

Reader's Roadmap

Helping you navigate the world of books



F E242h

Book of the Month
January 2012



Reader's Roadmaps enable readers to pursue threads of interest inspired by a book they've just read.

Half-blood Blues F E242h

Set in Paris, Berlin and Baltimore, and interweaving two time periods, 1939 and 1992, *Half-blood Blues* relates the black experience in Nazi Germany and occupied France.

In 1939 Berlin, Sid Griffiths, who narrates the story in a jazzy black vernacular, and his friend Chip Jones, both African Americans, are members of a popular jazz band, the Hot Time Swingers. The band also includes a Jewish piano player and a brilliant young trumpeter, Hieronymous "Hiero" Falk. Hiero, the son of a French African soldier and a white German mother, is part of a particularly hated racial group in Germany. With the growing Nazi threat, all the members of this interracial band, but especially Hiero, are in danger, exacerbated by the fact that the Nazis identify jazz as the degenerate music of blacks and Jews. After the Nazis deport their Jewish piano player, Sid, Chip and Hiero flee to Paris, where they believe they will be safe. Stranded in Paris during the months leading up to German occupation, they record a song Hiero calls "Half-blood blues." Eventually Hiero is arrested and the others escape.

The second part of the narrative set in 1992 follows Sid and Chip as they journey back to Europe where Chip publicly accuses Sid of complicity in Hiero's arrest all those years ago.

Winner of the 2011 Scotiabank Giller Prize and shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, Esi Edugyan's compelling novel is a story not only about war and its horrors, but also about the power of human emotions and the resilience of the human spirit.

Esi Edugyan



Born and raised in Calgary to Ghanaian immigrant parents, Edugyan studied creative writing at the University of Victoria and has held several fellowships internationally. She has also taught creative writing at Johns Hopkins and the University of Victoria. *Half-blood blues* is her second novel. Her debut novel, *The Second Life of Samuel Tyne* (F E242s), was published internationally. Edugyan currently lives in Victoria, British Columbia.

JAZZ MUSICIANS IN FICTION

Give + Take / by Stona Fitch
F F5462g

1929 / by Frederick W. Turner
F T946n

No Matter How Much You Promise to Cook or Pay the Rent You Blew it Cauze Bill Bailey Ain't Never Coming Home / by Ed Vega
F V422n

Oh, Play that Thing / by Roddy Doyle
F D7542o

RACE RELATIONS IN FICTION

Babylon Rolling / by Amanda Boyden
F B7898b

Foreigners / by Caryl Phillips
F P5585fo

Fortunate Son / by Walter Mosley
F M9125f

The Help / by Kathryn Stockett
F S8644h

Miracle at St. Anna / by James McBride
F M1192m

NAZI GERMANY IN FICTION

Blood of the Reich / by William Dietrich
F D566bL

Every Man Dies Alone / by Hans Fallada
F F1944e

The Quiet Twin / by Dan Vyleta
F V996q

A Jew Must Die / by Jacques Chessex
F C5245j

JAZZ MUSICIANS

The Chitlin' Circuit : and the Road to Rock 'n' Roll / by Preston Lauterbach
781.64 L389

Jazz Jews / by Michael Gerber
781.65 G362

RACE RELATIONS

A Hundred little Hitlers : the Death of a Black Man, the Trial of a White Racist, and the Rise of the Neo-Nazi Movement in America
/ by Elinor Langer. 301.45 L276

Racism in Canada / by Vic Satzewich
305.800971 S254

The World is a Ghetto : Race and Democracy since World War II
/ by Howard Winant 302.56 W758 2001

WORLD WAR II

All Hell Let Loose : the World at War, 1939-1945 / by Max Hastings. 940.54 H358

Maple Leaf Empire : Canada, Britain, and Two World Wars / by
Jonathan F. Vance
971.06 V222



5851 Cavendish Blvd. Côte Saint-Luc, Québec
phone: 514-485-6900
email: reference@cotesaintluc.org