



# Elijah Visible: Stories

By Thane Rosenbaum

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With the publication of *Elijah Visible*, Thane Rosenbaum emerged as a fresh and important new voice on the American literary scene, a young writer in the great Jewish storytelling tradition of Isaac Bashevis Singer and Isaac Babel. In this haunting debut, Rosenbaum weaves together nine postmodern tales about Adam Posner, a young man determined to climb the American corporate ladder, who finds himself paralyzed by the legacy of the Holocaust. Encumbered by the psychic screams of his deceased parents, Posner embodies the disintegration, as well as the spiritual search, of the modern Jewish family. Rosenbaum's stunning portrait of the post-Holocaust world will resonate with contemporary readers of all backgrounds.

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## Elijah Visible: Stories By Thane Rosenbaum Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In "Cattle Car Complex," the first of nine interlinked stories in this powerful debut collection, disaffected Manhattan lawyer Adam Posner, a lifelong insomniac and claustrophobic, is stricken with paroxysmal rage on an office elevator as he remembers how his parents, both Holocaust survivors, were transported by cattle car to concentration camps. In a subsequent story, "The Rabbi Double-Faults," the Holocaust shadows 1950s Miami when a seemingly nonchalant rabbi bares his death-camp tattoo during a tennis game with the then-young Adam. Rosenbaum, himself the child of Holocaust survivors, now a law professor at Fordham, casts Adam as the central character of each of these searing tales, but in various guises, at different ages, with different sets of parents. In "Romancing the Yohrzeit Light," a desperately funny story that recalls Philip Roth, Adam is a New York abstract expressionist painter courting a gentile Swedish woman; in "An Act of Defiance," he is a brooding college instructor specializing in Holocaust studies who encounters his Belgian uncle, an Auschwitz survivor, exuberantly alive. With savage irony, these impassioned stories bemoan secular Jews' fragmented families and weak identification with their faith, as well as the chasm between generations that dulls recognition of the full enormity of the Holocaust.

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From Kirkus Reviews

A first collection from Rosenbaum, a Manhattan lawyer turned writer, draws heavily on the author's memories of growing up as the child of Holocaust survivors. "The Holocaust," Rosenbaum writes, "is the great equalizer of stark interior dramas: Reordering nerves, creating strengths and frailties, transforming individuals into something they would not have otherwise been." And those individuals, the ones who survive, will in turn transform those with whom they come in contact, none more so than their children--this is the running theme, the major preoccupation, of these nine stories. Adam Posner, the central figure, is a multifaceted version of the author himself, here a tennis prodigy growing up in Miami Beach, there a lawyer struggling against demons from the past, elsewhere a child summering in a Catskills bungalow colony with a crazy, gambling-addicted mother. Using the pieces like a fragmented mirror, Rosenbaum plays out nine variations on what life could have been for a son of Holocaust survivors, dark improvisations on the themes of death, distrust, and psychic dislocation. In the most successful tales--generally the longer ones--Adam is primarily a witness, a device that effectively allows the reader entry into a psychologically troubled world. Two stories set in the Miami Beach of the '60s, "The Rabbi Double-Faults" and "Lost, In a Sense," are particularly astute in their understanding of the inner life of childhood and the emotional confusions generated by the adult world. The weakest story, "Cattle Car Complex," reduces these insights to a weak irony worthy of a failed Twilight Zone episode. Rosenbaum is a writer of promise who must learn to eschew the overwrought metaphor and occasional easy irony. The best pieces here are quite good indeed, however, and make their author a voice worth hearing. -- Copyright ©1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Review

"Thane Rosenbaum is totally obsessed with the Holocaust. His stories reflect that obsession. They are written with sensitivity and pain." ?*Elie Wiesel*

"Anyone concerned with the decay of Diaspora Judaism should read these stories, for Rosebaum shows great skill and sensitivity in depicting the aftermath." ?Henry Roth, author of *Call It Sleep*

"A remarkable and original collection of short fiction." ?*The Baltimore Sun*

“The nine stories of Thane Rosenbaum's *Elijah Visible* make for a noteworthy literary debut-not only because they introduce a distinctive voice to American Jewish fiction, but also because they represent a significant shift in how stories of the Holocaust can be told in and for our time.” ?Sanford Pinsker, *The Forward*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Herman Lewis:**

Have you spare time for any day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity regarding spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open as well as read a book titled *Elijah Visible: Stories*? Maybe it is to be best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can cleverer than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have different opinion?

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