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## **Read-Alikes for Barbara Kingsolver**

These contemporary fiction titles are focused on strong, realistic female characters and exhibit powerful writing. To order any of these titles, contact the library by email, phone, mail, in person, or order through our [online catalog](#). Select titles can be [downloaded from BARD](#).

### **The River Wife a Novel** By Jonis Agree

Read by Cassandra Campbell      Reading time 18 hours, 9 minutes  
Missouri. In 1930 teenager Hedio arrives with new husband Clement Ducharme at his remote family estate. Hedio discovers nineteenth-century diaries of Ducharme ancestors that recount the exploits of a fur-trapper-turned-river-pirate and an Irish adventuress, among others. Commercial audiobook. 2007.

[Download from BARD: The River Wife a Novel](#)

Also available on cassette RC064456

### **Island Beneath the Sea** By Isabel Allende

Read by Erin Jones      Reading time 14 hours, 48 minutes  
Zarité, a former slave in Saint-Domingue in the late eighteenth century, contemplates the loves, indignities, and fortunes of her life. Both tender and cruel relationships unfold, which highlight the colonial contradictions that gave birth to Haiti. Translated from Spanish. Violence and some descriptions of sex. 2010.

[Download from BARD: Island Beneath the Sea](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB071969

**The Robber Bride** By Margaret Atwood

Read by Mary Woods

Reading time 18 hours, 16 minutes

Set in Toronto. At the center of the story is Zenia, who reappears years after she was supposedly killed in Beirut. Shocked by this turn of events are Charis, Roz, and Tony--three women who appear to have little in common, other than that each was once one of Zenia's victims. Their individual tales reveal how Zenia betrayed them, stealing their men, their money, and their self-respect. Strong language and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller.

[Download from BARD: The Robber Bride](#)

Also available on cassette RC037309

**Tapestry of Fortunes a Novel** By Elizabeth Berg

Read by Anne Hancock

Reading time 6 hours, 27 minutes

After losing her best friend to cancer, Cecilia reevaluates her life. She takes a break from her job, sells her home, and decides to go after Dennis, the one that got away. Cecilia also moves into a shared house, where she learns from her three housemates. 2013.

[Download from BARD: Tapestry of Fortunes a Novel](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076670

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR20096](#)

Also available in braille BR020096

**The Gap Year** By Sarah Bird

Read by Jennifer Hubbard

Reading time 12 hours, 31 minutes

Lactation consultant Cam Lightsey prepares for her college-bound daughter Aubrey's departure. But Aubrey falls in love with football star Tyler, starts losing interest in continuing her education, and secretly corresponds with her long-absent father, who abandoned his family for a cult. Strong language and some explicit descriptions of sex. 2011.

[Download from BARD: The Gap Year](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB075284

**South of Broad a Novel** By Pat Conroy

Read by David Hartley-Margolin      Reading time 20 hours, 42 minutes  
Charleston, South Carolina; 1960s. Lonely, troubled Leo and several other high school students form an unlikely but close-knit friendship. They endure crises and successes until their loyalty is put to a final test two decades later, in San Francisco. Strong language and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2009.

[Download from BARD: South of Broad a Novel](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069381

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18480](#)

Also available in braille BR018480

**Prayers for Sale** By Sandra Dallas

Read by Faith Potts      Reading time 9 hours, 8 minutes  
Depression-era Middle Swan, Colorado; 1936. Elderly Hennie Comfort befriends newcomer Nit Spindle, a newly married seventeen-year-old. Hennie, a natural storyteller, entertains the lonely girl by reminiscing about the seventy years she has spent in the mountains while the menfolk mined for gold. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Prayers for Sale](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069184

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18622](#)

Also available in braille BR018622

**What Doesn't Kill You** by Virginia DeBerry

Read by Mare Trevathan      Reading time 8 hours, 30 minutes  
After her business partner dies, Tee Hodges is unexpectedly fired from the company she cofounded. Struggling to pay for her daughter's wedding and other bills, Tee discovers who her real friends are. But Tee's pride keeps her from asking for help. 2009.

[Download from BARD: What Doesn't Kill You](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069065

**Sweet Salt Air** by Barbara Delinsky

Read by Carol Dines

Reading time 15 hours, 33 minutes

Travel writer Charlotte and food blogger Nicole reunite after ten years on Quinipeague Island, Maine, to collaborate on a cookbook. Both hide secrets concerning Nicole's husband Julian, a renowned surgeon. Meanwhile, Charlotte finds romance from an unexpected source. Some strong language and some descriptions of sex. 2013.

[Download from BARD: Sweet Salt Air](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB077222

**The Memory Keeper's Daughter** By Kim Edwards

Read by Laura Giannarelli

Reading time 16 hours, 23 minutes

Kentucky, 1964. Doctor David Henry delivers his own children: a boy, Paul, and Phoebe, a girl with Down syndrome. Telling his wife that the newborn girl has died, he gives Phoebe to nurse Caroline Gill. Over time, David's family erodes, while Caroline's family flourishes. Some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2005.

[Download from BARD: The Memory Keeper's Daughter](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB063403

Also available on cassette RC063403

**A Dangerous Age** By Ellen Gilchrist

Read by Celeste Lawson

Reading time 6 hours, 13 minutes

Half-Cherokee Olivia Hand, a newspaper editor in Tulsa, Oklahoma, confronts her mixed feelings about the war in Iraq as she and her cousins endure tragedies. Companion to I Cannot Get You Close Enough (RC 35282) and The Anna Papers (RC 28884). Strong language and some descriptions of sex. 2008.

[Download from BARD: A Dangerous Age](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067432

**Flora a Novel** By Gail Godwin

Read by Celeste Lawson

Reading time 8 hours, 14 minutes

Summer 1945. After her grandmother dies and her father is called away to do secret government work, precocious ten-year-old Helen is isolated in her family's decaying house with her twenty-two-year-old cousin Flora. Flora cries easily and Helen feels superior to her, but the summer changes their lives. Strong language. 2013.

[Download from BARD: Flora a Novel](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076779

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR 20102](#)

**Laura Rider's Masterpiece** By Jane Hamilton

Read by Erik Todd Dellums                      Reading time 5 hours, 55 minutes

Wisconsin. Laura Rider, who has sworn off sex with Charlie, her husband of twelve years, begins writing her first romance novel. Hoping for creative fodder, Laura orchestrates an affair between Charlie and her idol, married local radio celebrity Jenna Faroli. Some strong language and some explicit descriptions of sex. 2009.

[Download from BARD Laura Rider's Masterpiece](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070184

**Children and Fire** By Ursula Hegi

Read by Erin Jones                                      Reading time 6 hours, 32 minutes

Burgdorf, Germany; 1934. Thekla Jansen, a devoted boys' school fourth-grade teacher, regrets the moral compromises she makes during Hitler's rise to power. She rues encouraging her charges--especially ten-year-old Bruno--to join the Hitler-Jugend, betraying her beloved teacher Fräulein Siderova, and hiding the truth about her birth. 2011.

[Download from BARD: Children and Fire](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074789

**The Red Garden** By Alice Hoffman

Read by Erin Jones                                      Reading time 7 hours, 12 minutes

Fourteen short stories set in Blackwell, Massachusetts, are linked in part by a garden that grows only red flowers and plants. In "Owl and Mouse" lonely Emily falls in love with an adventurous blind man. Some violence and some strong language. 2011.

[Download from BARD: The Red Garden](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073270

**The Hour I First Believed** By Wally Lamb

Read by Mark Ashby                                      Reading time 25 hours

While teacher Caelum Quirk visits his recently deceased aunt's Connecticut farm, his school-nurse wife Maureen witnesses the Columbine high school rampage at home in Colorado--and falls apart. Starting their lives over back East, Caelum learns life-altering family secrets. Strong language, some violence, and some explicit descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: The Hour I First Believed](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068011

**Made in the U.S.A** By Billie Letts

Read by Mare Trevathan

Reading time 9 hours, 47 minutes

Fifteen-year-old Lutie and her eleven-year-old brother Fate live in South Dakota with their father's obese girlfriend Floy. After Floy dies in a Wal-Mart, the siblings flee to Las Vegas to find their father. A mysterious circus performer rescues them. Strong language, some violence, and some explicit descriptions of sex. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Made in the U.S.A.](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067942

**Life After Life a Novel** By Jill McCorkle

Read by Mare Trevathan

Reading time 9 hours, 36 minutes

After her suicide attempt, Joanna becomes a hospice volunteer at the Pine Haven retirement center. Single mom C.J. does the residents' hair and makeup. Their friendships and interactions are intermingled with those of the residents, staff, and neighbors of the North Carolina home. Some strong language. 2013.

[Download from BARD: Life After Life a Novel](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076418

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR19916](#)

Also available in braille BR019916

**The Lake Shore Limited** By Sue Miller

Read by Martha Harmon Pardee Reading time 10 hours, 51 minutes

Playwright Wilhelmina "Billy" Gertz's latest production concerns a man waiting to hear whether his estranged wife survived a train bombing but who is ambivalent about her fate. Leslie, Billy's friend, fears the play reflects Billy's feelings towards the 9/11 death of Leslie's brother--Billy's lover. Some strong language and some explicit descriptions of sex. 2010.

[Download from BARD: the Lake Shore Limited](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB071364

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR19100](#)

Also available in braille BR019100

**The Forgotten Garden** By Kate Morton

Read by Annie Wauters                      Reading time 17 hours, 24 minutes

At twenty-one Nell learns that as a young child she was abandoned on a ship to Australia. When her adopted father passes away decades later, she travels to England to find her identity. But secrets remain until her granddaughter Cassandra picks up the investigation after Nell's death. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: The Forgotten Garden](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070900

**Little Bird of Heaven** By Joyce Carol Oates

Read by Laura Giannarelli                      Reading time 18 hours, 10 minutes

Upstate New York. Aaron Kruller grows up believing that his father killed his mother, while Krista Diehl's family suffers because Krista's father is also suspected in the murder. Krista becomes obsessed with Aaron in high school, until they drift apart. Strong language, some violence, and some descriptions of sex. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Little Bird of Heaven](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069789

**Sing You Home a Novel** By Jodi Picoult

Read by Erin Jones                              Reading time 13 hours, 44 minutes

After years of fertility treatments, Zoe delivers a stillborn son. Her husband Max can't face more attempts and they divorce. When Zoe later marries a woman, Vanessa, Max fights Zoe's plan to impregnate Vanessa with Max and Zoe's three remaining frozen embryos. Strong language and descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2011.

[Download from BARD: Sing You Home](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072862

**The Geometry of Sisters** by Luanne Rice

Read by Annie Wauters                      Reading time 9 hours, 43 minutes

After the drowning of her husband and disappearance of her older daughter, Maura moves her other two children, daughter Beck and son Travis, from Columbus, Ohio, to Newport, Rhode Island, where both Maura's long-ago summer lover and estranged sister live. Some descriptions of sex. 2009.

[Download from BARD: The Geometry of Sisters](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069203

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18646](#)

Also available in braille BR018646

**Rescue** By Anita Shreve

Read by Gregory Maupin

Reading time 7 hours, 20 minutes

Young EMT Webster's strong attraction to drunken car-crash victim Sheila quickly leads to dating, pregnancy, marriage, and the birth of Rowan. When Sheila's drinking becomes dangerous, Webster sends her away and raises Rowan alone. Now seventeen-year-old Rowan is drinking and Sheila reappears. Strong language and some descriptions of sex. 2010.

[Download from BARD: Rescue](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073895

**My Hollywood a Novel** By Mona Simpson

Read by Martha Harmon Pardee Reading time 15 hours, 29 minutes

Classical musician and composer Claire leaves New York for Los Angeles when her husband begins writing television comedy. Claire can't manage their newborn William and hires Filipino nanny Lola to help. Middle-class Lola, who sends money home for her children's college tuition, stabilizes Claire's family. Some strong language. Bestseller. 2010.

[Download from BARD: My Hollywood a Novel](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB071878

**The Help** By Kathryn Stockett

Read by Jill Fox

Reading time 17 hours, 37 minutes

Jackson, Mississippi; 1962-1964. College grad and fledgling writer Eugenia "Skeeter" Phelan searches for a book-worthy project. At the urging of an editor, Skeeter interviews African American maids Aibileen and Minny about their relationships with their employers. Violating integration laws, the three women question their lives. Some strong language. Bestseller. 2009.

[Download from BARD : The Help](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068889

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR19132](#)

Also available in braille BR019132

**Daughters-In-Law** By Joanna Trollope

Read by Annie Wauters

Reading time 9 hours, 48 minutes

England. Rachel Brinkley controls her three grown sons' affairs until Charlotte, her newest daughter-in-law, arrives on the scene. After Rachel insults Charlotte, the three brothers shift their loyalties to their wives and children, forcing Rachel and her husband Anthony to reframe their own lives. 2011.

[Download from BARD: Daughters-In-Law](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074293

**Earthly Possessions** By Anne Tyler

Read by Celeste Lawson

Reading time 6 hours, 39 minutes

Maryland housewife Charlotte Emory goes to her local bank while planning to leave her boring husband. Would-be bank robber Jake Simms Jr. takes her hostage and hustles her away. During their flight, Charlotte recounts her life story and the events that landed her in her present predicament. 1977.

[Download from BARD: Earthly Possessions](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB062138

Also available on cassette RC062138

**Cutting for Stone a Novel** By A. Verghese

Read by Mark Ashby

Reading time 21 hours, 24 minutes

Ethiopia, 1954. Twin brothers Shiva and Marion Stone's Indian-nun mother dies during their birth and their British father abandons them. As revolution brews decades later, Marion, a surgeon, flees to America, where he eventually confronts his past. Some violence, some strong language, and some explicit descriptions of sex. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Cutting for Stone a Novel](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070131

**The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood** By Rebecca Wells

Read by Kimberly Schraf                      Reading time 14 hours, 53 minutes

At forty, Sidda Walker is a famous theater director whose life spirals downward after a New York Times interview implies that her mother, Vivi, was a child abuser. Vivi immediately disowns Sidda, but the Ya-Yas, Vivi's longtime friends, intervene. Sequel to Little Altars Everywhere (RC 36350). Strong language and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller.

[Download from BARD: The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB045768

Also available on cassette RC045768

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR14189](#)

**The Interestings** By Meg Wolitzer

Read by Kristin Allison                      Reading time 17 hours, 26 minutes

In 1974 Julie "Jules" Jacobson goes to art camp on scholarship, where she meets New Yorkers Ash, Goodman, Ethan, Cathy, and Jonah. They remain friends through the next three decades, though Jules leads a middle-class life while the others prosper. Strong language and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2013.

[Download from BARD: The Interestings](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076712