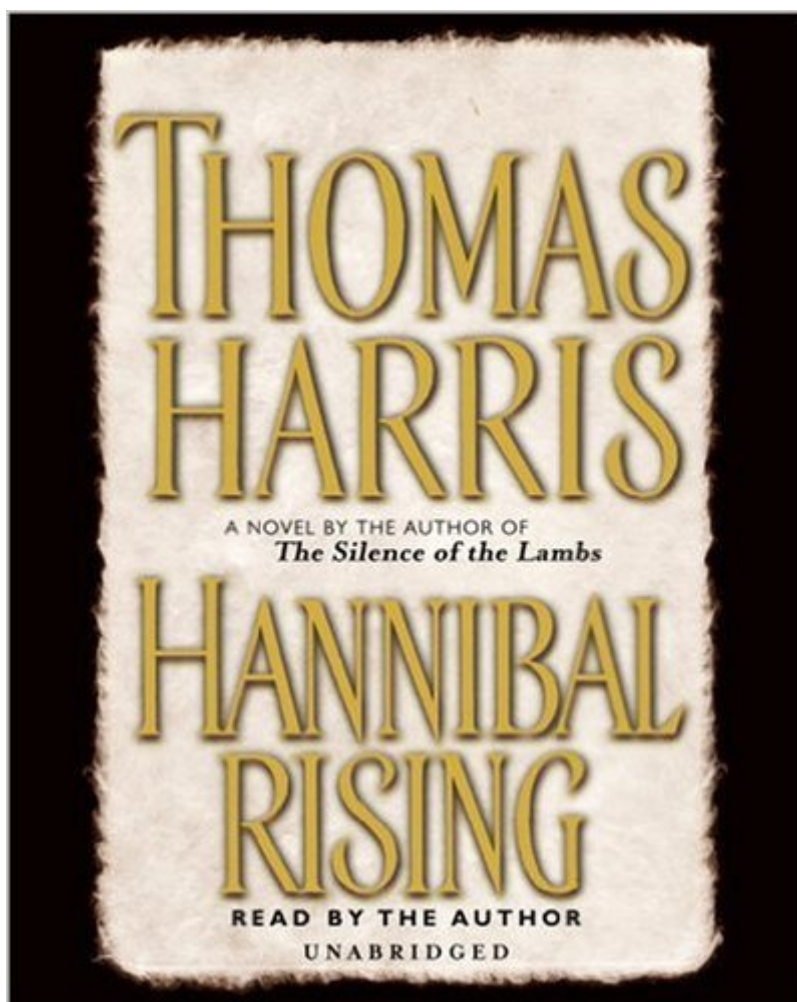


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Hannibal Rising



Synopsis

HE IS ONE OF THE MOST HAUNTING CHARACTERS IN ALL OF LITERATURE. AT LAST THE EVOLUTION OF HIS EVIL IS REVEALED. Hannibal Lecter emerges from the nightmare of the Eastern Front, a boy in the snow, mute, with a chain around his neck. He seems utterly alone, but he has brought his demons with him. Hannibal's uncle, a noted painter, finds him in a Soviet orphanage and brings him to France, where Hannibal will live with his uncle and his uncle's beautiful and exotic wife, Lady Murasaki. Lady Murasaki helps Hannibal to heal. With her help he flourishes, becoming the youngest person ever admitted to medical school in France. But Hannibal's demons visit him and torment him. When he is old enough, he visits them in turn. He discovers he has gifts beyond the academic, and in that epiphany, Hannibal Lecter becomes death's prodigy. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (511 customer reviews)

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[Authors, A-Z](#) > ([H](#)) > [Harris, Thomas](#) #5579 in [Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers](#)

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Customer Reviews

As a longtime fan of Thomas Harris' novels featuring Hannibal Lecter, I was very excited to read HANNIBAL RISING. The premise intrigued me: I'm one of those people who loves the recent slew of prequels, and the idea of learning the ghastly origins of Hannibal Lecter sounded simply delectable to me. [...] HANNIBAL RISING is not the equivalent of RED DRAGON or THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS - perhaps not even of HANNIBAL, for that matter. But I disagree with those many who have simply dismissed HANNIBAL RISING as "crap". True, it's not a great read, but it is certainly a fun one. The book opens during Hitler's "Blitzkrieg" operation during World War II, when Axis troops spread across Europe and placed the majority of it under Nazi control. The Lecter

family, which consists of the cultured Count and Countess as well as their talented son Hannibal and his little sister, Mischa, flees to their cabin in the woods of Poland to escape from the invading SS. Of course, things go to hell when a fighter plane crashes into the cabin, burning Hannibal's parents and leaving he and his sister to fend for themselves. Then a band of starving Russian thieves come across the cabin, and with nothing left to eat, they turn to Hannibal and his sister ...The rest of the book deals with Hannibal as a disturbed teenager trying to deal with the pain over the loss with his sister when he is taken in by his uncle Robert and his dazzling wife, Lady Muraski, and subsequently his life as a young medical student in Paris, where he finally begins planning his revenge on the fiends who murdered his sister. HANNIBAL RISING has nothing - NOTHING - in common with any of the previous Hannibal Lecter books.

I don't think I've ever seen a book bagged as savagely on as this - so much so that, despite having pre-ordered and received my copy, I almost didn't bother to read it. What a pleasant surprise, then to find a beautifully crafted, clever, literary novel, developing ever further one of the most complex characters of modern fiction, packed full of the same metaphor and figure as was Hannibal - a further stage in Thomas Harris' development from author of intelligent thrillers to a proper, literary, writer. Unlike most people, I liked Hannibal, but thought it was a bit baroque for its own good. With Hannibal Rising, Thomas Harris has kept the melody, but cut the ornamentation down to a plainsong. The character Hannibal Lecter's progress from his walk-on part in Red Dragon is intriguing: Thomas Harris can scarcely have expected, let alone intended, that a character seemingly named for the sake of a cheesy rhyme would, er, consume thirty years of his professional life. In Red Dragon Hannibal Lecter was mostly a bogeyman (at that point he displayed the classic psychopathic trait of childhood cruelty to animals - which has long since been revised into an uncommon affinity for assorted birds and horses): only in the novel Hannibal did Harris really begin to extend a figure who transpired to be more supernatural than human (there are unmistakable resonances of Dracula) and not really immoral at all. Perhaps this is Harris' most shocking initiative of all: A heartless psychopath, via a preference for eating only the rude, is now given a full moral basis and, what's more, we're on his side as he wields the knife. That's a pretty subversive shift in perspective, and Harris has executed it without us even realising what he was up to. Yet people still complain.

Wow. Lot of negative reviews for this book. Now some points I will agree on with many of you....but for different reasons. I agree, most chapters were kind of choppy and not well laid out. BUT I was

paying attention when I read the Prologue, and I understood that Harris was going for that intentionally as these chapters do represent the least developed rooms in Hannibal's memory palace. It does make sense. Now as for more specific complaints that others have touched on: "The reasons for the cannibalism remain unclear": Folks if you really are interested in cannibalism, you will pick up and read other books on the subject. I have. The gulf between the regular joe and the serial killer is huge. Enough happens in Hannibal's developmental years to make the passage across that gulf pretty clear and comprehensive. There isn't much of a gulf between the serial killer and cannibalism. If anything, it's a natural progression. If a serial killer remains free and active long enough, cannibalism is going to be experimented with. So the cannibalism really isn't that interesting. It's a forgone conclusion. "I wasn't convinced that those kinds of events in childhood would make someone be that way.": Well that's nice. But people making this assessment are looking at it from their point of view, which has likely always been safe, comfortable, and always well-fed. And you really should be careful about making declarative statements like that without making sure there isn't a REAL LIFE precedent. Go to Wikipedia and look up ANDREI CHIKATILO. Read about him. Look familiar? This is the real life example Harris is quite obviously using for Hannibal's childhood. The difference between the two, is that Andrei was insecure, disorganized, and inadequate. Hannibal is not.

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