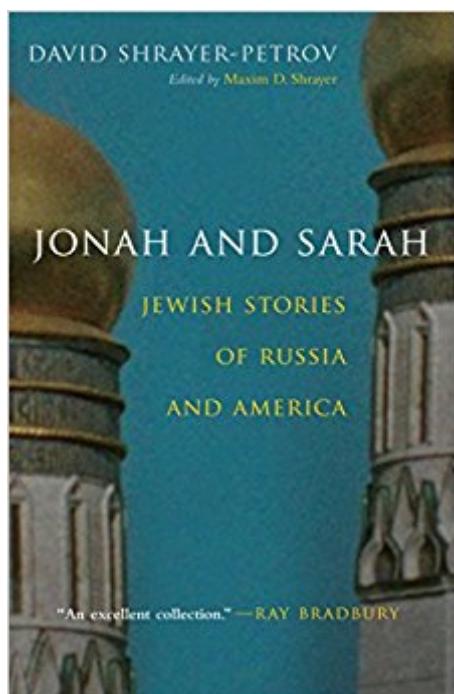


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# Jonah And Sarah: Jewish Stories Of Russia And America (Library Of Modern Jewish Literature)



## Synopsis

From the deceptively simple narratives Apple Cider Vinegar and Hurricane Bob to the surrealist story Dismemberers and the magical tales Jonah and Sarah and Lansky Road, the tempo fluctuates, but throughout, David Shrayer-Petrov seamlessly preserves familiar voices. The stories have a genuine feel of the setting and epochthe Russian stories work as narratives of everyday life, while the American stories offer an accurate sense of an Â©migrÃ©'s alienation. Like all good works of fiction, these stories take on a mythic quality and transcend time and place. Each carries and communicates to the reader an aura of mystery, the enigma of love, and a meeting of Jewish past and present. Whether he invokes lyrical dialogue, gentle irony, or sharp polemical discourse, Shrayer-Petrov shows that he is a powerful presence in Russian and Jewish literature. For those interested in fiction about new immigrants to America or in the psychology of Jews in the two decades before the Soviet Union's collapse, this collection is a must read.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is Shrayer-Petrov's seventeenth book and the twentieth in Syracuse University's Library of Modern Jewish Literature series. The author writes that these 13 stories bear testimony to 16 years of "setting roots in my new country." Almost half of the stories were written before 1987, when he and his family emigrated from the Soviet Union to the U.S. Spanning two decades of Jewish themes and characters, this collection retrospectively showcases about one-third of Shrayer-Petrov's short

fiction. Three of the stories deal with love and marriage between Jews and Gentiles. Others concern such topics as anti-Semitism, totalitarianism, love, and alienation. Powerfully inventive and haunting, these are works of stunning imagination from a profoundly gifted storyteller. George Cohen  
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"A lively and artful set of stories. [Shrayer-Petrov's] sharp wit and deeply moving prose sweep us into ripping memories of a past awash with personal struggle against a fierce Soviet Union and through the strains and expectations of a new immigrant to America. . . Engaging insights, with colorful, unforgettable, characters. . . . A triumph."

I have just completed reading this collection of short stories and am moved by their sheer beauty and powerful message. Shrayer is a first rate literary artist, and it is so wonderful that his author son, Maxim, was able to translate them so the English speaking world could benefit from their aesthetic power. It would have been a shame if Shrayer's stories had not made it to the west, because they have so many compelling and exquisite things to say about being human under extraordinary circumstances. This is a book that deserves a wide readership. Rarely does a work of literature strike as many high notes as this one.

I bought "Jonah and Sarah" based on a positive review I read and I enjoyed this collection a great deal. The short stories are moving and offer fascinating perspectives on Jewish life in the Soviet Union, immigration and Jewish immigrants in America. The translations are superb. What makes the collection special is that it was edited by the author's son and is a labor of love. I recommend it highly. I think it would make a great holiday gift!

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