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A Sparrow In Terezin (A Hidden Masterpiece Novel Book 2)



Synopsis

Bound together across time, two women will discover a powerful connection through one survivor's story of hope in the darkest days of a war-torn world. Present Day--With the grand opening of her new art gallery and a fairy tale wedding just around the corner, Sera James feels she's stumbled into a charmed life--until a brutal legal battle against fiancé William Hanover threatens to destroy the perfectly planned future she's planned before it even begins. Now, after an eleventh-hour wedding ceremony and a callous arrest, William faces a decade in prison for a crime he never committed, and Sera must battle the scathing accusations that threaten her family and any hope for a future. 1942--Kája Makovsky narrowly escaped occupied Prague in 1939, and was forced to leave her half-Jewish family behind. Now a reporter for the Daily Telegraph in England, Kájadiscoversthe terror has followed her across the Channel in the shadowy form of the London Blitz. When she learns Jews are being exterminated by the thousands on the continent, Kája has no choice but to return to her mother city, risking her life to smuggle her family to freedom and peace. Connecting across a century through one little girl, a Holocaust survivor with a foot in each world, these two women will discover a kinship that springs even in the darkest of times. In this tale of hope and survival, Sera and Kája must cling to the faith that sustains and fight to protect all they hold dear--even if it means placing their own futures on the line.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As in the first Hidden Masterpiece novel, *The Butterfly and the Violin*, author Kristy Cambron gives us a stirring glimpse of World War II in *A Sparrow in Terezin*, particularly at the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp in Terezin and from the perspective of Kája Makovsky, a young, half-Jewish writer who's separated from her family when she flees Prague, only to end up later in the disaster of the London Blitz. Kája's intelligence, compassion, and courage all find places to pierce through the war's horror, even when any chance for a future, her future, is on the verge of being blacked out. "Can you tell me about him, about Jesus?... He was a Jew." "He was, just like us. And if he were here right now, he'd be suffering. He'd be crying for what we do to each other." While the emotionally tumultuous present-day account about newlyweds Sera and William Hanover is well intertwined, the novel's strength is in Kája's story, though it took a while before I got a strong sense of a deeper and cohesive purpose running through her thread, when the book's central theme started rounding out in the second half. There was a little issue with overuse in the book, "embattled" and forms of the verb "melt" appearing quite a few times as well as a number of scenes with Kája in tears. Of course, crying would be more than expected in any heartrending novel like this, but as there are many ways a person can react to fear, grief, relief, etc., I think main characters' tears have more impact in a novel, especially one with dark themes like war and death, when crying is depicted at the most necessary points, or even slipped in at an effectively understated moment, and not as much in between.

A Sparrow in Terezin is the sequel to *The Butterfly and the Violin*, and the two books do need to be read in order. Both books are written in two separate timelines, with the contemporary story in both books following the story of art gallery owner Sera James and business mogul William Hanover. As with the first book, the historical section of the novel followed the story of a woman in World War Two Europe, following her from Prague to London and back to Europe over the course of three years. I thoroughly enjoyed *The Butterfly and the Violin*. Some readers didn't like the way it skipped between two timelines or didn't like the Sera/William subplot, but it was original and I

thought it worked. I'd been looking forward to the sequel, so started reading it as soon as the review copy was available (it wasn't like I had anything better to do on Christmas Eve when I was hosting the family for Christmas Day). Yes, I'm aware that's five months ago. It just shows how keen I was to read this). But while *A Sparrow in Terezin* is a good novel, I didn't enjoy it as much as I expected, as I didn't think the two timelines worked as well. I found the present-day timeline frustrating, as it didn't seem to be moving the story forward and the link between present and past seemed contrived (I can only assume the minor character linking the stories will actually turn out to be a major character in a later book). It didn't help that the past plot took a long time to get to the point—it's not until two-thirds of the way through the book that Kaja arrives in Terezin, by which time I'd been so involved in her London story that I'd forgotten the implications of the title.

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