



# The Captain's Daughter and Other Stories (Vintage Classics)

*Alexander Pushkin , John Bayley (Introduction) , Natalie Duddington (Translation)*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS: The Captain's Daughter, The Tales of Belkin, The Shot, The Snowstorm, The Undertaker, The Postmaster, Mistress Into Maid, The Queen of Spades, Kirdjali, The Negro of Peter the Great

## The Captain's Daughter and Other Stories (Vintage Classics) Details

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Author : Alexander Pushkin , John Bayley (Introduction) , Natalie Duddington (Translation)

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## From Reader Review The Captain's Daughter and Other Stories (Vintage Classics) for online ebook

**Sladuna says**

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**Bushra Zia says**

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Pyotr is an army officer who rescues Masha from murder at the hands of an insurgent. A novel that spirals through young romance, violence, and a heroine's willingness to survive.

Pushkin entertains the reader with traditional romance.

The book is available at [https://www.amazon.com/Captains-Daugh....](https://www.amazon.com/Captains-Daugh...)

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**David C Ward says**

Russian tales, some picaresque, others are character studies, and the Queen of Spades is a bit like one of Poe's stories of obsession and the supernatural. Not bad but slightly nondescript compared to E Onegin, the novel in verse. The Captain's Daughter, a love story set in the provinces during Pougachev's rebellion, is kind of interminable (and has a sentimental ending) but the Queen of Spades is a pretty sharp ghost story about revenge. Is Russian literature more obsessed with gambling than in other cultures? If so, why?

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**Yuu Sasih says**

A present from kak Ayu Adisty. She mistook me as a Pushkin's fan--when I am actually a Dostoevsky's fan--and gave me this book (along with a Dostoevsky, of course). Read this first because I'm curious about Pushkin. His name rarely mentioned than other classic-Russian writers (like Gogol, Dostoevsky or Tolstoy. OR Tolstoy) but he was mentioned as the Father of Russian literature, the one who shaped Russian literature, so I'm all perked up.

This book contained six stories: The Captain's Daughter, The Queen of Spades, Dubrovsky, Peter The Great's Negro, The Station-Master and The Snowstorm. From all of them I enjoy the last work the most, The Snowstorm, and then Dubrovsky. The Snowstorm because its twist, Dubrovsky because Pushkin bravely give such an unsatisfying ending for Dubrovsky's fate--it's not even good OR bad.

Pushkin's writing is simple and easy to understand, unlike many classics with their seemingly confusing

string of words. Reading Pushkin's as easy as reading any popular novel nowadays, and it's really engaging. I don't even feel bored reading his stories despite the simpleness. There're something charming and romantic in his writing. And I fall in love!

Now I'm also Pushkin's fan! Thank you for giving me this book, kak Ayu!

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### **emere says**

Desde el dibujo de la familia rusa, la imagen del lugar y las personalidades mostradas, todo es delicioso. Puedo percibir las cosas, para mi, más importantes sobre este libro:

~Refleja la austeridad y los golpes, estragos y dificultades provocadas por una guerra civil basada en ideales que no cambian el orden en el poder.

~Proyecta la visión y representación del ideal de un niño en medio de una crisis, mientras forja una identidad, atravesando por un sube y baja mostrado como el primer acercamiento a la adultez.

~Ruptura en el ideal y la moral rusa en turno, mostrando la lucha entre la decisión y el destino del protagonista.

~El libro está escrito a modo de una plática y de hecho es técnicamente una especie de diario.

~Muestra al antagonista como un "malo" con cualidades heroicas, como un libertario en pro de ideas de cambio a una sociedad rusa estanca, por lo tanto este antagonista resulta ser más bien un "soplo de aire fresco" en tiempos de fingida e inamovible paz.

~¿Dónde empieza la adultez? Se es demasiado pequeño para tomar decisiones y demasiado grande para ser mimado o cuidado. El proceso de madurez como algo inevitable.

~La bondad y la benevolencia en todo sentido no necesita ser arbitrario: Eso es la ética.

~Se ve a la figura femenina como una representación de poder y fuerza, simultáneamente de cuidados y delicada.

~Muestra a personajes que pesar de intentar un cambio, están ética y moralmente tranquilos, y sus ideales o situaciones encajan perfectamente con el clima que se está viviendo en el momento. Es como si estuvieran hechos para la circunstancia.

~Se hace lo necesario en nombre del amor, y por tratarse de amor, no carece de moral.

~Las deudas de honor son por toda la vida e incondicionales.

-Atreverse es igual de importante que no hacerlo, pero hacerlo es más divertido, es inseguro y más satisfactorio.

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### **Barak says**

It seems Pushkin also wrote stories (after he got married), not just poems. These are not as great as his poems, but are still fun enough to read.

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### **(P)lla says**

Un volume che raccoglie insieme Le novelle del compianto I.P.Belkin ovvero sei brevi racconti che ci presentano la vita nei villaggi russi, tutto avvolto in un mix di guerra, onore, rispetto, vendetta, superstizione e molto altro; la Storia del villaggio di Gorjuchino è una sorta di documentario; La donna di picche è un racconto breve dove il gioco d'azzardo fa da sfondo alla vita dei protagonisti; infine La figlia del capitano, l'unico romanzo del volume è un vero e proprio romanzo storico in cui la Russia zarina fa da sfondo a mille battaglie, un romanzo in cui l'amore nonostante tutto trionfa sempre.

Ciò che mi ha colpito di Puskin, di cui assolutamente nulla avevo letto, è stato lo stile veramente semplice e scorrevole; a parte i nomi dei protagonisti, impossibili da ricordare, il testo scorre meravigliosamente, a volte interrotto da dialoghi, immagino, in dialetto russo che sono rappresentati molto bene e che fanno sorridere; il tutto è sfumato da una sottile ma sempre presente vena ironica che non fa mai male.

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## Frankie says

I already read these stories in The Complete Prose Tales of Alexandr Sergeyevitch Pushkin, but wanted to reread Pushkin's prose in a more recent translation. This volume includes Duddington and Keane translations which are somewhat less formal in diction and easier to read.

"The Captain's Daughter" is a little heavily theatrical, which is understandable when you know Pushkin and the bildungsroman style. Its strength lies in its historic and journalistic merit. Like Tolstoy's account of The War of 1812 in *War and Peace*, Pushkin covers the Pugachev Rebellion admirably well.

The five stories "of Belkin" are interesting and quaint but not very well-developed or unique. One thing I did enjoy about them was the narrator's setup introduction by witnesses and letters. Later writers would learn to follow this type of indirect narration to protect themselves from the censors. "Kirdjali" is a related bit of folklore on par with the book of Judges in the Bible, but was too brief to pull in the reader.

"The Queen of Spades", as I felt on my first reading, is my favorite of Pushkin's prose. The characters of Hermann and the old Countess are believable and unique, and pitched against one another perfectly. It employs the theme of mysticism using both gambling and ghosts, without much need for exposition.

Finally, the unfinished "The Negro of Peter the Great" (my elder copy had translated the title "The Moor...") which is perhaps more diplomatic, but evokes Shakespeare's Othello) contains a strong plot, and it's a shame it doesn't continue after its 41 pages. I have some doubts about the gilded czar that Pushkin makes of Peter. However, the early days of Petersburg make for a fascinating setting, and the contrasting Paris vs. Petersburg culture clashes set this story on an epic scale.

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## Yair Ben-Zvi says

A fantastic collection of moving and inspiring short works by one of the masters of Russian fiction. I loved this book and recommend it highly. The austerity of the text, its rigid and unrelenting strictness in its adherence to realism and a 'no frills' style of writing (the details and descriptions are certainly sparse and spartan but certainly contribute much to the atmosphere, depicting a Russia straddling the line between aristocratic decadence and barbarous severity) can be off putting and admittedly a bit boring and a slog to get through. But Pushkin's stories always pay off wonderfully with nods to the unknown (Queen of Spades and its dark arts touches) and realistic portrayals of men and women in a certain time and certain place, yet like the greatest of writers, speaking to anyone, anywhere. It's a more than worthy journey to see yourself to the end of this great collection.

## Mark Jensen says

I don't know if all of Pushkin's works are like this, or maybe this is just a really accessible translation (Paul Debreczny) but this was quite entertaining and easy to read. Many Russian authors can be a bit of an effort to get through. The stories typically center around an aristocratic young man, often in the military service (though with a few exceptions they never seem to actually be on active duty) who get into adventures of one sort or another. A few of the stories seem to end abruptly; for one of them I'm half convinced the ending somehow didn't get printed it was so abrupt and inconclusive. Nevertheless, an interesting read.

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## Roberto says

Una clásica, en el mejor de los sentidos del término, novela de aventuras sin el artificio experimental de la narrativa del siglo XX. Quizá no sea una característica meritoria, ni defectuosa, pero se agradece. La sencillez en los planteamientos, el desarrollo lineal de los acontecimientos, la exaltación de valores como el honor, la caballerosidad, la fidelidad, el cumplimiento de la palabra dada, el esfuerzo, la entrega,... en la que el amor no es el menor de los acicates de los personajes hacen de "La novia del capitán" una novela romántica. Tan alejados como estamos en el siglo XXI de ese mundo y sus valores, el estilo de Pushkin y su fluidez narrativa modelan una obra muy atractiva. Comprendo que tantos escritores rusos hayan visto en Pushkin a un maestro, al maestro de la lengua rusa.

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## Mike says

The short version: anyone who likes Dostoevsky and Tolstoy literature should read the Captain's Daughter by Pushkin, as it is the best justification I've come across for his status as the father of Russian fiction.

The long version:

This isn't a review of Pushkin's Eugene Onegin, but I think it's a good idea to explain how my thoughts about the Captain's Daughter come from the former.

At times I feel I've read more about Pushkin than I've read of his actual work. Aside from the recent addition of the Captain's Daughter, my bookshelf only holds the Queen of Spades and Eugene Onegin; the former is too short to register an impression concomitant with Pushkin's literary stature, and the second a triumph of artifice over soul. Onegin is poetically fantastic (just you try writing a Pushkin sonnet) and can be very affecting, but is largely arch, centering on it does on a character who may be an empty assemblage of literary tropes who borders on parody. (Onegin is a sort of self-assembled Frankenstein built from the French literature popular in Russia at the time; while there is much pathos in Tatiana's yearning for him, it is hard to be moved by someone so personally bloodless. SPOILER--that Tatiana lives her life out in a passionless marriage doesn't really quicken the imagination either, though it does set up the later movements of Russian realism--none other than Fyodor Dostoevsky, among others, held Tatiana up as a sort of ideal Russian woman. END SPOILER). Anyway, the whole thing seems like a kind of literary bauble, and it is hard to be moved by something so soulless.

Given the ennui of Eugene Onegin I was surprised to find that the Captain's Daughter was a bit more of a

swashbuckling romance. It is the story of Pyotr, a young man sent off to the army by his father; Marya, the young woman who wins his heart; and Shvabrin, the jealous rival to their love (the interplay between the three reminded me of Oklahoma! of all things). The love triangle is bent and twisted any number of ways by Pugachev's revolt, an actual occurrence of the 1770s. (SPOILER ALERT). The plot is operatically simple and resolves with an ending that I imagine many modern readers will feel is forced: Shvabrin slanders Pyotr and says that he was complicit in the revolt; Pyotr refuses to explain the exact circumstances as he wants to protect his beloved Marya from facing a military judge; eventually Marya goes off to Petersburg and, in a scene like something out of a Julie Andrews movie, is able to convince Empress Catherine the Great to pardon Pyotr. If you said that this is clumsy or that it sounds like propaganda, you're probably right, but that doesn't mean it isn't art. END SPOILER)

I think there is something very classical about the book, in the same way that many of Mozart's works are Classical. There is a sense of danger through the book, but no sense of impending tragedy. The drama of the work comes from the protagonist's fiery passion and love, but this love is accommodated by a just and wise ruler, and so the ultimate balance is kept and all ends well (it's worth saying here that Mozart's Sarastro is ultimately a sort of mythical embodiment of reason; to enshrine the Empress as the repository of wisdom and source of justice is a far different matter).

But Pushkin rode the line between the classical and Romantic periods, and there is a good bit of fascination for the attractive rebel in the novella (just as there's an attraction for Don Giovanni in Mozart's opera). Pushkin dutifully treats the love between Pyotr and Marya, but is rather more affecting when he describes Pyotr's conflicting emotions about the rebels, many of whom were former comrades. His friendship with the Cossack Maxymich allows him to receive a crucial communication from Marya, and there is a sort of mutual respect between himself and Pugachev. Pugachev knows that his soldiers will desert him at the first loss and that he is doomed to lose his war, and yet he pursues it anyway. There is undeniable Romantic grandeur in the character who knows that he cannot succeed but struggles anyway, for that is who he is and he can be nothing else. That need to court doom is part and parcel to the later Russian works. Pushkin couldn't come out and say it, but he's got a good deal of sympathy for Pugachev, and without that you don't get Dostoevsky's underground man or Raskolnikov. It's not for nothing that they all revered him.

(neither does this review mention Pushkin's use of Russian folk songs, or that he sets his story in rural Russian and not the capital, or number of tones that he employs through the story: the beginning sections about Pyotr's education sound almost like a sketch from Calvino's *The Baron in the Trees*, his journey to the fortress at Belogorsky sound almost like Mark Twain, and life at the outpost reminds one of Gogol; his relationship to Pugachev reminds one almost of Pip and the convict in *Great Expectations*. There's also some of Dickens'/Dostoevsky's dry wit in the book, as when one officer dilutes his tea with vodka. That all of these coexist within one 120 page story is a marvelous achievement, and helps me understand the status that Russians give to Pushkin).

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## Gabrielle Daigle says

I'm not sure why I've never read Pushkin before, but I'm a fan now! I especially enjoyed how *The Captain's Daughter* portrayed Pugachev's Rebellion. It reminded me of Tolstoy. I wished the final story in this collection had been completed, but even so, I learned quite a bit about Russian history and enjoyed the story-telling anyway, so it's a worthy inclusion. This translation is easy to read and I'd recommend it to anyone, slavophile or not.

## Leah says

Pushkin, of course, is the master of Russian literature. While Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, etc. are more well-recognized in the West as 'seminal figures' of Russian literature, it is Pushkin who truly embodies Russian storytelling.

The translation of "The Captain's Daughter" (a novella, 140 pp) was excellent. Were this collection rated on the novella alone, it would easily get five stars.

However, the rest of the stories in the collection (about another 150 pp) suffered, unfortunately, from stilted and occasionally confused translating. A shame, too, because Pushkin's stories are really meant to be simple and easily understood.

Much like a Russian O. Henry, Pushkin generally thrives on the ironic. His storytelling is spartan: only the most basic details are provided, but each story is heartfelt, simple, and quite beautiful.

There is a strong selection of stories in this collection, and overall, the storytelling is very good. The translation could be improved, but is fairly readable; it's a shame that the translation can bog down the flow of Pushkin's stories.

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## Yersinia Pestis says

Il colpo di pistola (???????, 1830) \*\*\*

La dama di picche (???????, 1834) \*\*\*\*

La figlia del capitano (???????????, 1836) \*\*\*\*

L'Onegin non mi aveva fatta impazzire, invece questi racconti mi sono piaciuti talmente tanto che ho comprato il teatro breve

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