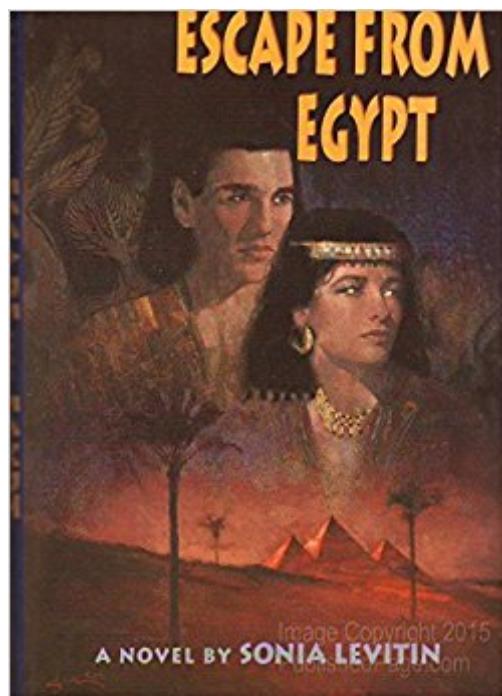


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# Escape From Egypt: A Novel



## Synopsis

The Exodus story forms the backdrop for this carefully researched novel in which Jesse, a Hebrew slave, is torn between his family's wishes and his passion for the half-Egyptian, half-Syrian Jennat. By the author of Journey to America.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Not even the amply gifted Levitin ( Journey to America ; The Golem and the Dragon Girl ) can quite pull off this one, a coming-of-age/love story set against the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. As usual, Levitin's characterizations are superb; here, she draws particularly complex, believable portraits of a half-Egyptian, half-Syrian slave girl and a Jewish slave boy striving to reconcile integrity and passion. But the unusual verisimilitude of her writing may be at cross purposes with the attempt to convey the powerful themes of the Passover story. Taken literally, the mythic qualities of the biblical plagues and miracles shrink ("The raging green-and-gray waters were pulled back and back as if by invisible hands. The sea was raised up into two walls. Now the seafloor lay exposed"). On the other hand, Levitin's exploration of questions of conscience and faith is startling and searching. Nobody in her novel mouths pieties; religious convictions are the fruits of hard and dramatic struggle. Her rigorous approach, however uneasy its combination of the divine and the day-to-day, will spur her audience to fresh appraisals of sacred history. Ages 12-up. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Grade 6-9-Jesse, a Hebrew slave, works for a goldsmith and meets the lovely Egyptian-Syrian slave, Jennat. At home, there is talk of a man named Moses claiming God will lead his people out of

Egypt. The plot follows the Biblical exodus: the plagues, the leaving, crossing the parted Red Sea, and the wandering in the wilderness that follows. Through Jesse's eyes, readers see not only the faithful followers but also the struggles and rebellion, the questioning and loss of faith. The young man is torn, not only by Moses's demands but also between his love for Jennat, who follows the Hebrew migration, and his family's desire for him to marry a cousin. The book ends with a much older Jesse telling his sons about the past as they are about to enter Canaan. The historical background may be familiar to many, but it is given new life by its focus on one family. The strong characterizations help to give readers an understanding of the motivations and conflicts within individuals and between cultures. Levitin gives a sense of the enormity of the challenges and the various effects the messages from Adonai, or God, had on the people. An involving story that will provide YAs with a deeper understanding of an important historical and spiritual event. Jane Gardner Connor, South Carolina State Library, Columbia Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

## GOOD STORY

Escape from Egypt is a brilliant, enthralling book by Sonia Levitin. Set in Egypt during the Biblical story of the Hebrew's enslavement, Escape from Egypt is the story of a teenage Hebrew slave-boy named Jesse. Jesse has fallen head over heels in love with Jennat, a young Egyptian girl, but is betrothed to his cousin, Talia. Jennat loves Jesse, but she has been promised to an Egyptian noble as a concubine. When the Hebrews flee Egypt, Jesse and Jennat have to find a way to be together. Escape from Egypt's best attributes are its pace and the amount of detail. The book moves at a good pace: it does not go so slowly that the reader becomes bored, yet it does not move so quickly that the reader becomes confused. It also gives a nice amount of detail, so the events are easy to follow without being vague. Though I truly enjoyed reading this book, it did have one fault that I found stopped it from being the ideal novel. The plot was somewhat unoriginal. The setting and characters were entertaining, but the "Romeo and Juliet" story of two people who fall in love and can not get married because of race, blood, or station in life has been used too many times to still be considered original. Nonetheless, the setting and characters were outstanding, making the book captivating. In total, Escape from Egypt was a first-rate novel for teens.

A Review by Nena This book takes place when Hebrew's were in slavery. Jesse, a young Hebrew, is in love with an Egyptian girl, named Jennat. He is to be married to his cousin, Talia. He does what he can to see Jennat. Yet Jennat doesn't want to see him. He goes through a lot of danger just to

see her. While he tries to see Jennat his is reminded about marring Talia. Wonder what he is going to do? The beginning was confusing because the point of view is changed from Jesse to Jennat. I had to stop and read it a couple times to get who was talking. Besides that, I loved the book. I was hooked after the first chapter. I couldn't put it down. Sonia is a great writer. I saw the word Egypt on the cover and I just had to read it. I am very interested in Egypt. I would love to go there some day: to see the pyramids, the Nile, and the people. I think that would be so much fun. I wonder how Sonia comes up with the story line. It is a great book I highly recommend it to any one interested in romance and Egypt.

I was interested in this book when I found it at the library because I like reading fiction set in ancient Egypt and because it was about the Exodus. But I was disappointed. At some times, it's too rushed, and then at other times it drags on, making you want to skip pages. Also, the characters (one of the most important aspects of a book for me) just didn't draw me in and make me really like (or really hate) them. And...it was just the writing style, the unexplainable feel of the book that didn't work out for me. So, I wouldn't recommend it.

I thought the book was very informative because I did not know about the bible and all the rules of their God before I read this. But I also learned that their god is very cruel and was disturbing to hear about the nasty and torcherous things he did. I felt that the characters were all trapped and couldn't get out or do anything to be free. The slightest thing they did wrong they could be killed for. That I did not like about the story. I thought there was too much death and suffering. But it was helpful because before this I hadn't heard about anything happening after they crossed the ocean. So I would recommend this book but not to people who don't like gruesome or evil things.

The book *Escape From Egypt* by Sonia Levitin is a well written book about two lovers trying to get out of Egypt. We enjoyed the setting of the book! The characters in the book have a strong will and passion for life. The book had its ups and downs, some parts were very dull because the author crammed too much information into some parts that were very exciting and action filled. We thought that the author put things up a point of view that other people could understand.

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crammed too much information into some parts of the story. We thought that the author put things in a point of view that other people could understand.

I read this book about a month ago. It was pretty good. The author seems to obsessed with death. 5 of the main characters die. It's not a book for smaller children because of the death and romance, but all in all it's pretty good. Jesse is a man with one passion; to get revenge on the Egyptians. When he meets Jennat, he falls madly in love with her. They get married have kids and get to Canaan. (To put it simply)Anonymous

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