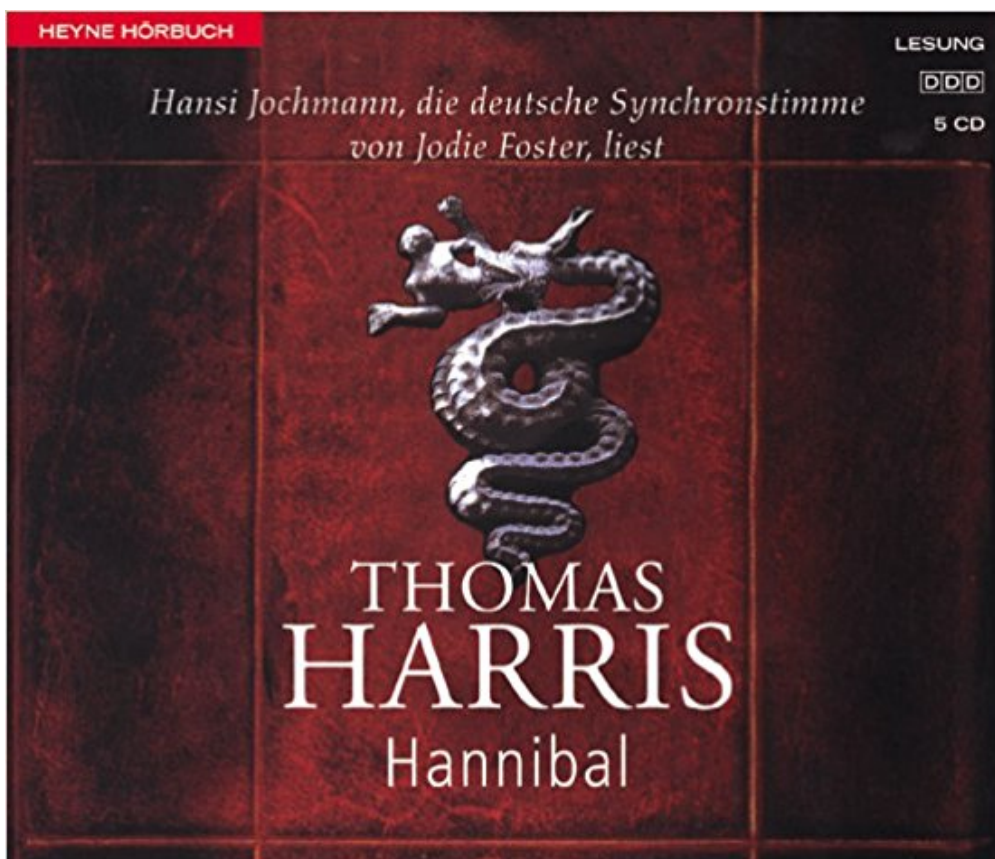


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Hannibal. 6 CDs.



Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I was very hesitant to buy this book after seeing how evenly divided people were between loving and hating it. But then I realized that some of the best books drive fans to polarize this way, so I gave it a chance. To me, this book did reach a feverish nightmare quality that felt heightened compared to its predecessors. However, for Harris to pull off the ending, that height was necessary. Yes, it was shocking, but also utterly satisfying, and it couldn't have been accomplished any other way. I didn't entirely enjoy the middle section in Italy, but perhaps it only made me that much more glad to return to Starling and her action-packed chapters. If you're someone who gets particularly thrilled by a blazing showdown at the climax of a book, I'd recommend this book. If you're more interested in Harris' craft as a murder mystery writer, this book may have veered too far into ethereal horror territory for you. But either way, I think it's worth giving it a try.

The book came in great conditions. The dust jacket was slightly worn off but the pages were completely neat and the cover seemed untouched. The state of the product left me with absolutely no complaints. Now, on to the book's contents. I shall be brief. Mixed reviews are predictable on this one. Those of us who have the stomach to digest the insanity within this book can tell just how magnificent Thomas Harris' storytelling skills are. If you can get over the violence and psychological sickness of certain characters (I'm looking at you, Vergers!) you may just realize how deep Dr. Lecter is. However, if you're too distracted by the intense violence you won't be able to see anything beyond that. This is not a book for everyone, and I can understand that. It's quite strong. However, that goes both ways; it's as powerful negatively as positively. I loved it, and I can see myself

re-reading it several times in the future.

There is something so sinister and unfamiliar to most people with Hannibal Lector - you love him or you hate and fear him. I don't see any gray area there. It's the truly elegant, noblesse oblige gestures and actions on Hannibal's part that lured me in with *Silence*. I wanted to know who Hannibal really is - out in the open, away from prison and free to make a life of his choosing knowing it may be the last chance he has to live in the world. The descriptions of Florence are exquisite and moving - having been there myself more than once, I thank Mr. Harris for paying homage to this great city and I found no more fitting place to re-enter Hannibal Lector's life. I won't comment on the emotional, sociological, or ethical issues behind some of the characters' choices in this book other than to say in many ways the ending fit very well indeed. Clarice was looking for mate, a partner that knew her, understood her in ways she could not do for herself. While it's dark and scary and based on inherently evil acts I felt the love between Hannibal and Clarice was also based on mutual respect, admiration and humor. How could the story end any differently and remain true to these two characters?

I didn't mind the graphic violence or the lewd commentary that some of the other reviewers did at all. Honestly, it was tame in comparison to what I was expecting. For a book about serial killers and in particular, the one the book is named after, you'd expect a bit more, um, killing. My biggest problem with the book is that it takes so long to get into the meat of the story, taking detours through POVs I honestly couldn't care less about, like Pazzi for instance. Half the book takes place in Italy and the author seems to find it necessary to remind us of this fact every few sentences by throwing in unnecessary Italian phrases and random historical facts. There are very few chapters dedicated to Hannibal himself and most of those are spent shopping or setting up dinner parties. Not only that, but the supposed super evil villain of the century here, spends his nights having nightmares about a sister he lost during the war and playing harpsichord numbers. I suppose anyone looks sympathetic next to Mason though, who used to molest children, but now because of his paralysis chooses to torment them and collect their tears for his martinis. How do you make a cannibal a likeable anti-hero? By putting him next to that guy. Anyway, I guess I'm just disappointed that the ultimate baddie everyone has been so afraid of the whole series turned out to be a big, sentimental pussycat and not the monster I was hoping for.

Thomas Harris seems to have been reading Anne Rice. Hannibal Lector has been transformed into

Armand, with his small size, small, even teeth, enormous strength, air of attentive stillness and unnaturally acute senses. Even his age. He acts like--and seems to be depicted as--a young man, but he was born in 1938 and this makes him just a little long in the tooth for this sort of stuff. Harris confirms this impression when he states that cannibals are nomadic but vampires are territorial. Hannibal Lecter is territorial. The book, therefore, is in part a fantasy, and presumably this was the author's intent. While entertaining, it doesn't really work. In a fantasy, magic prevails and anything can happen. Most of the other reviewers do not like the ending. I share their opinion. Clarice is (magically) mesmerized by the vampire and comes to share his world. I don't buy it. In addition, the FBI segments are ridiculous. It has become a convention that government bureaucracies are inherently stupid but these people are too stupid for belief. Everybody who is pure in soul (and some who aren't) knows that Paul Krendler is vicious, venal and stupid. It seems more than unlikely that he would have risen as high as he has in any organization resembling a meritocracy. In addition, the way that the organization was willing to throw Starling to the dogs, for reasons that make little sense, was a convenient plot device but a total cop-out. That being said, it's still one of the more entertaining books that I've recently read. Too bad it wasn't better.

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