

#1 *New York Times* Bestselling Author

Kristin Hannah

(AUTHOR)

The Women

(BOOK TITLE)

DATE

TIME

MAR 5 2024

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Book
Club EST. 2019

HOLLY FURTICK
BOOK CLUB

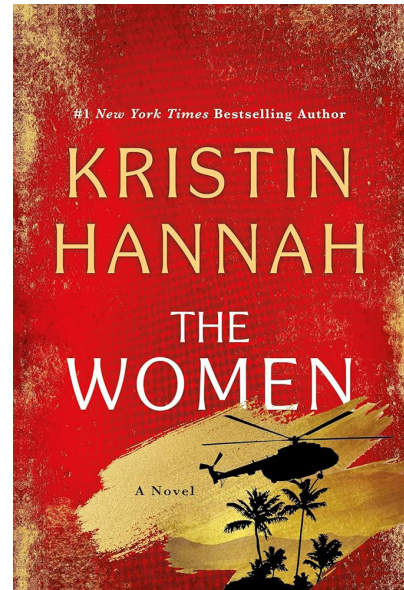
A Novel



Book Club

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kristin Hannah is the award-winning and bestselling author of more than 20 novels including the international blockbuster, *The Nightingale*, which was named Goodreads Best Historical fiction novel for 2015 and won the coveted People’s Choice award for best fiction in the same year. It was named a Best Book of the Year by Amazon, iTunes, BuzzFeed, the Wall Street Journal, Paste, and The Week. In 2018,

The Great Alone became an instant New York Times #1 bestseller and was named the Best Historical Novel of the Year by Goodreads.

The Four Winds was published in February of 2021 and immediately hit #1 on the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, USA Today, and Indie bookstore’s bestseller lists. Additionally, it was selected as a book club pick by the both Today Show and The Book Of the Month club, which named it the best book of 2021.

Firefly Lane, her beloved novel about two best friends, was the #1 Netflix series around the world, in the week it came out. The popular tv show stars Katherine Heigl and Sarah Chalke and Season Two is currently set to conclude the series on April 27, 2023.

Her new novel, *The Women*, about a young woman coming of age during the turbulent 1960’s in America, who joins the Army Nurse Corps and serves in Vietnam will be published February 6th, 2024.

A former attorney, Kristin lives in the Pacific Northwest.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Women can be heroes. When twenty-year-old nursing student Frances “Frankie” McGrath hears these words, it is a revelation. Raised in the sun-drenched, idyllic world

of Southern California and sheltered by her conservative parents, she has always prided herself on doing the right thing. But in 1965, the world is changing, and she suddenly dares to imagine a different future for herself. When her brother ships out to serve in Vietnam, she joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows his path.

As green and inexperienced as the men sent to Vietnam to fight, Frankie is overwhelmed by the chaos and destruction of war. Each day is a gamble of life and death, hope and betrayal; friendships run deep and can be shattered in an instant. In war, she meets—and becomes one of—the lucky, the brave, the broken, and the lost.

But war is just the beginning for Frankie and her veteran friends. The real battle lies in coming home to a changed and divided America, to angry protesters, and to a country that wants to forget Vietnam.

The Women is the story of one woman gone to war, but it shines a light on all women who put themselves in harm's way and whose sacrifice and commitment to their country has too often been forgotten. A novel about deep friendships and bold patriotism, *The Women* is a richly drawn story with a memorable heroine whose idealism and courage under fire will come to define an era.

SETTING/LOCATION

- Coronado Island
- Vietnam and 36th Evacuation Hospital

CHARACTERS

- Frances “Frankie” McGrath
- Jamie Callahan - doctor in Vietnam, and love interest
- Ryerson (Rye) Walsh - friend of Frankie’s brother and helicopter pilot in Vietnam, had affair with
- Finley - Frankie’s brother
- Ethel Flint - nurse in Vietnam and best friend of Frankie
- Barb Johnson - nurse in Vietnam and best friend of Frankie
- Bette McGrath - Frankie’s Mom
- Frankie’s Dad
- Henry Acevedo - Frankie’s boyfriend/Fiance

THINGS I LOVED ABOUT THIS BOOK

- I loved the setting. I was a huge ER fan and I love the war time setting
- I was pleasantly surprised by the second half of the book. I went in knowing nothing and loved following Frankie’s journey post her service.

- I hate books that glorify extra marital affairs. Even though this was present you hated every second of it for Frankie
- I loved the progression of Frankie's parents

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

- Who was your favorite character?
- Frankie has three complicated romantic relationships in the book. Which one did you hope was going to work out?
 - Jamie
 - Rye
 - Henry
- What did you learn about Vietnam through this story?
- Did you see it coming that Rye was alive?
- Did you see Jamie returning?
- We all loved Frankie's friendships in this book. Do you have a Barb and Ethel?

MEMORABLE SCENES

- Rye telling her women can be heroes (pg 7)
- Deciding to enlist - finding a branch that would take her (pg 14)
- Telling her parent she had enlisted and finding out her brother died the same day (pg 17)
- Arriving in Vietnam (pg 26)
- Meeting Barb and Ethel (pg 36)
- Being assigned to Neuro (pg 59)
- When they did their MEDCAP (Medical civic action program) work and encountered a girl with a hand that had been damaged in a sugar cane processing factory (pg 71)
- Jamie asked her to be her surgical nurse (pg 81)
- Jamie being injured and Frankie assumed he was dead (pg 120)
- Meeting Rye again at a party in Vietnam in the French quarter Saigon (pg 150)
- Takes leave in Hawaii, starts sleeping with Rye (pg 189)
- She goes home to a very cold welcome - finds out her parents lied about her service claiming she was in Florence (pg 214; pg 226)
- Frankie believes Rye is dead after she visits his Dad, has a breakdown and moves in with Barb and Ethel (pg 237)
- Attempts to get help at the VA hospital to help her with her PTSD and they tell her there were no women in Vietnam (pg 274)
- Meets Henry at a rally with Barb (pg 299)

- Frankie meets wives of POWs, finds out her mom has had a stroke, and she moves home, gets involved with the POW wives (pg 306; pg 319)
- Frankie meets Henry at the July 4th party, and they begin a relationship (pg 331)
- Frankie get pregnant, and they she and Henry get engaged (pg 346)
- Frankie finds out Rye is alive, a returning POW, and he has a wife and child, loses the baby and breaks up with Henry (pg 362)
- Her mom gives her pills to help cope after the miscarriage, starts abusing them along with drinking(pg 372)
- Frankie and Rye start an affair (pg 389)
- Frankie finds out Rye's wife had a baby and starts to spiral (pg 404)
- She get fired, takes too many pill, almost kills herself in ocean while high, dad rescues her, and then is committed to psychiatric facility where Henry works (pg 414)
- Frankie leaves the recovery program, sells the house, she and Barb find a new place for her to live (pg 439)
- Frankie sets up a women's Vietnam recovery group in Montana - Last Best Place Ranch (pg 447)
- She and her parents go to the Vietnam memorial and she sees Jamie who she thought was dead. (pg 459)

MEMORABLE QUOTES

- “How come there are no pictures of women up here, except for the wedding pictures?” Rye asked. “It’s a heroes’ wall. To honor the sacrifices our family has made in service of the country.” He lit a cigarette. “Women can be heroes.” Frankie laughed. “What’s funny about that?” She turned to him, wiped the tears from her eyes. “I ... well ... you don’t mean...” “Yeah,” he said, looking down at her. She couldn’t remember a man ever looking at her in such a way, so intensely. It made her catch her breath. “I mean it, Frankie. It’s 1966. The whole world is changing.” (pg 7)
- (from protester signs) WAR IS NOT HEALTHY FOR CHILDREN AND OTHER LIVING THINGS and BOMBING FOR PEACE IS LIKE SCREWING FOR VIRGINITY. (pg 15)
- “Yeah. You gotta be careful. Over here, the men lie and they die.” (pg 51)
- The world changes for men, Frances. For women, it stays pretty much the same. (pg 74)
- I imagine it would feel wonderful to be good at something that mattered. That is something that too many of the women of my generation didn’t consider. (pg 88)

- War was full of goodbyes, and most of them never really happened; you were always too early or too late. Like with Finley. She had said goodbye to her brother long after the words could have mattered to him. That was one thing this war had taught her; there was never enough time with the people who mattered. (pg 116)
- What should she have done? What could she have done? Love mattered in this ruined world, but so did honor. What was one without the other? (pg 119)
- She wouldn't be surprised if those death stares would be a part of them forever now. Men staring into a world they no longer were a part of, no longer comprehended, a world where the ground beneath your feet exploded. Another kind of casualty. (pg 202)
- Frankie realized what he'd said and how he'd said it—I'm afraid I'll love you till I die—and the promise planted a small and terrible seed in her heart. I'm afraid. Till I die. They were the wrong words for wartime, a gauntlet thrown to an uncaring God. She wanted to have the moment to do over, to make him say I love you in a different way. (pg 210)
- It was like a time capsule, this yard, where nothing ever changed. The outside world could be breaking apart, but inside these walls, all was calm, quiet, cocktails. Maybe that was why people built walls: to look away, to ignore anything they didn't want to see. (pg 232)
- But time—and friendship—had done exactly as promised: pain and grief had grown soft in her hands, almost pliable. (pg 283)
- She'd learned that people noticed a raised voice; quiet was the perfect camouflage for pain. (pg 284)
- the average life expectancy of a helicopter pilot in Vietnam is thirty days. (pg 289)
- In time, hiding her service and not talking about it had allowed shame to take root. She was never exactly sure what she was ashamed of, just that she was weak, or had somehow done something bad, been a part of something bad, something no one wanted to talk about. (pg 291)
- All those veterans together, reminding each other of their shared past. All the pain, the loss, the lost, the shame. She wasn't supposed to think about any of it anymore. She was supposed to soldier on. (pg 342)

- We're both the walking dead. (pg 379)

- "I don't know if I want to be comfortable talking." "Haven't you been uncomfortable and not talking for a long time?" (pg 423)

War trauma isn't a competitive sport. Nor is it one-size-fits-all. (pg 425)

- Nothing you feel is wrong or abnormal. It doesn't matter what your friends did or didn't experience. You're allowed to be uniquely affected by your wartime experience. Especially you, someone who was idealistic enough to volunteer. You have nothing to be ashamed of, Frankie." (pg 425)

- You have to find a way to go forward, become the new you. (pg 426)