



# A City of Broken Glass

*Rebecca Cantrell*

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In Rebecca Cantrell's *A City of Broken Glass*, journalist Hannah Vogel is in Poland with her son Anton to cover the 1938 St. Martin festival when she hears that 12,000 Polish Jews have been deported from Germany. Hannah drops everything to get the story on the refugees, and walks directly into danger.

Kidnapped by the SS, and driven across the German border, Hannah is rescued by Anton and her lover, Lars Lang, who she had presumed dead two years before. Hannah doesn't know if she can trust Lars again, with her heart or with her life, but she has little choice. Injured in the escape attempt and wanted by the Gestapo, Hannah and Anton are trapped with Lars in Berlin. While Hannah works on an exit strategy, she helps to search for Ruth, the missing toddler of her Jewish friend Paul, who was disappeared during the deportation.

Trapped in Nazi Germany with her son just days before Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, Hannah knows the dangers of staying any longer than needed. But she can't turn her back on this one little girl, even if it plunges her and her family into danger.

## A City of Broken Glass Details

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Author : Rebecca Cantrell

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# From Reader Review A City of Broken Glass for online ebook

## Sherry says

Rebecca Cantrell has written another page turning thriller in the Hannah Vogel series. This is the fourth in her remarkable series. Hannah is in Poland investigating Jews being moved through the city when she is kidnapped and returned to Berlin. Set in 1938, Hannah must escape from Berlin as the Nazi regime continues to rise and destroy the lives of people who are important to her.

I enjoy the plot, but I also enjoy the historical details in this amazing series.

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## Martha Locker says

This was set in Berlin during WWII under Nazi rule. This is the first book that I have read by this author. The main character is a journalist and former British spy, named Hannah Vogel. This author has other books with Hannah Vogel. Very suspenseful.

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## Mildred Said says

I have fallen in love with Rebecca Cantrell. I got this 4th book on the character Hannah Vogel. I then decided to start from the beginning when she was introduced in Trace of smoke. I flew thru the 3 books till I got to the last one. Hannah is a german citizen in the time of the Nazi rise. She becomes disenchanted and puts herself to help by being a spy. The feel of the times, is immediately felt. You realize what people must have been going through. I wish that everyone read this series. A great historical fiction piece.

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## Cherie says

This is an story about an anti-Nazi female German journalist, living in Switzerland, who is drawn back to Berlin to rescue a Jewish child. She is in Berlin at the time of "Kristallnacht", Nov. 9, 1938, the night when Nazi Stormtroopers and German citizens launched a massive government coordinated attack against Jews throughout Germany. Homes were ransacked, businesses destroyed and synagogues burned and Jewish citizens brutalized. It is a very well written, fast moving novel, full of history and just the right amount of romance. I discovered that this is part of a series written about this journalist. I will have read the rest.

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## Deborah Ledford says

Rarely have I read multiple books in a series where there isn't a single clunker. The fourth book of the Hannah Vogel series continues to enthrall me. A suspenseful read, abundant with detailed locations and events that deliver me to the 1930s Berlin I'm grateful to experience only through Ms. Cantrell's words. As with every Hannah Vogel book, I feel, taste, hear and smell every location, every step, while being propelled

along Hanna's hazardous journey with other true-to-life characters so captivating I wish were in my own. Cantrell remains at the top of my favorite authors list.

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### **Judith Starkston says**

In Cantrell's soon to be published mystery, *A City of Broken Glass*, Hannah Vogel has gone to Poland in 1938 with her adopted son Anton to write a fluff article on festival pastries for a Swiss newspaper. That should send shivers into anyone familiar with Cantrell's Hannah. She doesn't write fluff and in 1938 even Poland isn't as safe as Hannah has assumed. Almost immediately she goes in pursuit of a different story and discovers Jewish refugees rounded up by the Germans and dumped into Poland in cold barns with no food or medical care. Among the starving women lies Miriam, the pregnant wife of Hannah's old lover Paul, and she's in labor. When Hannah returns with a doctor, Miriam is suspiciously dead and the woman who was with her has disappeared. Unfortunately for Hannah, this tragedy is only a hint of the real danger lurking nearby. Soon she's trapped in Berlin against her will with a surprising old ally and to her especial horror, her son Anton. How to get her son and herself safely out of Berlin? In addition, because she's Hannah, how to help the various people whose needs cry out to her even while she herself is in dire peril?

Cantrell always succeeds in creating nail-biting suspense while building a thematically rich story. Hannah criticizes herself for not having done more to stop the Nazis in the past when she feels she could have. Her self-recriminations are unfair as the reader knows, but her thoughts underscore a central idea of this book—each person faced with great evil has a choice either to protect the vulnerable at the cost of his or her own safety or to turn away. One of the subtle measures of this theme in *A City of Broken Glass* is the response of those who love Hannah when she chooses to fight for the innocent. If a character would prefer for Hannah to stay safe but nonetheless lets her go forward and assists her, in each case that character is the one to trust and value. Love, in Cantrell's book, is measured in the harsh crucible of standing up to the Nazis. If the person you love refuses to let you endanger your life and instead wishes you to take the cowardly way, perhaps they do not love you enough. That's a tough theme in a tough period of history. Cantrell's heroes have to love even into the maw of death. Combined with Cantrell's vivid portrayal of place and time, such soul-searing action and character development makes for an amazing read, which will feed your heart and soul as well as entertain you.

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### **Brenda Hawley says**

I have really enjoyed the first three books of this series about Hannah Vogel, a German caught in the web of the Gestapo during pre-World War II Berlin in 1938. Hannah is a spunky heroine and tries to right the world which is far too out of orbit for her to change. Meanwhile, she gets mixed up with helping her Jewish friends, picking up orphans and falling in love with ex-SS officers who are also alienated in Germany. In this novel, she is in Berlin on Kristallnacht trying to find a Jewish orphan and a mad woman bent on killing her, Hannah and her son for revenge of her father's death. Two things bothered me in this book: one: Hannah and Lars' long, long argument concerning his absence of two years and his unfaithfulness. Enough was enough! And second, I still don't understand (and do not buy) Lars' argument why he drove a concussed Hannah to Berlin rather than into Nazi-free (at that time) Poland where she would have been a lot safer and her son would have had his Swiss passport. Because she and Anton, her son, end up back in Berlin, hunted by the Gestapo and the vengeful woman, her life is hanging on a fine thread. But I guess that was needed to make

the story happen. Anyway, some suspenseful pages and lots of history come combined with interesting characters who have many more adventures to go as the Second World War starts to erupt.

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### **Lisa says**

The fourth book in the Hannah Vogel series is a bit of a disappointment--many aspects of the plot seem redundant to previous books (since the main character finds herself in the same basic predicament) and the revelation of the villain and climax are not foreshadowed as well as in the other books; the book is resolved too quickly once we understand what the source of the trouble is. If I hadn't (recently) read the previous books, I don't think I would understand much of the importance of the relationships between characters or the allusions to the past. And I wonder (as I did in the second book) why this supposedly devoted mother thinks it's a good idea to take her son with her on even innocuous journalistic assignments, given that the slightest misstep could land her (and him) in an almost certainly fatal situation--although she seems adept at escaping where no one else could possibly have such luck. If there's a fifth book, the author needs to present a new predicament.

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### **Mary Kirchoff says**

Love, love, LOVE Cantrell's Hannah Vogel series. I have to confess to reading the whole fourth book in one night, which is something I both love and hate to hear about my own novels. Great characters, fascinating setting, fast-paced action. She does a brilliant job developing relationships, and I'm completely puzzled by the reactions of a few reviews that say there's too much in Broken Glass about Hannah's relationships. The whole series is ALL about relationships, not the least of which is Hannah's with herself. The series works on so many levels, so just pick a level that works for you and enjoy the ride!

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### **Mike Zinn says**

This is the last of the Hannah Vogel novels for now - but I'll certainly be looking for the next one. What a great combination of history and mystery and thriller. I'm glad that I stumbled across these books.

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### **Rebecca McNutt says**

This book vaguely reminded me of Syndrome E, but it also had some similar themes to Number the Stars and Dawn. It was not only filled with an exciting mystery, but it was also a testament to loyalty, family and friendship during WWII.

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### **Barb says**

A City of Broken Glass is the fourth in the "Hannah Vogel" series of books by Rebecca Cantrell. This is the

story of Hannah, who has many aliases, who is trying to get out of pre-war Berlin, along with her son. She is on the Gestapo's list as a spy. She is an investigative reporter for a newspaper in Switzerland who was sent to do a story on a saint's celebration in Zbaszyn, Poland. She stumbles upon the deportation of German Jews to Poland and tries to help find a little girl who was left behind. She is kidnapped by Gestapo and transported back into Berlin where her life is in great danger. She escapes her captors and the story continues as she tries to get her son, herself and her SS contact out of Berlin before the Gestapo catch up with her. The ending takes place during Kristallnacht which is considered the beginning of the Holocaust by some. I was so enthralled with this story that I couldn't stop reading until I was finished. I was kept on the edge of my seat by the danger always lurking around the corner as I devoured this story. I wish that I had read the first three novels before this one. I don't think it will diminish my enjoyment of those because I read this last one first if the plot of those novels is as deep as this book. I congratulate Rebecca Cantrell for providing a historical novel that keeps mostly true to events as they happened during that hellish time in Berlin. I heartily recommend this book to anyone, especially those who enjoy looking back to that time in history.

I received this e-book for free from the publisher for this review.

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## **Gina says**

Goodreads Description- In Rebecca Cantrell's *A City of Broken Glass*, journalist Hannah Vogel is in Poland with her son Anton to cover the 1938 St. Martin festival when she hears that 12,000 Polish Jews have been deported from Germany. Hannah drops everything to get the story on the refugees, and walks directly into danger.

Kidnapped by the SS, and driven across the German border, Hannah is rescued by Anton and her lover, Lars Lang, who she had presumed dead two years before. Hannah doesn't know if she can trust Lars again, with her heart or with her life, but she has little choice. Injured in the escape attempt and wanted by the Gestapo, Hannah and Anton are trapped with Lars in Berlin. While Hannah works on an exit strategy, she helps to search for Ruth, the missing toddler of her Jewish friend Paul, who was disappeared during the deportation.

Trapped in Nazi Germany with her son just days before Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, Hannah knows the dangers of staying any longer than needed. But she can't turn her back on this one little girl, even if it plunges her and her family into danger.

This is a fresh voice for the all too familiar topic of the Nazi Regime and the Holocaust that ended so many Jewish lives. I had to read a book based on Kristallnacht, the night that the Nazi's invaded Jewish neighborhoods, destroyed everything in sight, and deported approximately 12,000 German Jews to Poland. This was the first major round of deportations that led to many Jews ending up in concentration camps. I love historical fiction books based on this time period but Cantrell did a great job adding a unique voice to the story and managing to add a mystery into the story seamlessly. The characters were well developed. The only criticism is that the story dragged on a bit in the middle while Hannah, Lars, and Anton, the 3 main characters, were trying to figure out a way to leave Berlin after entering illegally. I don't want to go into too much detail to give any spoilers but I truly enjoyed this novel. There are so many books on this time period but like I said Cantrell has added something unique in the voice of the book as well as the plotline. I highly recommend this to anyone interested in reading about the Jewish Plight in Nazi Germany as well as how non-Jews were just getting through this terrible time in history. 4 stars!

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## Cheryl A says

This latest installment of the Hannah Vogel series finds Hannah in Poland, assigned as Adelheid Zinsli, her Swiss identity, to cover the 1938 Saint Martin festival. When she learns that 12,000 Polish Jews have been deported from Nazi Germany, Hannah knows that's where the real story is and sets out to find the refugees. She discovers a barn full of refugees and while getting the story, discovers the Jewish wife of an former co-worker, who asks Hannah to find her daughter, who she left in Berlin when she was deported.

As Hannah begins to plan how she can get the two year old Rose to safety, she finds her old fiance, Lars Lang in the hotel where she and her son Anton are staying. Lars is the current lover of Hannah's drive, Fraulein Ivona. While Hannah and Lars are trying to discuss the previous two years, the Gestapo arrives and arrests Hannah, carrying her back into Germany.

When ensues is a daring rescue and a race to find a missing child in the tinderbox that is Berlin in the days just before Kristallnacht. Weaving the past episodes of Hannah's adventures in fighting for those she cares for, we revisit many of the characters of previous novels and learn more about Hannah and Lars and their pasts. Full of suspense and action, Hannah, Lars and Anton must risk their own safety to save one innocent child.

Author Rebecca Cantrell has delivered another edge of your seat adventure. She has wisely placed each installment a couple of years apart, allowing the characters and the historical events to develop separately from each book. I'm eagerly awaiting the next adventure.

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## ThrillersRockT says

### A CITY OF BROKEN GLASS

The fourth book in a series of historical thrillers, A City of Broken Glass by Rebecca Cantrell is a blend of the mystery/intrigue and noir genres. It is a well written story that takes place in what many (myself included) consider the darkest period in the modern western world.

Set in Nazi Germany in 1938, the story follows Hannah Vogel, a journalist sent by the Swiss newspaper she works for to cover a fluff piece about pastries during a festival in Poland. But soon after she and her son Anton arrive in Poland, Hannah discovers a real story to cover: the deportation of Jews from Germany. The Jewish refugees Hannah finds are housed in a stable under deplorable conditions and guarded by Polish soldiers as if they are prisoners. When Hannah recognizes one of the refugees as the wife of a former lover, Hannah goes to her and sees that the woman is about to give birth. The woman begs Hannah to ensure the safety of her two year old daughter who has been hidden in a cupboard in the woman's home in Berlin. As Hannah agrees to help, she faces not just the mystery of why the toddler was left alone or where she is but also Hannah's very own mystery - how she herself becomes trapped in Berlin with her son and how it all ties together with her past. The suspense is built carefully through both the fictional events created and the actual historical events leading to the Holocaust and World War II.

The story is told in first person from Hannah's point of view and in that respect it's very well done. The

writing is a little on the colder side but almost exactly what the reader would imagine to be written by a journalist. It also fits well with the bleakness of the time period. Although there is a lot of internal dialogue and self criticism (for not doing enough to fight the Nazis) within Hannah and surrounding the other characters, the characters themselves still struck me as a little cold. Most of the emotion I felt arose from the events rather than the characters - even though the author does a good job of making the main characters a little more likeable towards the end (and they are probably realistic for the time).

As I mentioned earlier, this is the fourth book in the Hannah Vogel mystery series but it can easily be read as a stand alone thriller. There is a lot of historical information behind it and the author even provides additional information from her research at the end.

For a suspense thriller, it's a very good story. It also has an interesting but very disturbing setting. So it's probably just me, but I did feel a little discomfort when I read the novel. Yes, I know there were German citizens who did stand up against the Nazi Regime and their inhuman laws. The author even points this out at the end with real examples. However, as history tells us there were so many who didn't. It gives the reader a lot to think about. I think if the storyline was in a different setting and the characters just a little different, it would have been an easier novel to like.

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