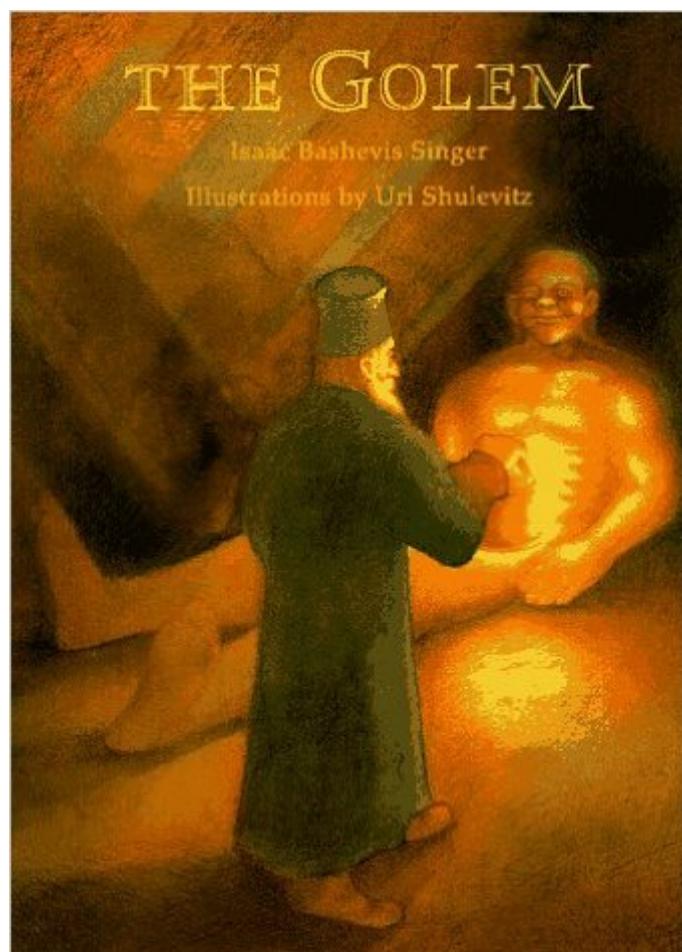


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The Golem



Synopsis

A clay giant miraculously brought to life by a saintly rabbi saves a Jewish banker who has been falsely accused in the Prague of Emperor Rudolf II.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 960L (What's this?)

Paperback: 96 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR); 1st edition (October 29, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0374427461

ISBN-13: 978-0374427467

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 6.2 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (10 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #978,812 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #158 in Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > Jewish #181 in Books > Children's Books > Religions > Judaism #948 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Multicultural

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

The Golem is one of the best known Singer short stories. Its theme is a Golem, a mythical figure imbued with life by cabalistic magic to help the Jewish people in a time of need. This story begins with persecutions on Jews in Prague, which is when the Golem is sent to Reb Leib. After helping the Jews in their objective, Reb Leib decides to use the Golem, with its incredible strength, for a less noble pursuit, which is when the Golem starts to disobey him. The story unfolds with the Golem, a creature made of clay, turning more and more human, with the maturity of a child but enormous strength. The problems mount as the Golem destroys all in his way, falls in love (reciprocatedly) and gets drafted by the emperor. The short story evokes many deep issues, such as what it means to be human, what one should do with unending power, what one should do to preserve the peace, and many others. Though originally a children's story, any adult would enjoy it. It is the type of story that leaves one reflecting about certain issues for days.

This is a short (80 pages) story told in simple words about the plight of Jews in the 19th century and

how a mystical creature saved lives but created some mischief in a small town in Europe...A small gem!

The Golem, as told by IB Singer, is a traditional Jewish mystical short story of a superhuman giant, made of clay, who is brought to life by the most religious rabbi in order to save Jews in times of trouble. And although it is a "children's" story, there are many layers of symbolism to keep adults interested. This particular edition was especially well done. I appreciated the artwork and overall esthetic presentation of the book. I came to this book after reading Michael Chabon's Pulitzer Prize winning *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*, the "Clay" in the title being the last name of one of the main characters, but also the substance from which the rabbi made the golem. Chabon heavily alludes to and borrows from this story, the Golem of Prague, though never quite lets the reader know that this is what he's referring to, almost assuming that the reader already knows about it, which is for most people not the case. So it was especially rewarding to finally read the story.

There is a reason Isaac B. Singer won the Nobel Prize for literature, and it can be found in the novella, *THE GOLEM*. In very conversational, precise language, this is the quintessential storyteller at the height of his full narrative power. A page-turner, for sure.

Great read! Singer makes you dive into Prague and the story about the Golem at tremendous speed, with his unique style while constantly referring to jewels of the Jewish tradition. Highly recommended.

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