



## The Nightingale

By Kristin Hannah

Reunited when the elder's husband is sent to fight in World War II, French sisters Vianne and Isabelle find their bond as well as their respective beliefs tested by a world that changes in horrific ways.

November 2016 WITCC Lifelong Learning Book Club Read

## Read-alikes compiled by Sioux City Public Library Staff

### Moving War Stories:

[\*A Star for Mrs. Blake\* by April Smith](#) (*Fic Smi*) After losing her son in World War I, Cora Blake is invited to visit his burial site in France as part of the U.S. Government's "Gold Star Mother" tour. She is joined on her journey by a diverse group of women assigned to travel together. A chance encounter with a journalist allows her the opportunity to share her story with the world.

[\*Lilac Girls\* by Martha Hall Kelly](#) (*New Fic Kel*) A novel based on actual survivors of Ravensbrück—Hitler's concentration camp for women, where prisoners underwent horrific surgical experiments. Drawing on over a decade of research, the author tells the story of what life was like in Ravensbrück through three narrators—Caroline, Kasia, and Herta—and how their bonds carried them through even the most difficult of situations.

[\*The Book Thief\* by Markus Zusak](#) (*Fic Zus*) The narrator of this book is Death, overwhelmed by the souls he has been collecting during World War II. Death focuses his story on Liesel, an orphan who begins stealing books from Nazi book burnings and learns to read with the help of her foster father. As Liesel discovers the power of words, she writes her own story.

[\*The Madonnas of Leningrad\* by Debra Dean](#) (*Fic Dea*) Marina, a Russian emigré, is fighting a losing battle with Alzheimer's while trying to prepare for her granddaughter's upcoming wedding. Marina spent her early years as a docent at the State Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, working to preserve the vast art collection from destruction during World War II. As details of her present-day life slip mysteriously away, Marina's recollections of her early years become increasingly more vivid.

### Stories about reminiscing in old age:

[\*Gilead\* by Marilynne Robinson](#) (*Fic Rob*) As the Reverend John Ames approaches the hour of his own death, he writes a letter to his son chronicling three previous generations of

his family, a story that stretches back to the Civil War and reveals uncomfortable family secrets.

[\*A Spool of Blue Thread\* by Anne Tyler](#) (*Fic Tyl*) The Whitshanks are one of those families that radiate togetherness. But they are also like all families, in that the stories they tell themselves reveal only part of the picture. Abby and Red and their four grown children have accumulated not only tender moments, laughter, and celebrations, but also jealousies, disappointments, and carefully guarded secrets that are revealed through stories woven like thread on a spool.

[\*The Boston Girl\* by Anita Diamant](#) (*Fic Dia*) Recounting the story of her life to her granddaughter, octogenarian Addie describes how she and her sisters were raised in early-twentieth-century America by Jewish immigrant parents in a teeming multicultural neighborhood.

[\*Tinkers\* by Paul Harding](#) (*Fic Har*)

On his deathbed, surrounded by his family, George Washington Crosby's thoughts drift back to his childhood and the father who abandoned him when he was twelve.

### Courageous tales of war resistance:

[\*The Paris Architect\* by Charles Belfoure](#) (*Fic Bel*) Lucien Bernard is an architect in Nazi-occupied Paris with little interest in the plight of the Jews; however, when he is offered the profitable opportunity to design hiding places to elude the Nazis, he accepts the challenge at his own risk. When one of his designs fails to fulfill its purpose, his perspective changes as he finally understands the horrific reality from which no one can hide.

[\*A Train in Winter\* by Caroline Moorehead](#) (940.53082 Mor) In 1943, 230 women who participated in the French Resistance were sent to Auschwitz for their various crimes: handing out leaflets, printing newspapers, transporting Jews to safety, hiding Allied POWs, and other anti-Nazi

More great read-alike suggestions on the back



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## Read-alikes compiled by Sioux City Public Library Staff Continued

efforts. Bound together by the values they shared and the horrors they endured, 49 of these women survived to tell their stories of human endurance and the strength of friendship.

they each give birth minutes apart on the same night, but as the years pass, a deeply buried family secret causes their friendship to crack. No one knows why, and no one can stop it.

[\*The Moon is Down\* by John Steinbeck](#) (*Fic Ste*) A small town in Norway is invaded by the Nazis and forced to mine coal for the war effort. The townspeople's subversive acts threaten to bloom into full-fledged violence when the British supply them with dynamite. When important town leaders are taken hostage to halt the violent resistance, the town must decide what is more important: individual lives or the value of freedom.

[\*The Hiding Place\* by Corrie Ten Boom](#) (*940.5317 Ten*) A family of watchmakers, consisting of two spinster sisters and their elderly father, become leaders of the Dutch resistance after they hide Jewish families in their home. When their actions are discovered, they are sent to the Ravensbruck concentration camp where they continue to dedicate their lives to helping those in need.

[\*American Goddess at the Rape of Nanking\* by Hua-Ling Hu](#) (*921 Vautr, M Hu*) When the Japanese army invaded the Chinese city of Nanking during the 1937 Sino-Japanese War, one American woman who had refused to evacuate the city remained. Minnie Vautrin, the dean of a women's college, protected ten thousand Chinese women and children within the walls of the college and aided the refugees in rebuilding their lives in the aftermath. Yet, unable to forget the lives she could not save, the horrors she witnessed left scars that could not be healed.

### Tales of historical fiction about family secrets:

[\*Fire in the Blood\* by Irene Nemirovsky](#) (*Fic Nem*) After many years away, middle-aged Silvio returns to the rural French village where he grew up, drawing him back into the life of his family and village as well as the long guarded secrets of the past.

[\*The After Party\* by Anton DiScalafani](#) (*New Fic DiS*) When her popular best friend, Joan, spirals out of control in their socially driven 1950s Houston community, Cece, a young wife and mother, struggles to intervene before making a painful choice.

[\*A Hatred for Tulips\* by Richard Lourie](#) (*Fic Lou*) In modern-day Amsterdam, an elderly man named Joop describes his desperate efforts to feed his starving family during the Nazi occupation of World War II and reveals how his struggle to provide for them set in motion a horrifying chain of events.

[\*The Two-Family House\* by Lynda Cohen Loigman](#) (*New Fic Loi*)

Two women, sisters by marriage who share a two-family brownstone in Brooklyn in the 1950s, form a strong bond when