

## THE LAST JEW by NOAH GORDON:

### Editorial Reviews

#### **From Library Journal**

The impact of the Inquisition and the Catholic Church on the lives of Spanish Jews in the late 15th and early 16th centuries is the subject of this latest novel from Gordon (Matters of Choice). Young Yonah ben Helikes, son of a Toledo silversmith, watches in horror as hundreds of thousands of Jews are given the options of converting to Christianity, leaving Spain, or facing the murderous violence of a population inspired to hatred by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. After his father and younger brother are killed, Yonah wanders through Spain, eluding agents of the Inquisition while trying to keep his Jewish faith intact. He puts his silversmith talents to good use by working at an armory and later gains the knowledge and skill of a physician. As Yonah matures, falls in love, and marries, he gradually puts together the missing pieces of his life and confronts the deaths of his relatives. Gordon is a natural storyteller, and, given the novel's fascinating setting and a more-than-likable hero, this superior historical novel should have a place in all libraries.

*Nancy Pearl, Washington Ctr. For the Book, Seattle*

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## THE SHADOW OF THE WIND by CARLOS RUIZ ZAFON

### Editorial Reviews

#### **From Publishers Weekly**

Ruiz Zafón's novel, a bestseller in his native Spain, takes the satanic touches from *Angel Heart* and stirs them into a bookish intrigue à la Foucault's *Pendulum*. The time is the 1950s; the place, Barcelona. Daniel Sempere, the son of a widowed bookstore owner, is 10 when he discovers a novel, *The Shadow of the Wind*, by Julián Carax. The novel is rare, the author obscure, and rumors tell of a horribly disfigured man who has been burning every copy he can find of Carax's novels. The man calls himself Llain Coubert—the name of the devil in one of Carax's novels. As he grows up, Daniel's fascination with the mysterious Carax links him to a blind femme fatale with a "porcelain gaze," Clara Barceló; another fan, a leftist jack-of-all-trades, Fermín Romero de Torres; his best friend's sister, the delectable Beatriz Aguilar; and, as he begins investigating the life and death of Carax, a cast of characters with secrets to hide. Officially, Carax's dead body was dumped in an alley in 1936. But discrepancies in this story surface. Meanwhile, Daniel and Fermín are being harried by a sadistic policeman, Carax's childhood friend. As Daniel's quest continues, frightening parallels between his own life and Carax's begin to emerge. Ruiz Zafón strives for a literary tone, and no scene goes by without its complement of florid, cute and inexact similes and metaphors (snow is "God's dandruff"; servants obey orders with "the efficiency and submissiveness of a body of well-trained insects"). Yet the colorful cast of characters, the gothic turns and the straining for effect only give the book the feel of para-literature or the Hollywood version of a great 19th-century novel.

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## **SARAH'S KEY by TATIANA DE ROSNAY**

### **Editorial Reviews**

#### **From Publishers Weekly**

*Starred Review.* De Rosnay's U.S. debut fictionalizes the 1942 Paris roundups and deportations, in which thousands of Jewish families were arrested, held at the Vélodrome d'Hiver outside the city, then transported to Auschwitz. Forty-five-year-old Julia Jarmond, American by birth, moved to Paris when she was 20 and is married to the arrogant, unfaithful Bertrand Tézac, with whom she has an 11-year-old daughter. Julia writes for an American magazine and her editor assigns her to cover the 60th anniversary of the Vél' d'Hiv' roundups. Julia soon learns that the apartment she and Bertrand plan to move into was acquired by Bertrand's family when its Jewish occupants were dispossessed and deported 60 years before. She resolves to find out what happened to the former occupants: Wladyslaw and Rywka Starzynski, parents of 10-year-old Sarah and four-year-old Michel. The more Julia discovers—especially about Sarah, the only member of the Starzynski family to survive—the more she uncovers about Bertrand's family, about France and, finally, herself. Already translated into 15 languages, the novel is De Rosnay's 10th (but her first written in English, her first language). It beautifully conveys Julia's conflicting loyalties, and makes Sarah's trials so riveting, her innocence so absorbing, that the book is hard to put down. *(July)*

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## **Aeneid by Virgil: (Barnes & Noble Classic Series)**

**Translated by Christopher Crance**

**Introduction by Sarah Spence**

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