

Bring **The Secret Rise**
to Your Book Club

Book Club Leaders ... contact Judith or Brian to participate in a special meeting to discuss **The Secret Rise, The Secret Hamlet, or The Secret Journey**—the concepts, the stories, and the evolution of the series. We always encourage readers to post individual reviews on Amazon.com. And thank you.

In-person gatherings are possible if you are in Colorado. Zoom is always an option in any state, and most countries. eMail Judith@Briles.com directly to set a date.

Discussion for Book Clubs

The Secret Rise

Did *The Secret Rise* pull you in? Did you want more?

- Were you satisfied or disappointed with how it ended?
- How do you picture the characters' lives going forward?
- If you were to identify the most important theme within *The Secret Rise*, what would it be?

Do you have a favorite part(s)?

- What was it?
- Were you surprised with its reveal?
- What would you like to see more of in the next book, *The Secret Awakening*?

What themes surfaced in the story?

- Have you ever been in a situation where you needed someone to save you?

- Have you ever been in a situation where you did not want someone to save you?
- Have you ever had to step in and help someone out of a dire situation?
- Have you ever had to overlook or accept something so that you could have a relationship with someone?
- Has anyone in a church betrayed you?
- Will the duke continue to press Nichol with his desire?
- Have you ever had to trust someone you barely knew?
- If you are a parent, have you ever tried to hold your children back?
- Have you ever allowed yourself to cut off others you knew well because you felt they had become bad?
- Have you ever had inner voices or feelings that guided you?

Do you have a favorite character?

- Who?
- Why?
- Is there anything you particularly liked or disliked about him or her?

What do you think of Nichol's ability to defend herself and others?

- Do you know anyone like her?
- Do you think it's important for a woman to be able to physically defend herself?
- Was it wise for her to encourage her children to be trained with defense skills as she was?

Nichol's vengeful half-brother is finally taken down. Was it just?

- Did you feel any empathy for Fredric?

- Do you think he got what he deserved?
- Were you surprised with who he revealed was after Nichol?

Nichol's Influence with Duke Richard has increased.

Could she be in danger?

- Will her relationship with the duke damage the one she has with Robert?
- Could her children be at risk?
- Will other hamlets and villagers be envious of the support Harmonie gets?

What risks did Nichol undertake when she combined the hamlet of NoName with Harmonie?

- Will the townspeople resent the added exposure?
- Should she and the others create a Timo Fair in Harmonie?
- Will the road that is planned bring in undesirable people?

Could a young woman in the 11th century be a merchant, mother, and confidant of a future queen?

- How can the two women stay in contact when their countries separate them?
- What could Queen Emma do for Nichol?
- Will men seek to destroy Nichol's presence and growing influence?

Does Archbishop William fear Nichol's power?

- Will the archbishop sabotage Nichol?
- Will the archbishop go behind Duke Richard's back to undermine Nichol?
- What does the archbishop fear?

Duke Richard wants Nichol's guidance. Should she continue to give it?

- Should Nichol trust the duke?
- How could Nichol and the Hamlet create an alliance with the duke?
- What danger could Nichol bring to the Hamlet and to her family with her connection to the duke?

The duke has expressed his desire for Nichol. Will he seduce her?

- Did her response to him surprise you?
- Should she heed Ezra's caution about the duke?
- Should she have saved the duke's life?

When Nichol first met Garlyn, he was caustic. He is now the Mayor and Lord of New Harmonie. Will he allow others in his circle?

- Will Garlyn spend more time in New Harmonie?
- Will Garlyn find a wife?
- Will the new road being proposed between Harmonie and New Harmonie create conflict?

If Nichol didn't have the voice of the *Lady* as a support, comfort, and guide ... would she have succeeded in her quest?

- Does Nichol need the *Lady* in her life now?
- Should Nichol be cautious as the *Lady* begins to communicate with her children?
- Could the *Lady* abandon Nichol?