

## **Mark of the Thief**

**Jennifer A. Nielsen**

**Reviewed by: Rishabh Murali, 15**

**Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity**

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Nic, the main character in *Mark of the Thief*, has always had only one goal in mind: freedom for him and his sister, Livia. When Nic is forced to retrieve an ancient bulla for General Radulf in a dangerous, dark mine, he fears for his life. Yet, he makes it out with the bulla unlike anyone else, and shockingly decides to hide and keep it with him in hopes of freedom. Nic and Livia then get sent to Rome to participate in the blood sports, and barely survive with the help of the bulla. After this, Nic never loses sight of his goal of freedom, and fights everyday to help make sure that goal is in check. Since this is only the first book in a series of books, they leave us at a cliffhanger, and we still do not know if Nic and Livia get their freedom that they deserve.

Personally, I liked this book a lot. It shed light on ongoing and past issues such as slavery and abuse. Nielsen described the characters very well, and made it clear which characters were on which side of the Praetor War. The book was very fast-paced, and was foreshadowing to an extent of what would come in the sequel. There was not much to dislike besides the fact that the owners were treating Nic and the other slaves so unfairly.

For this book, I suggest an age group from 15-25. This is mainly because it is in the point of view of a kid, but there are many real life issues in this book that young kids may not understand. I would suggest getting this book from a library; this is because a good portion of this book is dark, and personally I wouldn't want to read a dark and negative book as a gift.

### **Recommended Books:**

Rise of the Wolf

Wrath of the Storm

The Scrouge

The False Prince

The Runaway King