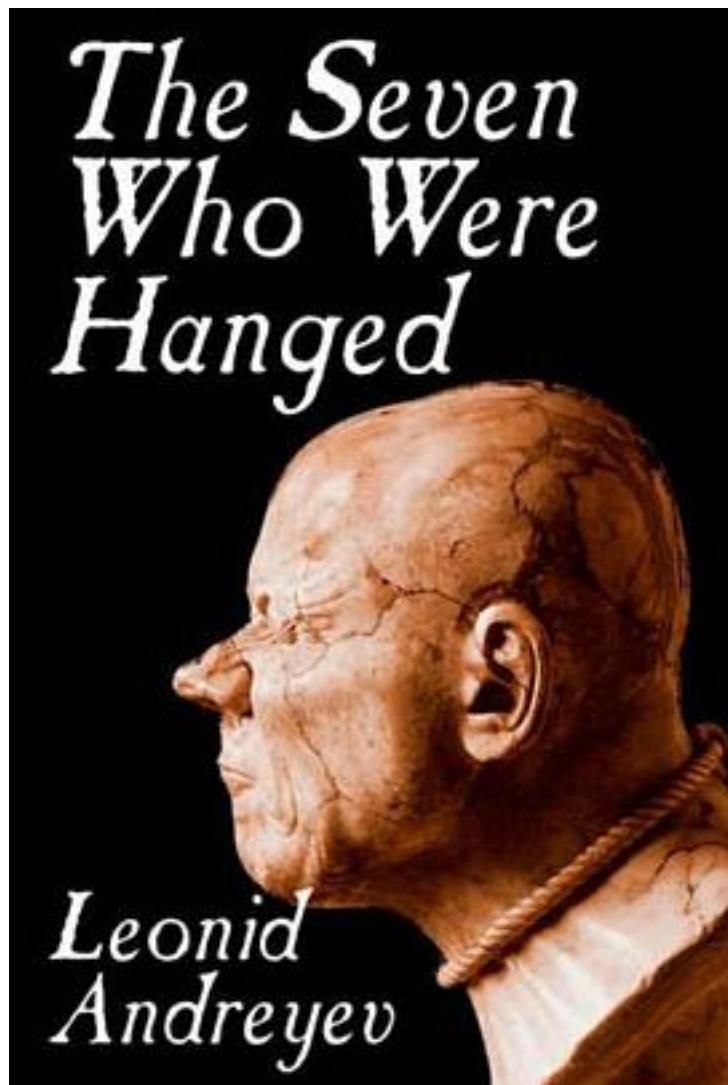


The Seven Who Were Hanged



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As in a hard shell, every human being is enclosed in a cover of body, dress, and life. Who is man? We may only conjecture. What constitutes his joy or his sorrow? We may guess only by his acts, which are oft-times enigmatic; by his laughter and by his tears, which are often entirely incomprehensible to us. And if we, Russians, who live so closely together in constant misery, understand one another so poorly that we mercilessly put to death those who should be pitied or even rewarded, and reward those who should be punished by contempt and anger -- how much more difficult is it for you Americans, to understand distant Russia? But then, it is just as difficult for us Russians to understand distant America, of which we dream in our youth and over which we ponder so deeply in our years of maturity. The Jewish massacres and famine; a Parliament and executions; pillage and the greatest heroism; "The Black Hundred," and Leo Tolstoy -- what a mixture of figures and conceptions, what a fruitful source for all kinds of misunderstandings! The truth of life stands aghast in silence, and its brazen falsehood is loudly shouting, uttering pressing, painful questions: "With whom shall I sympathize? Whom shall I trust? Whom shall I love?" In the story of *The Seven Who Were Hanged* I attempted to give a sincere and unprejudiced answer to some of these questions. -- Leonid Andreyev

作者介绍:

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