



## Broken Dreams

*Rissa Blakeley*

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## **Broken Dreams** Rissa Blakeley

Elaina Cooper's world was turned upside down on what was supposed to be the happiest day of her life. She was about to marry Henry Daniels, the man of her dreams -- or so she thought. Just as she was to walk down the aisle, screams pierced the air.

In the days that followed, questions lingered in Elaina's mind. Why did Henry seem to know so much about what was happening? And why did she feel like he was keeping secrets from her? Henry knew that his haunted past would eventually catch up to him...in more ways than one. Through all of this, he must face his demons, and Elaina must decide whether she can accept who he is. Henry is determined to fight to the very end to make their sexy, mercurial relationship work no matter what staggers in their path.

Along with their ragtag band of survivors, they must travel south to face Henry's fears. There will be joys and loss but, in the end, is love enough to hold them together?

## **Broken Dreams Details**

Date : Published April 27th 2014 by self (first published April 21st 2014)

ISBN :

Author : Rissa Blakeley

Format : ebook 634 pages

Genre : Horror, Zombies, Science Fiction, Romance, New Adult

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## From Reader Review Broken Dreams for online ebook

### Sharon Mariampillai says

I received a copy from the author, in exchange for an honest review.

This was an interesting read. I think what made me want to review this book was that it was a paranormal dystopian. The characters were okay. I really liked Henry out of all of the characters. I thought he was the best character. He was attractive, and there was just something about him. I hope to see what happens to his character and the other characters. The story was very interesting. However, it was slow paced and it was boring at times. It did pick up because I was enjoying it more and more as the book went on. I really enjoyed this read. I hope book 2 is better than this one. I can't wait to read the second book. Overall, a great read.

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### Brenda says

Henry Daniels went through Hell growing up, but it made him strong and he survived. Nothing could break him. Until he met Elaina. The black haired beauty held his heart and soul in the palm of her hand and held the power to bring him to his knees. And she loved him just as greatly.

Their wedding day should have been perfect, and it would have been....until the zombie apocalypse began.

Yep, you read that right. The zombie-freaking-apocalypse. What starts out as a typical boy meets girl, they fall in love, get married, and live happily ever after, completely jumps the tracks and turns into a horror movie gore fest that strains the bonds of friendship, of family, and love.

This is a massive book to read, but don't let the size scare you away; it's also a fast as hell roller coaster ride that leaves you raging, crying, cheering, and sometimes laughing out loud. Oh and let's not forget the SEX SCENES!!! Holy crap!!! Rissa Blakely sets the pages of Broken Dreams on fire the the heat and passion between Henry and Elaina!!!!

The side characters and storyline are perfect for this book, and Rissa does a fantastic job of really dragging you into the story, even when you're not quite sure you want to ride along as the characters go to some seriously scary, dark places.

I enjoyed this book IMMENSELY, and would recommend it to anyone who needs a break from the 'typical' romance novel!!!

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### Mary Mooney says

I received a copy of this book to read and review for Wicked Reads, so here it is. After reading the synopsis, I was not expecting this story line. Liam's past broke my heart. He was being trained for a job and then beaten on a regular basis because he questioned those in charge. When he was sent to the United States to do the job, he began to have second thoughts. And after meeting and falling in love with Elaina, he changed his mind completely. But on their wedding day all hell broke loose. People were dying but were coming back as zombies. The story follows Henry/Liam, Elaina, Claire, Nick and Sophie, a fellow trainee of Henry's, from the upper east coast all the way to North Carolina where Gunther is suppose to be. They will run into undead,

scared survivors and others that will kill them just to take their supplies and vehicle. There is a lot going on and will keep you glued to each page just to see what happens next. This is a first for me by Rissa Blakeley and I really enjoyed it even though I am not a fan of zombie stories. The story is a long one, over 600 pages, but I feel it is worth the time to read it. Can't wait for more.

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## Heather says

Broken Dreams is unlike any other book I have read. I don't want to give away anything that isn't in the blurb, so forgive me if I am evasive, but I hate it when reviews give away things that I didn't know from what the author shared when telling us about their book.

This is an excellent debut from Rissa Blakely. I am one of those people who believe that the longer the book is, the better it is for me. 675 pages made me extremely happy. I read this in two day, I was completely pulled into the story that is Broken Dreams, a tale about surviving, about love even when there are humongous obstacles in the path, about being broken and patching yourself together to survive another day, and about friendships and what they can survive.

Broken Dreams is full of action and has quite a bit of gore, which I loved. It kept the book moving and made me want to know what was going to happen next. What can these people survive? What is going to be the breaking point? It is not just about Elaina and Henry (their hot scenes together are incredibly steamy for those who look for that mixed in amongst their adventure), there is a whole group of friends trying to make it: Nick, Claire, Thomas, Sophie, and more that we come to meet as we go along this journey, each one playing their own integral role.

The only critique I have is that I wish there was more ... I don't know what word I want ... just more to the slower scenes, the conversations that weren't arguments or full of adrenaline because they were fighting for their lives, they didn't have that same level of energy, that same pull for me as the rest of the book. Do not get me wrong, they still were great scenes, they just felt a little bit flatter to me compared to the rest of the book.

Going through Henry's past, bit by bit in the book was heart wrenching, hearing secrets come out in little pieces here and there added so much more intrigue to the plot and kept me guessing. You do not know which way Rissa is going to turn in Broken Dreams. This is one of those books where you don't even try to guess ahead after the first couple of secrets come out because you realize that she is one step ahead of you at every turn.

All in all excellent book and a really great start to what promises to be an amazing series. I cannot wait to read the next one.

## Jen is a book hoarder says

### 4 Stars

This book was good. It was slow in the beginning but picked up about halfway through. The emotional rollercoaster ride that the author takes you on with one of the main characters, Henry, is well, emotionally dark. It's a journey though that you have to take. I gave only 4 stars because to me there were too many flash backs.

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## Tiffany says

556 Book Chicks was not expecting to like this one...

It's like that sometimes when Authors send you a request to read and review their book. It immediately puts pressure on you to like the book. Then there are times you discover a book that you wouldn't have necessarily 1-clicked on Amazon. And the Book Gods are screaming you were handed a gem of a book darling. LOL! My Book Gods often speak with a Southern twang. LOL!

I don't know if I would even classify this book as paranormal. It is, but it is so modern that you almost forget that it is "paranormal." It is so much more though...it's a story about love, forgiveness, starting over, and living life. And it is filled with action! I was a nervous wreck waiting...

Henry was sent to the US to complete a mission. Henry was trained to carry out this mission and he had every intention of doing so until he met Elaina. Then his mission changed to winning over the woman he loved, who had changed his whole purpose.

I loved all the action in this book...it was a page turner. The day Henry and Elaina attended the wedding, is the same day all hell broke loose in the city. Coincidence? No! Word had spread that Henry had derailed from his mission, but Roger was determined that the show must still go on. And so the world was exposed to the virus that caused humans to become undead. Who would escape the cluster fuck alive?

My holy shit moment...Henry, Elaina, Claire (Elaina's best friend) and Nick (Elaina's brother) were in the store looking for gas and supplies...when one of them is caught by an undead. There is also a kid in the store with a shotgun ready to take them all out if necessary. And when the kid tells them what he saw happened...they called bullshit. "I saw him go behind him after he yelled to you, covered his mouth with his hand, and put a gun to his head. It's true! Then he bit right down on his arm and was suckin' on it like a vampire!" OMG! I know you want to know who was hurt...and I can't wait for you to find out. But you have to read the book!

The suspense will almost kill you...I knew that Henry had secrets buried deep, but just when you discover one secret another 10 pop up out of nowhere. It's like he could never escape his past, and I found myself feeling so sorry for Henry. On top of all his secrets he has now found himself in charge of keeping his friends alive. Broken Dreams is a must read. I loved every second of it and I can't wait to read part 2.

~Tiffany (556 Book Chicks)

## **S.M. Harshell says**

\*\* I received a free copy of this book to read and review for Wicked Reads. \*\*

I didn't know what to expect when I read the blurb, I was pleasantly surprised. 600 pages is a big commitment of time in a book, Broken Dreams did not disappoint!

Broken Dreams is the story about love and friendship but above all else survival. This story is action packed and well worth the time to read. I have stepped away from the paranormal reads, this was a great book to jump back into that genre with.

Can't wait to see where book #2 takes me.

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## **Kristin says**

I'm not sure where to start other than to say, hold on to your socks because they are going to be rocked with this new series!

Broken Dreams is the first book in a new trilogy by Rissa Blakeley and takes you on a journey with Henry, Elaina, Sophie, Nick, Claire and Thomas as they fight to survive what can only be described as the end of the world for them. The book is primarily told in Elaina's point of view, but you will also see things in the third-person as well. Ms. Blakeley also gives the reader flashbacks from both Henry and Elaina's point of views so that you understand both of their stories.

The book begins with Henry. He is in a training facility in England and has been given a task that is to be completed in the US. Henry shows us early in the book that he's a fighter and not afraid to speak his mind or ask questions. He at first refuses the assignment because he's afraid to leave his only friend Sophie behind. Reluctantly he leaves and takes up residence in the US. (I don't want to give a lot away so you'll have to read the book to find out what the assignment is and why he doesn't want to leave Sophie.) Henry meets Elaina at a bookstore where she works and he is instantly drawn to her. He finds a way to meet her and talk to her. Things progress in their relationship and the book then takes you to the day of their wedding (again, you'll have to read to see how this happens).

The day of Elaina and Henry's wedding should have been the happiest day of their lives, but instead it literally becomes a nightmare. One minute Elaina is getting ready to walk down the aisle to her love, but the next there is panic and mayhem. There's blood, gore, screams and scenes from horror films. Nobody can tell her what's going on and Henry is trying his best to keep it together so he can protect her and her best friend Claire. This is where the journey and fight for survival starts for Henry, Elaina and Claire. This is also where Elaina discovers things about Henry she never knew and isn't sure what to do. Even though Elaina isn't sure what information she gets from Henry she can believe, she knows that she loves him and that he will protect

her with his life.

You'll meet Sophie soon and believe me, you'll hate her and admire her at the same time. She's in love with Henry as well and wants nothing more than for his relationship for Elaina to end so she can have him back. You will also at one point in the book feel sorry for Sophie and all she's been through.

Nick will be introduced after Sophie and he's Elaina's brother, and Claire's crush. He's not happy with Henry at all and there will be times where you'll side with Nick and times where you want to tell him to shut it. But most of all, you'll love that Nick wants to be there for those he loves and protect them.

This book takes you on an emotional journey. I'll be upfront about Elaina; you'll want to smack her at first but as you read the book, you see her emotional journey and watch her evolve. She will get under your skin but she's one of the best female characters I've read about. The journey she goes through with Henry and company is not just for survival; she also goes through a journey with herself. She learns that she can be strong when she needs to and that she can be what Henry needs.

Henry will do things that will make you love him but then he'll do something that will make you want to seriously yell at your book. He's got a hero complex at times but you'll understand as you read the book. The one thing that is constant with Henry is his love for Elaina. Even in the darkest moments of the book and when he thinks that he's lost her, Henry loves her. He wants no one else but her and that's something he makes very clear to Sophie when things go sour after her arrival. He is a bit intense at times but he's also got this side of him that is soft and gentle.

Claire also grows throughout the book and the changes in her are awesome. She goes from being the shy quiet girl to someone who can believe in herself. Claire discovers that if you want something bad enough, it's worth waiting for and it's worth the fight to keep it. You will enjoy watching her grow through this book.

Nick goes through I think the toughest journey because he has physical changes to go through. Nick's love for his sister, Elaina, is very strong. There were times where I thought Nick and Henry were going to rip each other apart because while they both want the best for Elaina, they didn't always agree on how that should be done. The love that Nick has for Claire is something he fought for so long and gave into after a very emotional part of the book. You will love how these two come together and stop fighting their feelings.

You will laugh. You will cry. You will get frustrated. You will love. You'll be left wanting more but trust me, Ms. Blakeley does an excellent job of keeping you on the edge of your seat. I'm certain that the next book in her series will be just as thrilling! If you're looking for a new paranormal romance that doesn't involve sparkling vampires, you need to read this book! Join Henry's army and fight for a new tomorrow!

\*\*\*Review has been done in conjunction with Nerd Girl Official. For more information regarding our reviews please visit our Fan Site: [www.facebook.com/NerdGirl.NG](http://www.facebook.com/NerdGirl.NG)\*\*\*

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## **?Stephanie? says**

Title: Shattered Lives: Broken Dreams (Book 1)  
Author: Rissa Blakeley  
Publisher: Rissa Blakeley, 2014  
Genre: NA Science Fiction, NA Paranormal

**\*\*I received a copy of this book free from the Author in exchange for an honest review\*\***

*This review can also be found @ my Goodreads page or TeacherofYa's Tumblr*

My Review:

Ummm. How do I start this? Let me just say that the book was **634** pages. **634!!!** I am just thrilled to be done. Whew! This has nothing to do with the content of the book, but let me just say that I once tried to read a 900+ page book and almost blew my brains out. Sometimes a book is just too long. Just my opinion. (This is probably going to be a long review because it was a long book, btw)

I was not prepared for what this book was, and that's on me. I was thinking YA. It was NA, for mature audiences only. Very explicit. But it in no way takes from the story-telling or writing of the book. It just made me uncomfortable until I got used to it. I'm not a romance reader or an erotica reader, and it times it felt like that was what I was reading, with some science fiction elements thrown in.

Their author even describes her own book through Elaina:

I was trying to keep myself busy by reading a few of the books that were once my mother's. Lightweight, written in a box, soft core romance novels...barf. Nothing erotic about these kissy-kissy, lovey-dovey things. I wanted something with a shifter or vampire and some rather interesting scenes. I tossed the book aside.

**Ok, with that being said, let's get to the meat of it, shall we?**

We have a story originally told from one POV: Liam, aka Henry, has been beaten and abused most of his life. We aren't given much detail except that he's in some sort of program, and the boss, Roger, decides to send him to the United States (from London). Then he meets Elaina, falls in love, and quits the program. On their wedding day, all hell breaks loose as the pastor takes a bite out of Elaina's friend Claire's boyfriend. All of a sudden, it's *Thr Walking Dead* and Elaina flees her wedding. Turns out, Henry has been guarding a virus that has been stolen and knows all about it. (I don't know how much to say without spoiling it for others....and I don't do spoilers, so I'm going to tread carefully here). With Henry, Elaina, Claire, Nick, Thomas, and Sophie (Henry's sexy ex from London), the group goes off looking to find the bastard that infected the pastor and started the epidemic.

Henry is a basket-case. He's originally the sweetest man alive. Then he goes from zero to asshole in 2 seconds flat. Elaina has all sorts of nicknames for these different versions of Henry: "Angry Henry," "Program Henry," "Drunk Henry," etc etc etc. He actually seems more like "Douchebag" Henry for the majority of the book. But for some reason, I felt sorry for Henry. I understood him, and I understood Elaina's love and frustration toward him. Then I realized why: this was MY last relationship to a T. My boyfriend was hot and cold like Henry. He broke my heart like Henry. He had a substance abuse problem like Henry:

Henry was an alcoholic. I turned and looked at Claire. "He's an alcoholic... Claire, my Henry is an alcoholic," I said in a hushed tone as the tears poured from my eyes.

I realized why I empathized with Elaina. And she says something that I always believed, and what kept me in an unhappy relationship for six years:

“That’s what love is. Unconditional. I may not love everything you do, but I love you so goddamned much. You are amazing. You just haven’t realized it yet.”

She's of course saying this to him as he has a gun to his head. My boyfriend used to threaten to kill himself, too. It's manipulation, not love. So I had a hard time understanding all the shit she put up with for this "love of her life."

Of course, in the end it's all about the quality and plot of the book, yeah? It wasn't for me. Yes, I did get to the end, where there is a major cliffhanger, and wanted to know what happened next. But this just is not my genre and type of book: it felt like contemporary erotica with zombies thrown in for fun. I could see people liking it....and I was able to keep reading it without losing interest, but it's just not MY TYPE OF BOOK. So I can't fault Blakeley for writing something that's not for me. I'm just not the right audience for this novel. I would, however, recommend it to fans of this sort of genre. Because Blakeley does something right: she keeps her audience riveted to the very last second. It sucked me in. I wanted to know what happened to the very end. But I just don't know if I could handle reading another book with a relationship like this.

Is It Classroom-Appropriate?

Hell no.

Age Level:

18+. For mature readers. Lots of sex. Lots and lots of swearing. It's rated NA for a reason. (Though I'm starting to wonder what the difference is between NA and YA now. I thought they were supposed to be similar, but the one thing that I've noticed as a theme is sex. Is that what makes them different?)

End Result:

Not my cup 'o tea, but probably someone else's. The book was funny and well-written. Some dialogue was cheesy, but mostly it was good for what it was. I would probably continue to read it in my spare time between books or something just to know how the series ends. I hate not knowing. My rating? ★★☆☆?. ★★☆☆ and a half for someone who likes romance novels/erotica.

P.S. The guy on the cover IS hot. I might put up with a lot if my boyfriend looked like him. But that's the shallow part of me talking.

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## Nicole says

Freaking awesome. It sucks you in and eats at your brain, not letting go until you are emotionally spent and brain dead.

I was blown away at how much I enjoyed it. I'm working on book 2 now. Don't be turned away by the post-apocalyptic or zombie tags, this is more about the romance and the survival story. Henry is so attractive. You feel for him because of the torture that he goes through. His decision to leave the organization is what is the catalyst for the virus being released, but his love for Elaina is his reason for living, so you can understand his motives. At times, I thought he spent too much time crying, but if people were eating each other and you didn't think you were going to survive, you might spend some time crying. His love and unending devotion toward her is so swoon-worthy. Elaina is strong and takes everything in stride. Claire and Nick are great

supporting characters. The story is awesome and will be hard to put down, which means leave a day or two to get through all 600+ pages. The story is smart, sassy, snarky, intriguing, and will make you ugly-cry more often than you will want to admit. These books should come with tissues, wine, and a few chocolate bars to help you get through.

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### **Nancy Brisson says**

This trilogy is written by the daughter of a couple in my yoga class. Their daughter has chosen the pen name Rissa Blakeley and the trilogy is called **Shattered Lives** (Volume 1, **Broken Dreams**; Volume 2, **Awakened Desires**; Volume 3 which is not yet available but it almost due out, **Fractured Hearts**).

These books are “fun fiction” although they also may strike a more serious chord if you are in the midst of a tempestuous relationship, which means that these books probably have the greatest appeal for younger readers. Fair warning though, there is a lot a graphic sexual material and violence in here that is not suitable to young adult literature. This puts the target reader in the 20-40 year old area, I would guess.

Henry falls deeply in love with Elaina as soon as he lays eyes on her and she loves him back just as instantly and intensely. But Henry has some mysterious qualities that Elaina wonders about. His eyes are a bright emerald green for one thing. He seemed to arrive in Elaina’s world as if he dropped in from nowhere for another. He appears to be wealthy but has a job as the head of a blood bank.

This book is full of undeads (not zombies) who have caught a virus that was released into the wedding of Henry and Elaina (the wedding does not take place, at least not then). Henry knows about the virus because he was raised by the “terrorists” who want to use the virus to gain power.

The virus crops up at Henry’s wedding because he is being punished for leaving the group that trained him. Undeads must be killed to render them true dead or they will pass the virus on to you by eating your throat out.

From this point on these stories are nonstop action, human angst, fear, and passionate, desperate love and love-making and moment by moment survival.

No I will not tell you why Henry’s eyes are bright emerald green because I think there is an audience for these books. In fact, I have left a lot for you to discover on your own. I will tell you that these are long books. However, if you are passionate about this type of novel they may not seem lengthy to you at all. I think these books would adapt well as movies.

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### **Carol (StarAngel's Reviews) Allen says**

I have to put this down for a bit. I just can't get into it right now.

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### **Veronica says**

I received a free copy of this book to read and review for Wicked Reads.

I should say upfront this book is not my usual genre but I was interested enough in the synopsis and the chance to read a long (more than 600 page) book so I decided to give it a go. I'm glad I did because it is an enjoyable story.

I like that events in the book followed different characters at different times. It didn't take too long for the apocalyptic event to occur and for our characters to be fighting to survive. The fight for survival for me was the most interesting part of the story and kept me turning the pages.

The author takes us back to times before present day which I don't usually mind. In this case however I did start to get a bit sick of seeing what had happened in Henry and Elaina's past as I was more interested in what was going on in the here and now and how they were going to survive. The same with the steamy scenes in the last 15% or so of the book - I just wanted to get on with the story.

Henry, our main man, I didn't really like. At the beginning I didn't trust him, then he seemed ok and by the end he was just a disaster and I was kind of hoping he be killed off.

Overall this is an interesting story full of action, gore, drama and romance. I think even people like me who normally don't read this genre will like it and people who do read this genre will LOVE it.

Also, props to the editor - it was great to read an independently published book that isn't full of typos.

I enjoyed Broken Dreams and I'm looking forward to Book 2, Awakened Desires.

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## **Julie Ayling says**

I was given a copy Exchange for my honest review.

This is normally not a book I would pick up and read. But I'm so glad I did. This is a lot more than just zombies, this book is about Love, and forgiveness, and family.

Henry who comes from a program where he was raised and basically molded to be what they want he live through hell until one day The program sends Henry and out into the real world to do his job.

Well Henry's out recruiting that's where he meets his black beauty Elaina. And for me that's where the story really takes off the emotions that these two characters go through all the ups and downs hug me a couple times just putting the book down going are you kidding me.. So when Henry and Elaina are getting married the day of their wedding all hell breaks loose. And during all the chaos their group gross but it's not as simple as coming together and working together there's so many struggles within the group.

Will these to survive not only from the undead but will they survive each other?

Can they keep their group safe?

So like I said don't be judging the book by the title for the cover it's not all about the zombies it's more than that..

I would definitely recommend this as a good read..

## **BooksandBeyondFiftyShades says**

Broken Dreams begins by introducing us Liam (Henry) at a training area in London. Henry is given an assignment to be completed in the United States. Henry is adamant about denying the assignment because he doesn't want to leave Sophie behind.

He is not given choice and is sent to the US to complete his assignment. After arriving in the US and scouting his location as directed he meets Elaina in a neighborhood bookstore and immediately drawn to her.

Henry and Elaina's wedding day arrives and what should be the happiest day of their lives becomes an emotional/physical nightmare for both of them. Henry is fighting to keep Elaina safe amongst all the blood and gore.

In the aftermath of the day Elaina learns things about Henry she never thought possible. The battle for fight or flight soon begins for Henry, Elaina and Claire. Sophie is brought back into the story where we learn of all of her struggles and the fact that she is still in love with Henry. Nick, Elaina's brother and Claire's crush only wants to protect his sister from the turmoil around them right now. Henry and the group of survivors have to travel south. Can Henry face his fears? Will the survivors find their happy ending?

I was riveted by this story and could not put it down. I became invested in the characters and their stories. Broken dreams will have you laughing, crying at the same time.

I would highly recommend this book

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