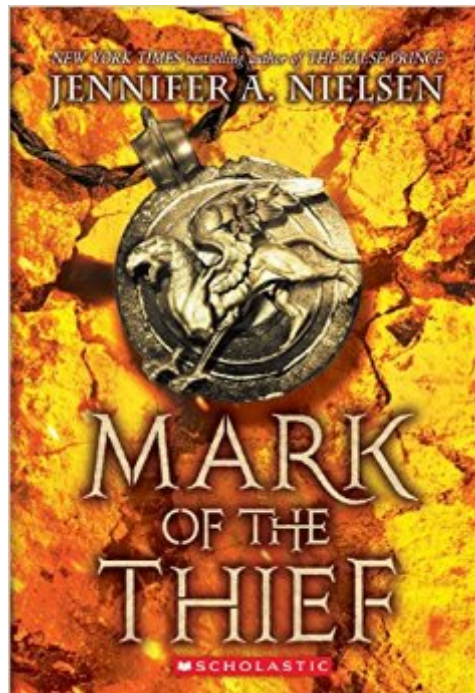


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Mark Of The Thief (Mark Of The Thief #1)



Synopsis

When Nic, a slave in the mines outside of Rome, is forced to enter a sealed cavern containing the lost treasures of Julius Caesar, he finds much more than gold and gemstones: He discovers an ancient bulla, an amulet that belonged to the great Caesar and is filled with a magic once reserved for the Gods -- magic some Romans would kill for. Now, with the deadly power of the bulla pulsing through his veins, Nic is determined to become free. But instead, he finds himself at the center of a ruthless conspiracy to overthrow the emperor and spark the Praetor War, a battle to destroy Rome from within. Traitors and spies lurk at every turn, each more desperate than the next to use Nic's newfound powers for their own dark purposes. In a quest to stop the rebellion, save Rome, and secure his own freedom, Nic must harness the magic within himself and defeat the empire's most powerful and savage leaders.

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

This story is borderline 2 stars. I love Percy Jackson. And Harry Potter. I have a minor in Latin. This book was written for me. Or maybe my children or nephews. I was really excited for it. Magic, and Roman History in the gritty setting of a Roman slave. This book has none of that. The setting is Rome in name only. My first clue should have been how very un-Roman every body except Julius

Caesars character is. And everything else is just as "phoned in." The action is ho hum till the end. I found myself caring very little for the main character and having almost no insight into what his world was really like. The main character is not much of a character. The bad guys are pretty vanilla. The setting might as well be 'generic' ancient times. The story is pretty generic too. You really get the feeling that this story was written and rushed out to capitalize on the ending of the Percy Jackson series. Jennifer Nielsen is a very good author (or was in her previous novels) and this doesn't feel like her previous novels. The whole thing just feels so forgettable and like her heart wasn't in it. Such a let down for me personally. As a lover of the classics and fiction. Realizing this novel is not aimed at me, I tried to get two kids to read this book. One nephew and one cousin. The guy was a 6th grader who's favorite subject is ancient history and incessantly bugging me (in the most lovable way possible) about Percy Jackson and Greek Gods and why are they different than Roman Gods, etc. He borrowed over its Christmas break and finished because his mom made him. He felt like it was a chore and didn't think it was Roman at all and tried to give it back early.

Review: Protagonist: Nic, a slave in the mines outside of Rome, is about to have his life changed forever. After finding a bulla that once belonged to Julius Caesar himself, a bulla which seems to contain a strange power, he finds himself as the most wanted man in all of the Roman Empire. Nic is such a great character to read from. His character development is very tangible and it's was to see how he naturally changes over the course of the book. He starts off as a slightly disobedient slave but over the course of the book starts to not only see himself differently but the world in which he lives in a different light and starts to find his own place within it. Romance: Much like the first book in Nielsen's previous series, The Ascendance trilogy, this book puts no real focus on the romance, but instead only really hints at it coming and has the book focus so much more on the characters and plot. Though there does seem to be some more intense foreshadowing about the romance than there was in her previous series. The feelings between the characters in question are even addressed a few times over the course of the book, though nothing close to the amount that it probably would be if this were a YA novel instead. World-Building: While I wouldn't necessarily call this a mythology book, like I would a Rick Riordan book, Roman mythology does drive this story quite a bit. Though the mythology is focused more on the divine magic of the gods as opposed to the legends about gods and heroes. Everything in this book from characters, setting, and the plot is so richly described that there was not a single moment where I felt that the book even started to drag, it's fast paced and full of a lot of great action and adventure.

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