



# The Luminous Heart of Jonah S.

*Gina B. Nahai*

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**The Luminous Heart of Jonah S.** Gina B. Nahai

"Lyrical, shrewd, and daring novelist Nahai...writes with acute emotional and nearly anthropological perception, laser-wit, and deep compassion....With touches of magic realism, extraordinary characters, and a spiraling, multigenerational plot involving fraud, a murder mystery, epic suffering, heroic generosity, women's struggle for freedom, and the clash between East and West, Nahai's mythic, tragic, often beautiful immigrant family saga illuminates timeless questions of prejudice, trauma, inheritance, loyalty, and love."  
--**Booklist**, Starred review

"A riveting tale....Readers will be well rewarded."  
--**Publishers Weekly**, Starred review

"What results is a novel that feels more universal than anything, and an engrossing, expansive epic that charts not only thousands years of Iranian Jewish life, but the brutality of one family's survival amidst revolution and cultural upheaval."  
--**Kirkus Reviews**, Feature on Gina B. Nahai

"One of Nahai's gifts is her astute observation of this community, her own, which she describes with unsparing precision."  
--**Los Angeles Review of Books**

"[Nahai's] novel has an intoxicating and driving rhythm that pulls you right in...[a] beautiful book."  
--**Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles**

"Simultaneously ironic, dramatic, and witty."  
--**BBC**

"An energetically inventive epic...Nahai's boisterous, sardonic, sometimes-lurid portrait of a community and the devil in its midst offers unusual, engrossing storytelling."  
--**Kirkus Reviews**

One of **Jewish Journal's** Noteworthy Books for the New Year

One of **Jewish Woman Magazine's** 8 Great Fall Reads

One of **Publishers Weekly's** Big Indie Books of Fall 2014

One of **Library Journal's** 25 Key Indie Fiction Titles for Fall 2014-Winter 2015

"Orange Prize and IMPAC Award finalist Nahai (*Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith*) returns after seven years with a distinctive look at Iranian Jewish life in America, featuring a Los Angeles-based family hounded for decades by an unprincipled financier from their own community. His disappearance upends everything."  
--**Library Journal** Prepub Alert

Included in *Library Journal's* "Books That Buzzed at BEA" Roundup, the first word on titles and trends from **Barbara Hoffert**, Editor

"With *The Luminous Heart of Jonah S.*, Orange Prize and IMPAC Award finalist Gina B. Nahai returns after seven years with another novel of bristly beauty, offering a distinctive look at Iranian Jewish life in America."

--*Library Journal*, Books for the Masses/Editors' Picks BEA 2014

From Tehran to Los Angeles, *The Luminous Heart of Jonah S.* is a sweeping saga that tells the story of the Soleymans, an Iranian Jewish family tormented for decades by Raphael's Son, a crafty and unscrupulous financier who has futilely claimed to be an heir to the family's fortune. Forty years later in contemporary Los Angeles, Raphael's Son has nearly achieved his goal--until he suddenly disappears, presumed by many to have been murdered. The possible suspects are legion: his long-suffering wife; numerous members of the Soleyman clan exacting revenge; the scores of investors he bankrupted in a Ponzi scheme; or perhaps even his disgruntled bookkeeper and longtime confidant.

Award-winning novelist Gina B. Nahai pulls back the curtain on a close-knit community that survived centuries of persecution in Iran before settling and thriving in the United States, but now finds itself divided to the core by one of its own members. By turns hilarious and affecting, *The Luminous Heart of Jonah S.* examines the eternal bonds of family and community, and the lasting scars of exile.

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#### **James Helm:**

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#### **Palmer Schwartz:**

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