



Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke

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The girl known as Gretchen Whitestone has a secret: She used to be part of Adolf Hitler's inner circle. More than a year after she made an enemy of her old family friend and fled Munich, she lives with a kindly English family, posing as an ordinary German immigrant, and is preparing to graduate from high school. Her love, Daniel Cohen, is a reporter in town. For the first time in her life, Gretchen is content.

But then, Daniel gets a telegram that sends him back to Germany, and Gretchen's world turns upside-down. And when she receives word that Daniel is wanted for murder, she has to face the danger she thought she'd escaped-and return to her homeland.

Gretchen must do everything she can to avoid capture and recognition, even though saving Daniel will mean consorting with her former friends, the Nazi elite. And as they work to clear Daniel's name, Gretchen and Daniel discover a deadly conspiracy stretching from the slums of Berlin to the Reichstag itself. Can they dig up the explosive truth and get out in time-or will Hitler discover them first?

Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke Details

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Author : Anne Blankman

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From Reader Review Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke for online ebook

Sasha Alsberg says

Gosh this book made me feel a lot of feels that were both sad, happy, mournful, exhilarating & thoughtful. It was both captivating and empowering to read this novel. Although it was slow in the middle, during the last 50 pages I didn't want it to end. I would love to see a novella about Daniel & Gretchen 20 years in the future since there are some loose ends (like their families and friends lives) I want clarified since I'm really curious. 4.25/5 stars, loved this book just like I did the first!

Hailey (HaileyinBookland) says

This is such a unique and gripping story. I loved it just as much as the first one. Video review to come!

Jasprit says

I was in awe of Blankman's work with Prisoner of Night and Fog, the way she was able to weave a story of everything that had taken place in Germany back in the 1930's and at the same time make a wonderful story of Daniel and Gretchen fit into it was amazing. I fell in love with Gretchen and Daniel's story; I wanted them to finally live their own lives and not constantly checking over their shoulder. So with the way things ended in Prisoner of Night and Fog, I was left with the hope that things would end better for them. But I guess I always knew deep in my bones that there would always be something or somebody that would lure Daniel and Gretchen back home to Germany, but all I wanted to do was keep them safe any way possible.

So of course when nothing could stop Gretchen and Daniel from going back I found myself even more overwrought with nerves, the consequences for them going back were even worse than last time I don't know what I'd do if anything happened to either of them after everything that they had been through. Also who did they have left to turn to? Hitler's strength and force was spreading rapidly through Germany, before they knew it he could possibly have full control. But I adored the strength and determination of Gretchen and Daniel, they really did go above and beyond to try and be free, risking their lives by trying to find answers and even coming face to face with old friends. But what I loved more about Gretchen and Daniel were the sacrifices they were willing to make for one another, I was aware of their love for each other before, but in this book they just went further onto show why they deserved to be free of everything in Germany and with each other. Despite everyone and me knowing that the love between Daniel and Gretchen was strong, I hated how with this book there were all these different things being thrown their way that just managed to create an uncomfortable distance at times. It really broke my heart at times as all Daniel and Gretchen had were each other, but even then at times several things were holding them back that gaining comfort from each wasn't as easy and natural as it was used to be. I hated this, as all I wanted to shout was that life was too short as it is to think about everything that could get in the way. Daniel once again came through for me in this story he was the perfect gentleman, always willing to put his life on the line if necessary, or take a step back to keep Gretchen safe. This poor guy went through it all, I adored though how despite things being awkward at times for him and Gretchen as they didn't know how things would go, he was the constant anchor that Gretchen needed, his small smiles of encouragement really were the only things that really helped Gretchen and me at

times not to lose hope.

Blankman once again was the master of upping the tension with this book, with the stakes so high, the danger of either Daniel or Gretchen getting caught had tripled with either of them knowing what the consequences could be. Also with Hitler not being around as much as he had been in *The Prisoner of Night and Fog*, his lack of appearance makes him that much more formidable. As there's always, the constant whispers of what he's plotting next, there's the control he has on the streets without him being around. So it made the build up of his path crossing with Gretchen's that much scarier as you didn't know which Hitler you would be getting when it finally happened.

Of course my poor little heart just about got through all the hurdles that they had to encounter, so many times I'd lost hope that everything would end in the way I was dreading. But I'm glad there were some fantastic characters along the way that ended up providing friendships in the most unexpected of places. Three characters that Blankman introduced really stood out for me in this book, and for them I'm highly grateful, unlike the bunch of characters who were quick to make assumptions, they were willing to aid, fight and discover the justice that everyone needed to know about. I know it wouldn't be possible for every character that I became attached to, to survive what with the way Hitler was calling the shots, but it was awful when bright lives such as these could just blink out in an instant.

Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke really bought up my anxiety levels, but strangely in the best possible way, as books which tend to evoke all my emotions and really bring a story come alive for me are ones that end up as my favourites and are ones that I know I will remember for a long time to come. And by all the emotions I do mean exactly that, there was certainly an underlying form of anxiety throughout this entire story as you didn't know what could be lurking around the corner. Then there were moments of bliss of just seeing Gretchen and Daniel be together and moments of giddiness, when things were actually going well for once under the dire situations they found themselves in. But most of all I warn you to keep some tissues with you as part way through I was a sobbing mess. Let me just say though these feelings were all worth it and if I had to experience them all over again over a poignant story as this I would do it in an instant. *Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke* was a beautifully written story, of two characters finding any means necessary to survive. They were characters who will leave such a big imprint on you that you never want to let them and their gorgeous story go.

This review can be found on: [The Readers Den](#)

Sarah says

(Source: I received a digital copy of this book for free on a read-to-review basis. Thanks to HarperCollins and Edelweiss.)

This was an enjoyable sequel, and I didn't expect the murder mystery aspect.

I liked Gretchen and Daniel in this book, they were both self-sacrificing both for each other and for the greater good, and they never lost sight of what was important. They really were a bit of a Romeo and Juliet though!

The storyline in this was pretty good, and I didn't expect the murder-mystery storyline. It did make sense as the reason why Gretchen and Daniel both felt the need to go back to Germany, and back into danger though.

There was some romance between Gretchen and Daniel as expected, but it wasn't all plain sailing at all, and there were several moments when it was questionable as to whether or not they would actually make it through.

I can't really say anything about the historical accuracy of the book, although it's clear from the Author's note at the end that she knows way, way more about all this stuff than I do! I will happily admit to being pretty useless when it comes to both history and geography, give me maths and science ten times over every time.

The ending to this was the most interesting part for me, because what actually happened to Hitler and Germany is of course already written as it actually happened. I did think the ending was good though, and I liked the way things were wrapped up with Gretchen and Daniel too.

7 out of 10

Shannon (leaninglights) says

Actual rating 4.25 stars

Anne Blankman can write. I loved being back in the story with Gretchen and Daniel... There were plenty of heart-stopping moments. The strongest part of the book for me was 50-90%. I thought it started a bit slow but really pulled me in and while I liked the ending, I'm not sure it was realistic. Overall though, I highly recommend this dualogy and I can't wait to see what Anne writes next!

Lara says

"I know how they'll feel. As though the world should stop rotating or the sun shining or the rain from coming down. When those things do happen, they won't be able to believe it. Because they'll think that the world should be different, now that their loved one has been killed. But the world won't be different. They will."

These books are one of the best historical fiction books I've ever read.

The amount of things I have learned from these books are uncountable.

Danielle (Love at First Page) says

4.5-5 stars

Prisoner of Night and Fog was Anne Blankman's highly impressive debut and one of my favorite books of last year. I have been dying to read the sequel ever since finishing it. Daniel and Gretchen are characters I've grown to truly care about, and I knew they still had a difficult road ahead of them. She is the niece of Adolf Hitler and he is a Jewish boy. Though they escaped from Germany together at the end of *PoNaF*, they are living with borrowed names, and Daniel, once a passionate and determined reporter, is now writing meaningless columns for a society newspaper. When he gets word that his family back in Germany is in trouble, he doesn't hesitate to make his way back to them, despite the very real possibility he could be killed. Gretchen, though happy with her new adoptive family and on her way to becoming a psychoanalyst, would never let Daniel go it alone and so follows him. Right back to where the monster lives, the very man whose electric blue eyes still haunt her every nightmare.

After loving *PoNaF* so much, I was desperate to feel the same about *Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke*. It's one of the most unique stories I've ever read, and I had faith that Anne Blankman would give her readers a worthy conclusion. She doesn't disappoint. Like the first book, *CoBaS* is set around real facts and figures during the rise of Nazi Germany, but the heart of the story is fictional. It's beautifully woven, at times romantic, haunting, terrifying, sad, thrilling, and finally uplifting. In the larger picture we know how this story ends – how history plays its awful self out – but we ache for Daniel and Gretchen to somehow win their peace. When they find themselves back in the very place they thought they'd never return to, my fear for them became a palpable thing. This part of history is not yet when Hitler has fully risen to power, but he's right on the cusp, and the Nazi party is already committing heinous crimes in his name. This wouldn't be a story if Daniel and Gretchen were kept safe, so I was a nervous wreck throughout the whole book. When an author can make me feel so emotional and care so deeply about her characters, I know I've discovered something special and worth savoring.

In *CoBaS*, we learn more about Daniel – about his family and his dreams – and I have fallen even more in love with him. He is brave, courageous, and selfless, always willing to put others above his own well-being, and that's doubly true for Gretchen. If it's in his power, he will keep her safe, but he also sees the strength in her and never diminishes it. Toward the middle of the book their romance takes a rather heartbreaking turn, and I was extremely worried about their future. They both want to pursue what they love – for Daniel that means worthy news reporting and for Gretchen that means studying psychology – and they're not sure if they can do that together. Me being me, I wanted true love to prevail, but I also understood the obstacles they faced – and that's if they were to make it back out of Germany alive. But beneath their doubts is a love that is made of strength, devotion, and sacrifice. The way Anne Blankman allows her characters to express their hearts – whether it's Daniel's outward pleas to Gretchen (one of the most romantic scenes I've ever read), or the way each of their actions speak louder than words, or how Gretchen constantly thinks of what a good man Daniel is – is such a heartwarming thing to me. They will do everything they can for one another, and I believe in the love they share completely.

Of course, the romance isn't the only thing to love about this book. Though it is the thread that ties

everything together, there's also a very thrilling, heartbreaking, and scary story. Daniel has been accused of murder, and he refuses to leave the country without at least trying to clear his name. He has always been a seeker of truth, so he will do whatever it takes to make things right... and hopefully stop Hitler and the National Socialists once and for all. Needless to say, I was terrified for him and for Gretchen, for the beatings they were likely to face in the future. Keep some tissues handy and prepare yourself for some despicable, unspeakable things. It makes me sick to think that this is our history, but Anne Blankman doesn't shy away from it. She clearly has done her research yet again. As for the man himself, Adolf Hitler, though he is not so much a character in *CoBaS* like in the first book, his presence is still felt everywhere and Gretchen's fear of him permeates the pages. He is still this giant figure in her head, and though she knows better than anyone how his mind works, he's still a virtual puzzle and an unknowable evil.

If you haven't yet started this historical fiction duology, I demand you put everything else on hold. These books will fascinate you, pull at your heartstrings, and, if you're like me, bring tears to your eyes. I fell in love with the story and its characters. Somehow, though it's one of the most horrific periods of history, I didn't want to leave Daniel and Gretchen's sides. They will stay with me for a long time to come.

Special thanks to Jamie @ The Perpetual Page-Turner and the publisher for sending me an ARC.

This review can also be found at [Love at First Page](#).

Sarah Churchill says

A bit slow to start, and more romance than I would have liked (with my stone cold heart) but still suspenseful from about half way onwards, and filled with horrible Nazi brutality. I especially like reading the Author Notes at the end once I'm done, because the plot in Blankman's stories are so closely interwoven with history and real life events that it's impossible not to have another level of respect for her storytelling even after reading.

Lisa Mandina says

4.5 stars.

I really just love how the author weaves true historical facts and events in with wonderful fictional characters that you really care about. Characters that don't make it through everything unscathed, they suffer tragedies and losses and even permanent debilitating injuries. And for the most part, they do act the way you would think people really act. Even if there is still some of the silly stuff that people in love in books seem to do. And it was like watching the Titanic movie, you rooted for the people, even knowing that in the end the really bad things, like the boat sinking or in this case Hitler rising to power, are still going to happen. Even though you know if they do prove what they try to prove, it won't actually end up saving Germany and all the people in the Holocaust, you still root for them to do what they can.

You can read my full review at [Lisa Loves Literature](#).

Giselle says

An Electronic Advanced Reader Copy was provided by the publisher via Edelweiss for review. Quotes have been pulled from an ARC and may be subject to change.

I was perusing Edelweiss for some book covers when I decided to checkout the review copies. HarperTeen always has e-ARCs for review and I always want each and every one of them but when I saw this book there, I knew I had to read it already.

This book.. It had my heart pumping and my forehead sweating. I felt all the feels and was also freaked out all at the same time. Being on the run from Hitler will have you paranoid. When your country is turning into something no one can recognize, and you have to look over your shoulder the entire time.. This is what Gretchen was going through, through her eyes we experience the terror and the immediate pressure to topple the Nazi regime. We all know how it ends in real life, but in this fictional world, I kind of wanted a different ending.

Gretchen and Daniel are just so sweet to one another and I dare say they are both loving and very mature and considerate of each other's feelings. Being in that world and what they had to go through, I love that it drove them to take action and to do something even if it meant their own lives were at risk. Very brave.

The writing is still as wonderfully written in the sequel as it is here. You immerse yourself in her words and her life and forget everything else. That's what Blankman does well. And her research is just as strong here too. I wanted a twist ending but I knew I was just being hopeful.

Grab this one if you're looking for an intense nail-biting read set in WW2.

Maja (The Nocturnal Library) says

Prisoner of Night and Fog, Anne Blankman's incredible debut and part one of her duology, seemed at times too good to be true. Extensively researched, clever, and deeply emotional, it explored a time some would rather leave forgotten, the darkest time in Germany's history. Blankman gave us front row seats to Hitler's rise to power, seen through the eyes of one of his darlings, a young girl he'd taken under his wing and treated as a favorite niece. But the events in Prisoner of Night and Fog took Gretchen away from the man she knew as Uncle Dolf, and in Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke, the two are bitter enemies, and Gretchen is sure she'd be killed on sight.

Forced to leave her comfortable life in Oxford and return to Germany with Daniel, Gretchen is forced to face the demon from her past, the man she once loved deeply and trusted implicitly. This time, with her eyes wide open, she hopes to uncover the Nazi Party's many conspiracies and stop Hitler's rise to absolute power.

Unfortunately, with the distance between Gretchen and Hitler, the book has lost some of its allure. We still see actual historical events, but this time we view them from afar, as would anyone else. We are not privy to insider information, not anymore, which means that we've lost our chance to learn more about the deterioration of his psyche. There's still plenty to admire about the book, but that part, the part I admired most in Prisoner of Night and Fog, is all but gone.

Of course, the events in 1933 Berlin are still thoroughly researched and presented in a wonderful blend of fact and fiction, which makes this book highly educational as well as entertaining. The work Blankman has finally put before us is impeccable. She did her job and she did it well, finding the perfect balance between history, fiction and character development.

We left Gretchen and Daniel in a very good place last time, but while life seemed to be looking up for Gretchen, Daniel has had a far more difficult time. Although he was safe, Oxford hasn't been kind to him as everything that made him the extraordinary boy Gretchen fell in love with was roughly taken away. Friendless and unable to be a proper journalist, he spent his days in sadness and loneliness, but was determined to hide it from his girlfriend. Going back to Germany brings light to their difficulty, and in *Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke*, their uncertain future causes a substantial rift between them. Nevertheless, our two darlings never turn their back on each other and they constantly work in perfect sync to bring down the Nazi Party.

Minor faults aside, *Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke* is a perfect conclusion to this story. Blankman set the bar pretty high, but she was more than up to the challenge. I can't wait to see what she'll give us next.

Alyssa says

Review posted on The Eater of Books! blog

Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke by Anne Blankman

Book Two of the *Prisoner of Night and Fog* series

Publisher: Balzer + Bray

Publication Date: April 21, 2015

Rating: 3 stars

Source: eARC from Edelweiss

Summary (from Goodreads):

The girl known as Gretchen Whitestone has a secret: She used to be part of Adolf Hitler's inner circle. More than a year after she made an enemy of her old family friend and fled Munich, she lives with a kindly English family, posing as an ordinary German immigrant, and is preparing to graduate from high school. Her love, Daniel Cohen, is a reporter in town. For the first time in her life, Gretchen is content.

But then, Daniel gets a telegram that sends him back to Germany, and Gretchen's world turns upside-down. And when she receives word that Daniel is wanted for murder, she has to face the danger she thought she'd escaped-and return to her homeland.

Gretchen must do everything she can to avoid capture and recognition, even though saving Daniel will mean consorting with her former friends, the Nazi elite. And as they work to clear Daniel's name, Gretchen and Daniel discover a deadly conspiracy stretching from the slums of Berlin to the Reichstag itself. Can they dig up the explosive truth and get out in time-or will Hitler discover them first?

What I Liked:

I liked this one, but unfortunately for me, I didn't like it as much as I'd hoped, as much as I'd liked *Prisoner of Night and Fog*. I wasn't really feeling the first half of the book, and while things definitely picked up in the second half of the book, I didn't love what was happening. Nevertheless, I thought this book was a decent sequel, and I'll most likely be reading the third novel in the series.

This novel starts with Gretchen - now Gretchen Whitestone - living in England, with a gentleman Alfred and his family. They treat her like she's their daughter, despite being with them for only seventeen months, from Germany. Daniel works in England at a newspaper (or post, or something like that), but he's miserable. He's always wanted to go back to Berlin, even though he can't. But when he gets word that a relative, Aaron, has been killed, Daniel goes back to Germany - and naturally, Gretchen is right behind him. But Daniel is a wanted man in Germany, framed for the murder of a young prostitute girl. Together, Gretchen and Daniel hunt down evidence to clear Daniel's name, but it's not so easy with conspiracies and raids and Nazis left and right.

The first half was entirely too slow for me, and to be honest, I found the plot to be a bit forced. Obviously, the author needs some sort of push, a plot twist, in order to send Gretchen and Daniel back to Germany. It's a legitimate push, but I thought it felt a bit forced. Historically speaking, it made sense, and could very well have happened, but like I said - forced.

The second half was a product of the first half and its forcefulness, but it seemed to retain some of the high stakes, heart-pounding thrill that *Prisoner of Night and Fog* had. In the first half, Daniel and Gretchen return to Germany, and they're on the run, because Daniel is a wanted man. They find the house that the prostitute had been staying at, and attempt to find the girl's belongings. But they're caught, and a gang takes them. But the gang is apparently a ring of men looking for justice (or something), and keep Daniel and Gretchen on the hunt for the prostitute's things, to clear Daniel's name. There is also a connection with Hitler and several of the officials under his thumb.

I found that whole thing (with the rather nice gang) to be completely unbelievable and unrealistic, but that's just me. More on that later. The second half picked up a bit, and there was plenty of action and thrill. There were so many times when Gretchen and Daniel were separated, and I couldn't turn pages quickly enough. Gretchen does indeed have to face Hitler again, whether she likes it or not.

The romance is in the background, and I liked it, especially for a sequel novel. Gretchen and Daniel are not a perfect couple, and are often plagued with insecurities about the future. Daniel hates living in England, but Gretchen doesn't want to live in Germany. Both cannot live without the other, but both are not comfortable in one place or the other. The romance was one thing that solidly worked for me in this book.

Overall, I liked this book, but I didn't love it. This historical time period greatly frightens me, and sometimes I wonder if I should have ever picked this series up to begin with. But I'm glad I did. I can't wait to see how *Blankman* wraps things up!

What I Did Not Like:

As mentioned above, I didn't like the first half of the book. It was boring, it was slow, it didn't seem right to me. The plot points seemed forced, like something was literally being shoved into the story in order to move it along. We know Gretchen and Daniel have to find their way back in Germany somehow, but I wasn't entirely convinced by how it was done.

I also was not believing the part after Daniel and Gretchen get caught in Fraulein Fleischer's office, in which an Iron First ring or something takes Gretchen and Daniel, and spares them. The ring allows them to continue looking for the real murderer of the prostitute. Neither Daniel nor Gretchen are hurt in this whole process. I find this hard to believe, even if the gang had a political motive. Somehow, it was too lucky and too convenient.

There were times when Gretchen bothered me so much. There are specific instances that I want to name, but that would be spoiling things, and I don't want to do that. But, there were other times when I was really cheering for Gretchen. This book is written in third person limited (to Gretchen), so it's not always clear what Gretchen is thinking. Sometimes, I wanted to slap her and tell her to get a hold of herself. She panics a lot, and there is no room for panic in war.

There is a lot less of Hitler in this book, which is to be expected, since Gretchen isn't living around him anymore. This can be a good thing and a bad thing. I personally wanted to see more of him in this book, because he's creepy and an strangely interesting character, but that's just me. He is present at the climax of the book, making a short appearance.

In any case. There were things I disliked, there were things I liked. This one gets a solid three stars.

Would I Recommend It:

If you enjoyed the first book, definitely read this sequel! It's an adequate sequel, certainly not the worst sequel possible. If you haven't read the first book, perhaps wait until the third book is published. Or skip the series. It's a powerful series, but not one for everyone, that's for sure. I don't generally like historical fiction of the twentieth century, but this series is okay!

Rating:

3 stars. Not enough for me to dislike the book, but not enough for me to sing its praises. I'll be reading the third book (hopefully), to know how it all goes down! I'm very familiar with this time period in history, so I'm curious as to how Blankman will end this series, especially in terms of the historical connection.

Irshad says

Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke by Anne Blankman - 4.5/5 stars

Alright, I'll admit it! Historical fiction is officially my favorite genre and I loved the way the author added all these fictitious elements in the book to make the plot extremely action packed!

In the conclusion to this epic duology, Gretchen and Daniel must return to Germany after their near escape from Hitler in the first book. They managed to escape the grueling tortures that were in their way and escaped to England where Gretchen found a real *family*. They treated her like one of their own and sent her to school to pursue her dreams of being a psychoanalyst. Her passion in this field was sparked after the discovery she made back in Germany when she was in love with the forbidden **Jew**.

After the tragedy that struck Daniel, he leaves for Germany, leaving his love behind. The break in their communications made her anxious and she made the bold decision to head to Germany to prove her beau's

innocence. She knew what dangers lurked if she set foot in her homeland. She knew how Hitler wanted her dead for her betrayal and the destruction of her pure Aryan blood.

But even her own death did not phase this brave protagonist to make the journey back to her homeland to aide in the investigation of the death of a prostitute. The progression of the plot was amazing and had always kept me on edge. It was extremely hard to put this book down.

Characters:

There were several new characters that were introduced in this book which was a blessing and also the recurrences of some familiar characters like Eva and Gretchen's mother. The reunion with her own mother was appalling. I did not expect her mother to have gone such hardships and losses in such a short period of separation from her daughter. The way Gretchen and her mother exchanged words were cold and it was obvious that they could not overcome their current situations to the point of agreement.

The reunion between former best friends was also beautiful and sad at the same time. A *beautiful disaster* so to say. The way they embraced each other and the care they had for one another is the epitome of friendship.

We are also blessed with new characters who sky rocketed this book's plot above and beyond. I loved the addition of Friedrich and Brigit who were rescuers and helpers in providing proof of Daniel's innocence.

Writing:

The writing was clear and precise and extremely focused. I loved how the author took time to research on the actual history before adding in the fictitious elements. Bravo to that Anne Blankman. The plot was detailed and the flow of the plot was great. I enjoyed the author's interpretation and creativity in this novel. No complaints at all.

Recommendations:

HELL YES! I'd recommend anyone to pick up this duality and indulge in its awesomeness.

Katherine says

***"Dictators ride to and fro on tigers from which they dare not dismount. And the tigers are getting hungry."*- Winston Churchill**

Setting: Oxford, England; Munich, Germany and Berlin, Germany; 1934

Coverly Love?: Fun fact; the model on the cover is also the photographer!! And her self-portrait is actually quite nice. However, I'm not a big fan of extreme close-ups of faces, if you know what I mean. I don't want to see all the pores of your skin and the red lines in your eyes. So while the model/photographer herself is very pretty, this cover just doesn't appeal to me.

Plot: It's been a year and a half since Gretchen and Daniel have fled Munich, Germany. Now living in Oxford, England with a kindly English doctor, Gretchen slowly starts to have some much needed peace and happiness in her life. Unfortunately, her life becomes completely shattered when Daniel receives a telegram

from his cousins, forcing him to go back to Germany. And while he expects the newly formed Nazi party to wait for him and give him a not so warm welcome, he never expects to be accused of murder. Fearing for his safety, Gretchen makes the gutsy decision to head back to Germany and help Daniel clear his name. But it's not as easy as it sounds. Gretchen was once Adolf Hitler's closest companion, and her supposed betrayal of the Nazi Party and falling in love with a Jew is an unforgivable act. And once Hitler finds out she's there too, he'll stop at nothing to destroy her. Will Gretchen and Daniel be able to clear his name? And most importantly, will they make it out of Germany alive?

WOW. And I thought the first book was amazing. One of my most anticipated releases of this year, I never expected the sequel to be even better than the first installment. With just as much romance and action, there's never a dull moment. Anne Blankman manages to capture the claustrophobic and palpable terror Gretchen and Daniel feel as they try to stay one step ahead of the Nazi's. It's almost like their old enemies are standing directly behind them, and while you can't explicitly see them, you can almost feel them breathing down their necks.

Characters: Gretchen has grown leaps and bounds from when we first saw her in *Prisoner of Night and Fog*. She's no longer the young Nazi girl blinded by adoration for the Nazi party and her former beloved Uncle Dolf. No; she's become harder, less likely to be swayed in her opinion. She's willing to do anything to save the ones she loves, but most importantly, she's willing to do anything to bring down the person and the political party that not only ruined her life, but will ruin the lives of thousands of others. Gretchen not only wants justice for Daniel, but for Monika, the murdered girl. While she does have the tendency to act before she thinks, her bravery knows no boundaries.

Daniel Cohen (aka the best boyfriend EVER) still can't seem to catch a break. While he's with Gretchen and safe in England, he's extremely unhappy and lonely with his new life. Things get infinitely worse when he's forced to go back to Germany when his cousin dies, and he's later accused by the Nazi's of murder. Top it off with the fact that he has a crippled left arm from the beating from the first book, and we have the potential ingredients for an Angry Daniel. But Daniel never becomes angry. He never blames Gretchen for what happens, even when his family does. He wants more than anything to take down the Nazi party and become the star reporter he dreams of becoming. If I were to sit here and write down all the things that make Daniel Cohen pretty much the most awesome male protagonist in the universe, we'd be here forever. So I'll just end it with this... he's amazing.

I probably shouldn't mention this, but Adolf Hitler is back, and he's as terrifying as ever. I get chills just typing this about him. So we'd best stop.

Pros: Umm, everything is a logical answer, right? RIGHT?

Cons: The author put Gretchen and Daniel through the ringer in this book. Towards the end, it got to be so bad that I wondered when the heck she was going to give them a break. They got beat up so much that by the time we reach the third book, they'll be pulps!!

Another thing that kind of (slightly) annoyed me was the back and forth between Gretchen and Daniel. The main dialogue between them was pretty much the same every time they opened their mouths; "Gretchen, don't endanger your life", "Daniel, don't go", etc. etc. Not enough to affect the rating of the book, but enough to where it got to be a bit bothersome. Another minor thing I have to complain about is the non-fleshed out secondary characters. They seemed more like background noise than actual people.

Love Triangle?: Nope!! Gretchen is completely and utterly devoted to Daniel, and he to her.

Instalove?:Nope! The romance is a continuation from the first book.

A Little Romance?:I can honestly say without a doubt in my mind that Daniel is the ultimate book boyfriend. He doesn't try and hold Gretchen back from doing the right thing, and he's so caring, kind and considerate. And you have to admire an author for creating as many romantic moments for them, considering their dire situation. Most importantly, the author showed us a relationship that was past those shiny, magical few months where you think everything about your other half is perfect. What makes Gretchen and Daniel unique among YA couples is their maturity levels. More than anything, they just want the other person to be happy, even if it means breaking up and allowing the other person to pursue their dreams. THAT, my friends, is love right there.

As a couple, Gretchen and Daniel are absolutely adorable. I haven't shipped a couple this hard since Jasper and Connie from the Jasper Dent trilogy. I've never wanted a couple to stay together as much as I want these two to stick together. I swear if something happens to Daniel in the final book (and my gut is telling me something probably will), I WILL RAGE.

Conclusion:Book series like this one makes waiting for the final installment absolute torture. The first book was along the lines of "Hmm, things don't seem right, and shit might hit the fan." This book was more along the lines of "Yeah, there's going to be a problem and shit will hit the fan if no one listens". So I think it's safe to assume that the final book will be "Oh crap, shit IS hitting the fan and we're all gonna die." Will I be able to handle it? Barely. Will Gretchen and Daniel be able to handle it? They better.

Will I be tuning to find out? Absolutely.

Read This!:Have you read the first book yet,Prisoner of Night and Fog? Have you, have you, **HAVE YOU??** Because if you haven't, you totally should. So I'll just be waiting right here for you to read it. No really, I'll be waiting. And by waiting, I mean breathing down the back of your neck waiting for you read it. ;)

Elena says

I didn't know this was a duology. :D I will miss these characters, but I couldn't be more happy right now!
