



## Mark of the Thief (Mark of the Thief #1)

By Jennifer A. Nielsen

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Jennifer A. Nielsen, author of the NYT and USA TODAY bestselling Ascendance Trilogy, has woven an electrifying tale of greed and power, magic and destiny, and one boy's courage at the heart of it all.

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.

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## **Mark of the Thief (Mark of the Thief #1) By Jennifer A. Nielsen Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

From School Library Journal

Gr 6–9—A fantastical alternate history set in ancient Rome. Nicolas Calva and his sister are slaves in the mines outside of Rome. When Nic is forced to retrieve treasure from Julius Caesar's cave, he assumes he is going to his death. But inside the cave he finds a bulla, a magical amulet thought to have given Caesar great power, and takes it for himself. Suddenly, Nic is the most wanted fugitive in Rome. The emperor and a powerful general are after the amulet and they will kill Nic to get it. His only help is Aurelia, a plebian girl who is searching for her own family. With no one to trust and nowhere to hide, the protagonist must decide how he is going to save his sister and get out with his life. He doesn't want the bulla or the responsibility of the magic it contains, but if the magical object gets into the wrong hands, Rome will be at war and Nic will be at the center of it all. Fans of Nielsen's "Ascendance" trilogy (Scholastic) will be clamoring for this new series. This genre mash-up of history, fantasy, and action/adventure is fast-paced and explores themes such as class struggles, familial ties, and the immorality of slavery. Readers will have lots to digest as they quickly flip through the pages to see how Nic will escape his enemies to become a free man.—Kimberly Garnick Giarratano, Rockaway Township Public Library, NJ

Review

Praise for the Ascendance Trilogy

A NEW YORK TIMES Notable Children's Book

A PUBLISHERS WEEKLY Best Book of the Year

A Chicago Public Library "Best of the Best" Children's Book

A Cybils Award Winner

"A page-turner." --THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

"Sage proves to be a compelling character whose sharp mind and shrewd self-possession will make readers eager to follow him into a sequel." --WALL STREET JOURNAL

"A swashbuckling origin story . . . chock-full of alluring details for adventure-loving boys." --LOS ANGELES TIMES

"An impressive, promising story." --PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, starred review

"A fast-paced and thrilling read with twists and turns that never let up." --SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL

"Gripping." --KIRKUS

"Should appeal to fans of . . . Suzanne Collins. . . . A sure-fire mix of adventure, mystery, and suspense." --THE HORN BOOK

About the Author

Jennifer A. Nielsen is the acclaimed author of the NEW YORK TIMES and USA TODAY bestselling Ascendance Trilogy: THE FALSE PRINCE, THE RUNAWAY KING, and THE SHADOW THRONE. She has also written The Underworld Chronicles, a humorous middle-grade fantasy series. Jennifer lives in northern Utah with her husband, their three children, and a perpetually muddy dog.

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Wayne Santiago:**

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**Sharon Wilson:**

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**Frank Botelho:**

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