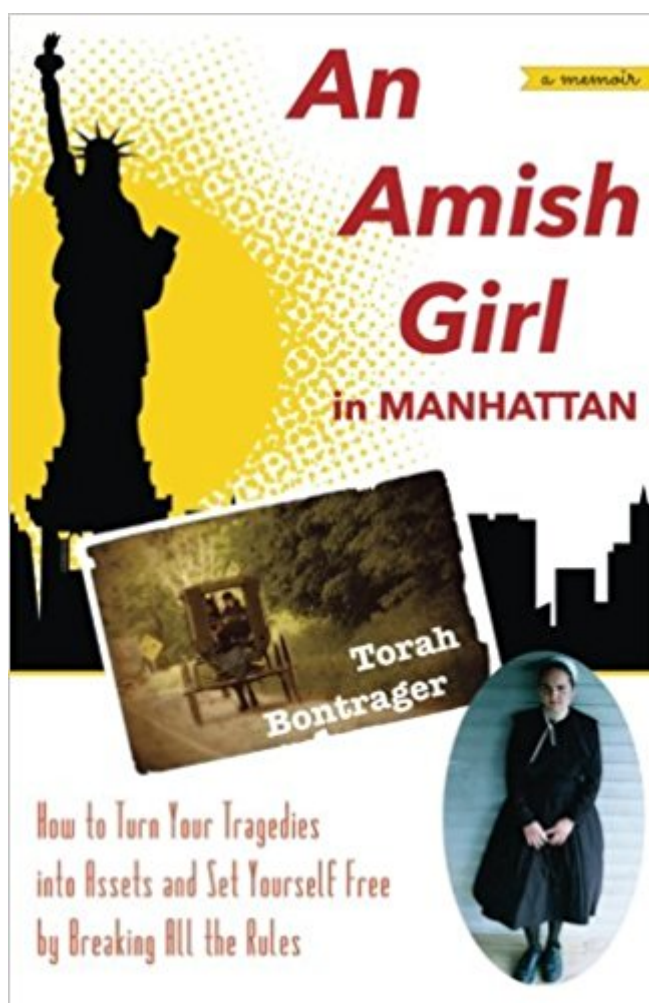


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# An Amish Girl In Manhattan: How To Turn Your Tragedies Into Assets And Set Yourself Free By Breaking All The Rules (A Memoir)



## Synopsis

Torah Bontrager was born and raised Old Order Amish and became the first Amish-escapee to graduate from an Ivy League school: Columbia University in New York City. She grew up with no electricity, no TV, no radio, no Internet, no cars, and up until the age of 10, no running hot water and no indoor bathroom. She learned how to grow her own veggies from heirloom seeds, raise animals for meat, hunt deer in the fall and forage for mushrooms, berries and plants in the wild. When Torah was 11 years old, she consciously decided to leave the Amish church. After 4 years of planning and a failed first attempt, she literally escaped in the middle of the night at age 15 without telling anyone goodbye. The next morning, her parents found the note that she had left on her nightstand announcing her permanent departure. Torah loved learning and wanted to explore the world and experience all the things that the religion prohibited. Her dreams were to go to Harvard and outer space, "impossibles" given her background and rudimentary Amish-only education. Torah gave up everything--family, security, community, the only life she had ever known--in the hopes that one day her dreams might come true. Amish Girl is about the darkness she encountered navigating a foreign world alone and grappling with her demons. It's about her inner and outer quest for truth that took her all around the world. It's about her struggles to make sense of the abuse and repeat rape she endured from her parents and other family members. And it's about how she emerged from the underworld, from her tortured psyche, to create a life of beauty, happiness and freedom. She wouldn't be telling her story otherwise.

Table of Contents: 1. Teenage Torah 2. Escape from the Amish: My Basic Story Â Why I Wanted to Escape Â My Current Educational and Familial Status Â Common Misconceptions or Myths About the Amishâ " Â The Positives of Growing Up Amish Â The Negatives of Growing Up Amish Â The Myth of the "Peaceful, Gentle Folk" Â My First Suicide Attemptâ " Â Searching for an Escape Planâ " Â My Second, Successful Escapeâ " Â What Lies Ahead 3. Held Hostage in Montana...and Wisconsin 4. To Speak 5. Second Breakfast 6. Look at Me 7. The Cat Knew the Way (Part I of a Trilogy) 8. Aborted Snowflakes and A Wheelbarrow for Christmas 9. Grandmother, the Light in My Life 10. The School Bus and the Shack in the Ditch 11. A Car Crash and My First Funeral 12. Freedom in the Skies Â Dharamsala, Home of the Dalai Lamaâ " Â Dubai, A City Built on Sinking Sandâ " Â My Sex Life 13. How to Snort Cocaine Like a Rock Star: Encounters with Alice Cooper, the Godfather of Shock Rock 14. Love Is Not Safe (Ethan, the NASA Engineer) 15. Young and Stupid in Karachi, Land of Bullets and Blood 16. The Buddha Showed the Way (Part II of a Trilogy) 17. My Freedom Is Not for Sale (A Billion Dollars Cannot Buy Me) 18. The Queen of Rings in the Asian South Seas 19. Following My Own Way (Part III of a Trilogy) 20. My "Heroes" Are

Julian and David Bowie 21. Suicide Meditations 22. The Baddest Motherfuckin&apos; Guitarist in Existence Saxophone Goddess 23. Dolls Without Faces 24. On Forgiveness: A Letter to Myself on My 36th Birthday 25. An Amish Spring: The Rise of A New Leadership 26. The Path of the Alone One (Post-Trilogy) \_\_\_\_\_ Amish Girl isÂ a fish out of water story.It&apos;s a rags to riches story. Â It&apos;s an immigration story.â <It&apos;s a tragedy to triumph story.â <It&apos;s a story about traveling the world to find yourself.â <It&apos;s a story for women who want to know that they are not alone and not crazy.â <It&apos;s a story for men who want to know that it&apos;s okay to say "no" toÂ corporate America.â <It&apos;s to let you know that you don&apos;t have to be extraordinary to be Extraordinary.â <It&apos;s for YOU. Â If you are reading this, you&apos;ll find a part of youÂ in my story.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

[REVIEW]"Love this book. Truly groundbreaking! Thank you, Torah!" --James Schwartz, author of The Literary Party: Growing up Gay and Amish in America

Yes, you can have the life of your dreams.Â If you really want to be happy, take back your power and set yourself free.Â It&apos;s okay to be afraid but it&apos;s not okay to let fear control your happiness, or lack of happiness.Â All brave people feel fear.Â All the time.Â I didn&apos;t escape because I wasn&apos;t afraid.Â I escaped because I valued myself and my personal dream of happiness more.Â I was determined to one day be free or die trying. Â I hope that one of the things

that people get from my book is how to turn their tragedies into assets and what I call steal back their freedom, by breaking all the rules. No matter whether you're Amish or not, most people are unhappy with their lives or businesses or other situations. There is always a way to turn the worst of what happens into a payoff, but it often means breaking the rules of whatever culture or society or family that you're part of. It's not necessarily easy to go against whatever everyone else says and follow your heart, but I hope that I can offer tools and different ways of thinking that make it a little bit easier and at the least, let you know that you're not alone.

Wow, very inspiring! It's so sad that the author had to go through so much hardship and that the Amish are not what they appear to be to us outsiders. But the fact that she kept relentlessly pursuing her freedom and go on to earn an Ivy League degree despite so much against her is incredible. Most Amish memoirs are very poorly written but this one is a refreshing change. A lot of the chapters read like fiction. There are some, Chapters 2 and 3 in particular, that are more non-fiction/factual/journalistic. But the rest of the book sounds like a fiction novel. The author's story actually made it in MTV's Brave category several years ago, the best of the entire history of their True Life series. Her story is also on Tim Ferriss' blog.

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