



## Locke & Key

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Based on the best-selling, award-winning graphic novel series *Locke & Key* - written by acclaimed suspense novelist Joe Hill (*NOS4A2*, *Horns*) and illustrated by Gabriel Rodriguez - this multi-cast, fully dramatized audio production brings the images and words to life.

A brutal and tragic event drives the Locke family from their home in California to the relative safety of their ancestral estate in Lovecraft, Massachusetts, an old house with powerful keys and fantastic doors that transform all who dare to walk through them. As siblings Tyler, Kinsey, and Bode Locke discover the secrets of the old house, they also find that it's home to a hate-filled and relentless creature that will not rest until it forces open the most terrible door of them all....

Featuring performances by Haley Joel Osment (*Entourage*, *The Sixth Sense*), Tatiana Maslany (*Orphan Black*), Kate Mulgrew (*Orange Is the New Black*, *Star Trek: Voyager*), Joe Hill, Gabriel Rodriguez, and Stephen King (*The Stand*, 11-22-63), as well as a cast of more than 50 voice actors, this audio production preserves the heart-stopping impact of the graphic novel's astounding artwork through the use of richly imagined sound design and a powerful original score.

## Locke & Key Details

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Author : Joe Hill , Gabriel Rodríguez , Haley Joel Osment (Narrator) , Tatiana Maslany (Narrator) , Kate Mulgrew (Narrator) , Stephen King (Narrator)

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# From Reader Review Locke & Key for online ebook

## Paul E. Morph says

If, like me, you are a huge fan of the 'Locke & Key' comicbooks, you will probably love this dramatisation as much as I did.

The production quality is superb, the cast are all fantastic and I'd buy the musical score as an album if it was available (I haven't checked).

BUT!!!

I will also issue a warning to accompany my praise: if you have not read the comicbooks DO NOT BUY THIS DRAMATISATION! I loved it, but I know the source material inside out. If I'd never read the original comics I could not have made head nor tail of at least fifty per cent of the events in this story.

The dramatisation is like listening to a movie with the picture turned off and absolutely NO audio-description. If you already know the story, you'll be fine, but if you don't the lack of narration will leave you wondering what the Hell is going on most of the time.

I can only imagine that the people who created this dramatisation were so close to the source material that the suitability for people who would be coming at this without prior knowledge totally escaped them.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!

As I say, though, if you already know and love the comicbooks, chances are you will love this too.

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## Michael Hicks says

The Locke & Key graphic novels have been on my to-read list, and sitting among a stack of other shamefully neglected graphic novels and trades, for several years now. You'd have thought that after discovering the pure joy of Joe Hill's NOS4A2 that I would have dived headlong into this comic book series, but alas... (Maybe somebody can loan me a Time Key to free up more reading hours in the day?). When Audible announced its adaptation of Hill's and artist Gabriel Rodriguez's much-acclaimed IDW comic book series, I was thrilled to give it a listen, and also curious as to how the heck one adapts a comic book for an audiobook.

Comics, obviously, are quite a different breed from prose novels, given their reliance on visual imagery to tell a story. Sure, there's narrative boxes (typically) and plenty of dialogue (usually) and thought bubbles, but the nature of a comic book is in its art. Audible Studios has worked around this translation from visual to audio by harkening back to the days of radio productions. Rather than rewriting the Locke & Key comics into a more novelistic approach for narration, the story is told by way of audio drama with a cast of more than 50 voice actors.

For the most part, this approach works quite well, but with a few caveats.

The story itself is largely understandable and very approachable in this re-imagined fashion, and for roughly

13 and a half hours we follow the Locke children, and their mother, Nina, as they relocate to the family estate of Lovecraft Mansion in the wake of the Locke patriarch's murder. While readjusting to their new lives, the children begin finding strange keys scattered and hidden across the house, keys that unlock doors into mysterious and terrifying new realms. Keys that are also being hunted for by an old evil named Dodge.

As the son of Stephen King, it seems clear that Hill has inherited quite a bit of his father's story-telling panache and hits on a few similarities in style. This was most clear in NOS4A2, but Locke & Key also exhibits some of the same themes common in many of King's works (and keep an ear open for a nice little homage to King's Carrie late in the story). First of all, this is an epic work of horror, with smatterings of fantasy thrown in for good measure, and how it affects the everyman. The central characters aren't burdened with super-powers, and most of their daily challenges come from attending school, making friends, dealing with being the outcasts because of the hellacious events in their lives. This is also a story of multi-generational horrors, as the Locke kids discover the secrets of their ancestry and the tribulations their father and his friends experienced upon discovering the keys.

All of this is performed admirably by the large cast, and I felt fully invested in these characters right from the get-go. The acting is pretty superb all-around, as is the sound production and score, with the cast and crew even making use of real-world locations to record, rather than sticking it out in a recording studio for the entire job. My only real issues came in the lack of narrative connective tissue in the big action scenes, which often felt muddled and pulled me out of the drama as I struggled to figure out who stabbed who, whether or not X or Y lived, and what exactly was happening in the aftermath. A few of these issues were mostly resolved in the following minutes, but the initial impact was jarring and confusing. Still, there were a few times where I imagined the narrative must have been clearer in the original comics and that certain scenes would have worked better as a companion piece to the source material. Maybe I missed a few things due to my lack of familiarity with the comic books, particularly in how the characters appear. We usually don't get any kind of character descriptions until much too late, well after I'd already formed a visual of who they are in my head and so I spent much of the narrative not realizing one family was African American, or that another sported plenty of ink across his body, or that one has a particular piercing that becomes quite a distinguishing feature for one of the Locke boys in the aftermath of a brutal murder.

These, mostly little, issues aside, I found Locke & Key to be a completely engrossing audio-drama and an absolutely terrific listen. The acting is strong, and Hill's writing, as expected, is completely top-notch. As an audio-drama, this sucker just works, and it works well. I was scared in all the right places, and my heart was racing during the brutal climax and left feeling exhausted in the wake the Locke family's cataclysmic showdown with Dodge. I might have even, maybe, just a little bit, kind of teared up in the final moments because I was so damn attached to these characters and to this family. And although the graphic novels have been untouched thus far, this audiobook has made me aware of exactly how much greatness I've been missing, so I've ordered the final volume to complete my set of IDW Locke & Key hardcovers and hope to dive into them soon. This is a completely fantastic story, and Joe Hill himself is quickly becoming one of my absolute favorite writers that I can trust to turn out solid, quality work and whose stories I look forward to the most. If Locke & Key becomes one of my latest die-hard obsessions, well, I can blame this recording for it.

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**Barbara (The Bibliophage) says**

**More reviews at [TheBibliophage.com](http://TheBibliophage.com).**

Shortly after I read Joe Hill's The Fireman, I started picking up his other books including a full-cast

audiobook of the Locke & Key series. In an effort to find "freezer-worthy horror" for a reading challenge, I thought I'd give it a try last week. (BTW, freezer-worthy is so scary you'd hide it in the freezer.)

As I started the audiobook, I realized it didn't make enough sense to me. It was hard to follow the story with just unfamiliar voices and characters. So I grabbed up the six issues of the graphic novel - 2 on Hoopla, 3 from the library in print, and the last via Kindle. Talk about a multi-dimensional reading experience!

The combination of audio and visual is perfect with this series. If you love the books and haven't listened to the audio, you must! The audio effects, music, and actors make the experience completely immersive and atmospheric.

Gabriel Rodriguez's art is positively gorgeous. He creates intense creepiness with all the magical and horrific elements of these books. In addition to being an artist and illustrator, Rodriguez is an architect and it really shows. Key House is a character in the book, albeit not a living organism. The illustrations featuring the house are architecturally detailed and amazing. Plus, the people he draws show their humanity (or evil) through expression and action.

The story from Joe Hill has deep messages, tremendous suspense, and true emotion. Of course, it's horror and fantasy, so you suspend disbelief. That's part of the joy of it all. Hill writes with perfect pacing and a nearly cinematic, focused plot. Once I started, I literally couldn't stop reading. And by the end I was incredibly attached to each character, especially the heroic and flawed Locke family.

Does this count as freezer-worthy? If I'd just read the graphic novels, I would have said no. But with the audio, it certainly is scarier than most. I'm going to count it and recommend to friends!

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### **Jimmie says**

This was my first venture into the graphic novel format. The audible version of Locke & Key was outstanding. The cast of characters, music and setting was outstanding. I can see why graphic novels are so popular. This audio version sounded like a movie. So I can see where the talents of an artist along with the talent of a writer is what makes a graphic novel come to life. You add the edition of the audio version with sound effects, and the book just explodes. Although this story is far beyond my area of reading, I felt I can easily become entrenched in graphic novels. I enjoyed Joe Hill's story very much. The novel reminded me of a FOX TV series from the 1990's, Herman's Head. Only Locke & Key is much more sinister. I also felt like I was listening to a teen graphic novel. In that aspect, I felt like I was auditing a class that I would have never taken. One of my goals of reading is to expand my horizons. Locke & Key accomplished that task really well. I'm glad I found my way to Locke & Key.

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### **Sandi says**

I read the first installment of Locke & Key on my Nook quite some time ago. I thought the story was intriguing, but I just couldn't do the whole comic thing. My brain can't handle the words and pictures

together. I was sad because I love Joe Hill's novels and short stories.

When this was offered free on Audible, I preordered it with low expectations. I don't normally listen to full-cast radio drama style audiobooks. They're usually hard to follow, hard to hear, and kind of annoying. But, this surprised and delighted me. The voice acting was top-notch. The celebrities listed all have very small parts, but they did really well. The voice actors who played the Locke family and their friends and foes were all excellent. Only a few of them were names I was familiar with, but all were great.

The production values were superb. The sound effects were convincing and the music was amazing. Oh, yeah, I really liked the story and characters too. I thought it was really compelling and I never wanted to turn off my Audible app.

I hope they do more of these productions. I really want to read *The Sandman* by Neil Gaiman and *Watchmen* by Alan Moore, but I'd never be able to do the graphic novels. If Audible were to do more high quality audio dramas of graphic novels, I'd listen to more.

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### **Bill says**

Shit! I was really down to give this one a listen, but evidently I hate full cast productions. I made it an hour before I had enough. Seemed grossly overproduced to me. I think I'll stick to the comics. Sorry Joe Hill. It's not you...it's me.

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### **AH says**

10/7/15 - Free audio book download from Audible. Take advantage of this - it has an all star cast including my favorite chameleon Tatiana Maslany.

5 stars for the acting and production value. This audio book had an all-star cast (Tatiana Maslany, Haley Joel Osmet, Kate Mulgrew, Joe Hill, Gabriel Rodriguez, Stephen King, and more) complete with music (pretty catchy), sound effects, and an announcer/narrator reminiscent of those old radio plays from the forties.

3.5 stars for the story which was a little hard to follow and at times, a little manic. You see, the villain in this book is very, very deranged and when he was on, he was criminally insane. If you can follow the story or are familiar with the graphic novel, I think that you will enjoy this more.

All in all, a crazy fun experience.

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### **Char says**

How awesome was this audio book of the graphic novel series of *Locke & Key*? It was SO awesome, I'm almost rendered wordless.

This was a full cast production and it brought these characters to life. This cast were so skilled at their work; these characters seemed real to me and I even shed a few tears at the end, something I rarely do when reading anything.

All I can say is BRAVO! Bravo to the cast! Bravo to Joe Hill and Gabriel Rodriguez for writing and illustrating the graphic novels in the first place, and BRAVO to whomever decided to give this away for free! Thank you so much, I had a blast!

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### **Bark says**

FREE audio production until November 4, 2015! Get yours here.

I am, most reluctantly, throwing in the towel at the halfway mark.

This started out so strong and had so much going for it. Written by Joe Hill who is one of my go-to authors and voice work by my favorite clone Tatiana Maslany, Stephen King (hisownself) & the fabulous Kate Mulgrew but as someone who has not read the comics I spent much of it in a state of confusion. This would probably be a five star production IF read as a companion piece to the graphic novels. But as a standalone piece it just didn't work for me. It's very imaginative but I'm going to read the graphic novels before ruining any more of this story for myself.

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### **Paul O'Neill says**

This was fantastic. I wish this was a full fledged book instead of a comic series. Such a cool premise and the story is very well thought out. I heart Joe Hill.

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### **Marc-Antoine says**

Awesome cast, fantastic story!

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### **Maria (Big City Bookworm) says**

*You can find all of my full length reviews at: **Big City Bookworm***

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Locke and Key is probably the graphic novel series that gets recommended to me the most often. I've always meant to pick up the series, especially during my yearly visits to Fan Expo Canada, but I always seem to push it aside for whatever reason. While browsing through Audible recently, I noticed that you could pre-order Locke and Key. At first I was slightly confused as I didn't realize that graphic novels were also created

as audiobooks, but then I noticed that it was labeled as an audio drama. Curious, I clicked the link and decided to check what it was all about.

The Lock and Key audio drama is basically like listening to a film with your eyes closed. There are sound effects and a musical score (that reminds me a lot of a Tim Burton soundtrack, take a listen after this paragraph) and even a full cast of actors rather than just one or two narrators. Initially, I wasn't sure if I should read the graphic novels first before listening to the audio drama, but then I noticed that it was free! I mean, who can resist a few audiobook am I right? Especially when it is a story that it constantly being recommended to you and that you have wanted to read for quite some time.

Locke and Key, written by Joe Hill, tells the story of the Locke Family who moves from California to their ancestral estate in Lovecraft, Massachusetts after a tragic event changes the family's lives forever. Within their new home lies an ancient form of dark magic. Keys are hidden throughout the house that open secret doors that allow children under the age of 18 to experience the individual power of each key and the magical secrets they contain.

Locke and Key consists of six graphic novels and the audio drama separates the story into six parts mirroring the graphic novel series. As I stated earlier, this audio drama is performed by a full cast, including a few very notable names. Haley Joel Osment (The Sixth Sense) portrays Sam Lesser, a disturbed teenager responsible for a tragic event that shakes the lives of the Locke family. Tatiana Maslany (Orphan Black) plays the part of a demonic spirit named Dodge who probably becomes one of the most strange and interesting characters as the series continues. Another big name to appear in this audio drama is none other than Kate Mulgrew (Orange is the New Black) as one seriously awful mother/grandmother. On top of these three wonderful actors, we have a full cast of almost 50 talented individuals portraying the rest of the many characters, including the three Locke family children: Tyler, Kinsey and Bode, within the world of Locke and Key.

I had never listened to an audio drama before and it's funny because I thought of it as this cool new and interesting thing when in reality there were plenty of radio dramas back before television programming even existed. I found it hard to get used to at first as there was no standard narrator that told you what was going on. There was no way to know what actions were taking place other than relying on the sound effects and other cues that took place while listening. The more I listened though, the easier it was to follow along. I started to get a feel for the voices of each actor and it became easier to tell one character from another.

Locke and Key is a very intricate and detailed story. There are moments that I really wished that I had the visuals from the graphic novels to accompany me through the audio drama. Locke and Key is so unique and unlike anything I have ever read/watched/listened to before. It has the perfect blend of fantasy and horror and I absolutely loved that combination. Joe Hill definitely worked his magic on this one!

The acting, for the most part, is phenomenal. It really was like watching a movie with my eyes closed. Everything felt believable, even considering the magical nature of the story, and I was completely entertained from start to finish.

As much as I did enjoy this story as an audio drama, I think I still would have preferred the graphic novels, or to at least have read them beforehand. The thing with graphic novels and film/television is that they provide you with an extra bit of information. There is only so much a sound effect can achieve. I found myself having to put pieces together on quite a number of occasions.

If anything, this audio performance has me wanting to read the graphic novels even more than I did before! I think going forward I would recommend either having read the graphic novels before listening to the audio



drama or having them with you as you listen, as a kind of dual experience. I will definitely be picking myself up a copy of the graphic novels as soon as possible and I hope to write a review on those as soon as I can!

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### **Amar says**

Definitivno vrijedi poslušat ukoliko ste voljeli stripove. Glumci su odlično uradili svoj posao, zvučni efekti su na mjestu i 99% je vrijedno materijalu u stripovima. Ali, ali... Ko nije čitao stripove, lahko će se izgubiti, jer bi moglo biti konfuzno, ti preskoki sa scene na scenu su malo lošije odrađeni i to je jedina kritika koju bi imao. Alfa i omega je maestralno odrađeno, da sam se naježio par puta.

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### **11811 (Eleven) says**

Way too YA for me. I'd rather watch Dawson's Creek while being waterboarded.

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### **Raeleen Lemay says**

I loved the graphic novels, but this wasn't really as good in comparison. There were times when it was difficult to understand what was going on, since some of the voices sounded similar and there were no descriptions of the action. It was good, but not the best!

I would definitely recommend picking up the books first, or reading them together with this audio production.

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