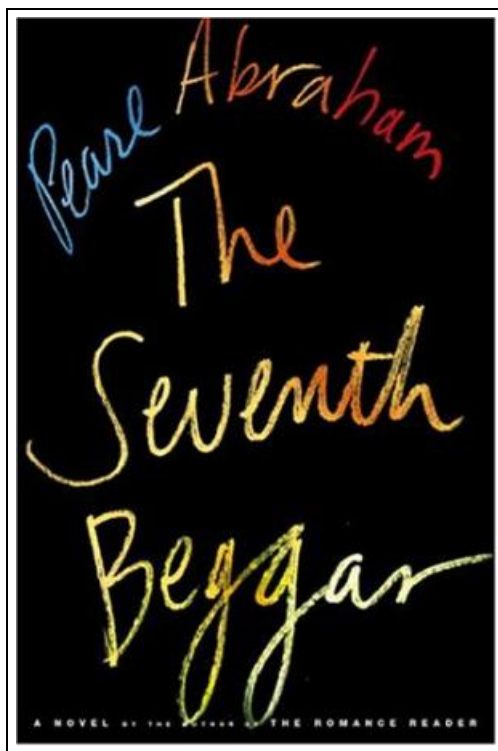


## The Seventh Beggar



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### **Reviews**

*It is simple in study safer to understand. It can be full of knowledge and wisdom Your way of life span is going to be enhance when you full looking at this book.*  
(Lavina Torp)

## THE SEVENTH BEGGAR

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New York, New York, U.S.A.: Riverhead Books, New York, New York, U.S.A., 2005. Hardcover. Condition: New. Dust Jacket Condition: New. 355 pages. From Publishers Weekly: Starred Review. Those looking for successors to Isaac Bashevis Singer (whose short stories were published by the Library of America this summer) should read Abraham's novel about contemporary Chasids. The broad narrative goes like this: Joel Jakob, a yeshiva student of the Berditchev Chasidim, dies young in a flash flood; his nephew, JakobJoel, who breaks with Chasid tradition and goes to MIT, is vaguely haunted by the uncle he never met. As a teenager, Joel reads the Book of Tales by Nachman, the historically real founder of the rival Bratislav Chasid, to the distress of his father, R. Moshele, the son of the "Berditchever" and founder of the Monsey, N.Y., yeshiva. R. Moshele's worries increase as Joel becomes subject to seizures, takes an unauthorized journey to Nachman's grave in Uman, Ukraine, and is quietly expelled from the yeshiva. Unbeknownst to his father or to his sister, Ada, with whom Joel is otherwise close, he is trying to create a female by manipulating letters of the Hebrew alphabet, as the legendary Kabbalists were supposed to have done. This concern with creating artificial life is given a twist in the life of JakobJoel, whose student work at MIT centers on "Cog," a female robot in the AI lab. Abraham (The Romance Reader, etc.) stitches many subplots and themes revelatory of Chasid life into her story, including the tale of an unfunny wedding jester (badkhn), Yankel Yankevitch; the often bitter rivalries between Chasid sects; and Ada's unlikely commercial success as a fashion designer for Chasid women. In one of Nachman's tales, which lends its name to this novel, a wise beggar says, "[E]verything has a heart. The world...

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