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The Nightingale



Synopsis

In love we find out who we want to be. In war we find out who we are. FRANCE, 1939 In the quiet village of Carriveau, Vianne Mauriac says goodbye to her husband, Antoine, as he heads for the Front. She doesn't believe that the Nazis will invade France—but invade they do, in droves of marching soldiers, in caravans of trucks and tanks, in planes that fill the skies and drop bombs upon the innocent. When a German captain requisitions Vianne's home, she and her daughter must live with the enemy or lose everything. Without food or money or hope, as danger escalates all around them, she is forced to make one impossible choice after another to keep her family alive. Vianne's sister, Isabelle, is a rebellious eighteen-year-old girl, searching for purpose with all the reckless passion of youth. While thousands of Parisians march into the unknown terrors of war, she meets G  t  tan, a partisan who believes the French can fight the Nazis from within France, and she falls in love as only the young can—but completely. But when he betrays her, Isabelle joins the Resistance and never looks back, risking her life time and again to save others. With courage, grace and powerful insight, bestselling author Kristin Hannah captures the epic panorama of WWII and illuminates an intimate part of history seldom seen: the women's war. *The Nightingale* tells the stories of two sisters, separated by years and experience, by ideals, passion and circumstance, each embarking on her own dangerous path toward survival, love, and freedom in German-occupied, war-torn France--a heartbreakingly beautiful novel that celebrates the resilience of the human spirit and the durability of women. It is a novel for everyone, a novel for a lifetime.

Book Information

Hardcover: 440 pages

Publisher: St. Martin's Press; 1st edition (February 3, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0312577222

ISBN-13: 978-0312577223

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.3 x 9.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars    See all reviews   (28,952 customer reviews)

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#23 in   Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Family Life

Customer Reviews

"The Nightingale" may be Kristin Hannah's best book yet! Combining history, family relationships and dynamics, as well as focusing on individuals doing what is necessary to survive the horrors of war, this novel draws readers into the story and holds them firmly in its grip from first page to last. It is a novel of finding the courage to do what is right and then of doing what is necessary to do the right thing. As an elderly woman prepares to leave her home of fifty years, she opens an old trunk and retrieves an identification card - "Juliette Gervais". Insisting that her son permit her to take an old trunk stored in the attic with her, the woman allows herself to remember her past life and that of her family immediately preceding and during the years of the Nazi occupation of France. "...For years I kept the memories at bay. I hid them in a dusty attic, far from prying eyes ..." She, however, could not forget. The Rosingal sisters, Viann and Isabelle, are as different as two sisters can be. "...Viann the rule follower and Isabelle the rebel ..." Their widowed father, emotionally damaged by his service in World War I, is unable to care for the two after his wife's death. He banishes Viann from his home when she becomes pregnant and marries the young man with whom she is in love. He cannot deal with Isabelle's rebellion and sends her to boarding school. When the Vichy government acquiesces to the Nazi regime's occupation of a portion of France, a kind-hearted Nazi officer billeted in Viann's country home allows her to overlook some of the atrocities taking place in Europe. Reality shatters her complacency when her best friend, a Jew, is captured. The Nazi officer's comment "...I was following orders ...

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