



The Image and Other Stories

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Isaac Bashevis Singer has put together a collection of stories covering a wide range of subjects, such as love, death, sex, politics, religious faith, and the illusions and obsessions humans often have regarding these subjects. The characters in these stories appear larger than life and often more real. Those who adhere strongly to certain beliefs, be they religious, political, or philosophical, are confronted by a dilemma that shakes that faith, as in “The Pocket Remembered.” Young writers and dilettantes, caught up in political fervor, commit themselves to issues and leaders but eventually find only disappointment, as in the stories “Remnants” and “Advice.”

Women appear prominently and interestingly in these stories. There are the strong and weak women, the faithful and the libertine, those who inspire love and those who inspire lust. So-called good women go astray, and lost women are found, but, then, the men are equally as interesting. Writers are often the storytellers or those to whom a story is being told, such as Aunt Yentl, who tells the macabre story “Strong as Death Is Love” and the title story, “The Image.”

Like all of Singer’s works, this collection is rich with references to Jewish religion and Jewish lore, and as in earlier Singer volumes, supernatural forces play a prominent role. Many of the stories were previously published in periodicals such as THE NEW YORKER, PARTISAN REVIEW, and PLAYBOY. They are entertaining, thought-provoking stories and should interest any fiction reader.

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