



Shaman (Cole)

By Noah Gordon

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Robert Jeremy Cole, the legendary doctor and hero of *The Physician*, left an enduring legacy. From the 11th century on, the eldest son in each generation of the Cole family has borne the same first name and middle initial and many of these men have followed the medical profession. A few have been blessed with their ancestor's diagnostic skill and the "sixth sense" they call The Gift, the ability to know instinctively when death is impending. The tragedy of Rob J.'s life is the deafness of his son, Robert Jefferson Cole, who is called Shaman by everyone who knows him. Shaman's life is difficult. First, he must learn to speak so that he can take his place in the hearing world, and then he must fight against the prejudices of a society where physical differences matter. As Shaman struggles to achieve his identity, the Coles, along with the rest of America, are drawn into the conflict between the North and the South.

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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. SHAMAN leaves you with that warm and satisfied feeling when you've finished.
Tony Hillerman

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rhonda Robitaille:

Here thing why this kind of Shaman (Cole) are different and reputable to be yours. First of all looking at a book is good however it depends in the content of it which is the content is as tasty as food or not. Shaman

(Cole) giving you information deeper and different ways, you can find any guide out there but there is no guide that similar with Shaman (Cole). It gives you thrill examining journey, its open up your current eyes about the thing this happened in the world which is might be can be happened around you. It is possible to bring everywhere like in area, café, or even in your approach home by train. For anyone who is having difficulties in bringing the branded book maybe the form of Shaman (Cole) in e-book can be your alternative.

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