy three times a week." "No!" "Yes, unless you want to be a one-armed man!" Coltrain said shortly. "Do you want to lose the use of your left arm?" Hayes glared at him. Coltrain glared right back.