



Shaman (The Cole Trilogy Book 2)

By Noah Gordon

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***Shaman* is the prize-winning second volume of Noah Gordon's celebrated Cole trilogy. It is as great a reading experience as *The Physician*. A *New York Times* Notable Book.**

Dr. Robert Judson Cole travels from his ravaged Scotland homeland, through the operating rooms of Boston, to the cabins of frontier Illinois. In the wilderness he befriends the starving remnants of the Sauk tribe, who have fled their reservation. In the process, he absorbs their culture and learns native remedies that enrich the classical medical education he received at Edinburgh University. He marries a remarkable settler woman he had saved from illness. The details of how their deaf son manages to become a physician also, despite his handicap, and the story of how the Cole family is sucked into the bloody vortex of the Civil War and survives, makes an exceptional reading experience.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In the New World, young Scottish physician Rob J. Cole seeks the justice and tolerance that seemed missing in the Old. But in Boston in 1839, where he assists surgeon Oliver Wendell Holmes, he finds the same mixture of altruism and evil that informs all human pursuits. Joining the Union Army in civilian service, Rob J. moves to the wilderness of Illinois. Gordon (*The Rabbi*) deftly employs Rob J.'s diary, which is read by his son Shaman, also a doctor, after his father's death, to reveal the Coles's early family years. In doctoring and sheep farming, Rob J. builds a worthy life, marrying the beautiful and haunted Sarah. While dealing sensitively with Sarah's jealousy of his Indian soulmate, the female shaman Makwa-ikwa, and with Shaman's deafness, Rob J. often escapes into the demands and rewards of his practice. The search for Makwa-ikwa's murderer raises such issues as racial injustice, religious prejudice and pacifism. In serviceable, if curiously unemotional prose, Gordon tells a quietly absorbing story that should please a wide audience. Literary Guild alternate.

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From Kirkus Reviews

Gordon (*The Physician*, *The Jerusalem Diamond*, etc.) offers two fictionalized generations of doctoring on the Illinois frontier from 1839 to 1865, covering such medical history as the advent of hygiene and anesthesia. Rob J. Cole, political agitator in Scotland facing banishment to Australia, decides to migrate to the US. A doctor, he lands in Boston and can find work only in the Irish ghetto, making hovel calls for a charity. Disillusioned with the politics of the charity and intrigued with Indians, he heads west, stopping in Illinois at Holden's Crossing. Rob finds his Indians in the Sauks, who have fled the reservation and are now starving nearby. He treats and feeds them, becoming their "white shaman," and eventually Makwa- Ikwa, their healer, goes to work with him. He travels the countryside, snipping off fingers and enlisting household help to pinch off spurting arteries. He removes kidney stones from a recluse named Sarah, who has holed up because she thinks she's dying from cancer. After he removes the stones, she blooms, and they marry. Sarah gives birth to a boy, and Makwa tags him "Little Shaman." At age five, Shaman develops scarlatina and loses his hearing, a disability that makes his road to a medical practice difficult. Both father and son end up doctoring during the Civil War, the carnage of which is graphically described. The story moves too fast to develop either characters or scenes deeply, but it's a good read and has a refreshing approach to the frontier as part of a larger culture, not an isolated place where people did nothing but murder each other. -- *Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Review

"What a book! It's a joy to read. Noah Gordon has given those of us who like good, strong, warm-hearted novels a wonderful gift." —Tony Hillerman

"A good read, and a refreshing approach to the frontier." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"A sweeping historical drama . . . described with precision and unflinching verisimilitude. Gordon writes with the skill and patience of a good doctor . . . powerful." —*The New York Times Book Review*

"Brilliant . . . a picture of America in the grip of expansionist fever and the Civil War." —*Library Journal*

"A rich, sensitive, and inspiring portrait of our collective past in all its majesty . . . a thinking person's Western . . . an alive and vibrant epic tapestry of America's adolescence." —*The Press-Enterprise*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marilyn Washington:

Hey guys, do you wish to find a new book to study? Maybe the book with the subject Shaman (The Cole Trilogy Book 2) suitable to you? The actual book was written by famous writer in this era. The book untitled Shaman (The Cole Trilogy Book 2) is the main of several books that everyone reads now. That book was inspired many men and women in the world. When you read this book you will enter the new way of measuring that you ever knew just before. The author explained their thought in the simple way, and so all of people can easily comprehend the core of this book. This book will give you a lot of information about this world now. So you can see the representation of the world in this book.

Ramona Wrenn:

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