

Shayna Glossary

This novel adheres closely to “YIVO-Standard” Yiddish, but exceptions were made for words with more known American or Hebraized spellings

Az och un vey	Too bad, such sorrow, intense grief
Agune	Deserted wife
Akshn	Stubborn
Aleyem-hasholem	May they rest in peace
Aliyah	Rise, call to read from the Torah, call to immigrate to Israel
Apikoyres	Non-believer
Aveyre	Sin
Bal-takhles	Practical man
Bal-torah	Man of learning
Bar Mitzvah	Coming of age and assuming religious responsibility
Barukh-hashem	Blessed is The Name
Bashert	Destiny
Bime, bimah	Platform in the synagogue from which the Torah is read
Bintl-briv	Advice column in Jewish newspaper, <i>The Forward</i>
Borukh-habo	Welcome, Bless those who come
Boytschik	Young boy
Bris	The Jewish ceremony of circumcision
Brokhes	Blessings
Bubbeh, (Bobe)	Grandmother
Bubbeh-mayse	Old wives tale
Bubkes	The least amount, nothing
Daven, davening	To pray, praying

Der mensch trakht un got lakht	Man plans and God laughs
Der seykhil iz a krikher	Understanding comes at a snail's pace
Drek	Rubbish, Excrement
Eishes khayal	Woman of valor
Es	Eat
Es, tatele	Eat good little boy
Es tut me vey	I hurt
Eynikl, eyniklekh	Grandchild, grandchildren
Eyns, tsvey; dray, fir, finef	One, two, three, four, five
Farkakte	Crappy
Farshtunkene, farshtunkenen	Stinky
Fleyshik	Meat, meals containing meat
Frum	Observant
Frume yidn	Observant Jews
Galitsianer	A subdivision of the Ashkenazi Jews of eastern Europe, originating in Galicia, western Ukraine and SE Poland.
Ganef	Thief
Genug	Enough
Get, ghet	Jewish religious divorce
Goldene medine	The Golden State/country, America
Golem	A clay figure brought to life by magic – Jewish legend
Gotenyu	Dear Lord
Goy/Goye/Goyim/Goyeshe	Gentile m, f, plural
Guter mensch	Good man

Gut-morgn	Good morning
Gut-shabbos	Good Sabbath
Hartsveytik	Heartache
Ikh darf pishn	I have to pee
Kaddish	Mourner's prayer
Kashe	Porridge made of buckwheat or other grains mixed with water or milk
Khevre kadishe	Burial society
Kheyder	First educational setting for Jewish boys, sometimes girls
Khokhm	Smart
Khutzpah	audacity
Kidish	Blessing over wine
Klafte	Bitch
Klezmer	Traditional eastern European Jewish music
Kneydlakh	Matza balls in soup
Kokhlefl	Cooking spoon, busybody
Koykhes	Strength
Krie	Making a tear in one's clothes, ritual of mourning
Libe ken brenen un nit oyfhern	Love can burn and never end
Lokh in kop	Hole in the head
Landsman, landslayt, Landsmanschaften	A person from the same village or nearby, benevolent societies organized by people from the same village or region
Litvak	Jews from Lithuania, Belarus, Latvia,
Lokshn	Noodles

Makher	Big shot, influential person
Makhsheyfe	Witch
Malekh-hamoves	Angel of Death
Mamele	Term of endearment for child
Mamme	Mother
Mamzer	Bastard
Mayse	Story
Mazek	Mischievous child
Mazel	Luck
Mazel-tov,	Congratulations
Mekhaye	A pleasure, what you live for
Mekhitse	Partition to separate men and women in the Synagogue
Mensch, (mentsh)	A person with integrity and honor
Meshuge, meshugene meshugas	Crazy, a crazy person, craziness
Mezuzah	A parchment scroll in a case affixed to the door post of Jewish home. Religious texts are inscribed on it.
Mikve	Ritual bath for purification
Milkhik	Dairy food
Minkhe	Afternoon prayer
Minyan, (minyen)	Quorum of ten required for Jewish prayer
Mirtse-hashem	God willing
Mishpokhe	Family
Mitzvah, mitzvos	Good deed
Meshiekh	Messiah
Nakhes	Pride of another's accomplishments, usually parents of children

Nar, narish, nariskayt	Fool, foolish, foolishness
Neshome	Soul
Nosh	Snack
Nu	Well, a word with various meanings depending on intonation, and context from exasperation to questioning, to scolding
Olev-hasholem	May he rest in peace
Orn-koydesh	Holy Ark container the torah
Oy vey	Woe is me
Paskudnyak	Despicable person
Patsh	Smack, gentle slap
Peyes	Sidelocks worn by the very orthodox males
Pisht	Urinated
Pogrom	From the Russian 'destruction' An organized massacre of a particular ethnic group, in particular that of Jews in Russia or eastern Europe.
Prost, proste	Common, vulgar
Puptshik, du bist mayn lebn. Ikh hob dikh lib	A song, You're my life, I love you
Rakhmones	Compassion, mercy
Rebetsn	Rabbi's wife
Reboyne shel-oylem	Master of the Universe
Rozshinkes mit mandlen	Lullaby - Raisins and almonds
Seder	A ritual dinner on the first two nights of Passover
Seykhel	Intelligence, smarts, common-sense
Shabbos	Sabbath
Shadkhn	Marriage brother, match maker

Shah	Quiet
Shande un a kharpe	Shame and disgrace
Sharkharis	Morning prayers
Shayna, sheyne	Pretty
Sheyn vi di levone	Song, pretty as the moon
Sheytl	Wig worn by very orthodox women
Shiker	Drunk
Shiva	Mourning ritual lasting seven days
Shlong	Penis, vulgar usage
Shmate	Rag, anything worthless
Shmuck	Contemptable person, vulgar for penis
Shmuts, shmutsik	Dirt, dirty
Sholem aleykhem	Greeting, peace to you, typical response is Aleykhem Sholem
Sholem-bais	Peace in the home
Shoykhet	Kosher slaughterer
Shoymer	Guard
Shpilkes	Needle, on pins and needles
Shtark, shtarker	Strong, powerful
Shtetl	Small town in eastern Europe with large Jewish populations, pl
Shtup, shtuping	Vulgar slang for sexual intercourse
Shul	Synagogue
Shvitser	Braggart, literally someone who sweats
Siddur, (sider)	Prayer book
Simcha, simkhe	Joys, celebrations, happy occasions
Takhlis	Practical matter, goal, end or limit
Tagelakh	Pastry dipped in boiling honey
Talis	A Prayer shawl, plural

Tante	Aunt
Tate mame makt mir khasene	Song, Father, Mother make me a wedding
Tatele	Toddler, m, good child
Tfilin	Phylacteries- Biblical mandate-keep God's words in mind
Treyf	Not- kosher
Tsayt	Time, menstrual cycle
Tsimes	Fuss, uproar, from cooking term for mixed fruit, veggies.
Tsores	Troubles
Tukhes	Butt
Tsadik	Righteous man
Tsedoke	Charity
Tsitses	Specially knotted ritual fringes attached to the four corners of a tallis or special undergarments
Tumbalalaika	Russian/Jewish folk song in Yiddish
Vayb	Wife
Yad	Literally hand, a ritual pointer when reading from the Torah
Yakne	Annoying nag, gossipy, trouble-maker
Yarmulke	A Head covering worn as a reminder that God is above
Yene velt	The world to come
Yente	Gossipy woman
Yeshive	Jewish religious institution focusing on religious texts
Yeytser-hore	Inclination to evil
Yeytser-tov	Inclination to good
Yid, Yidn	Jew, Jews
Yikhes	Status

Zay shtil	Be quiet
Zets zikh	Sit down
Zeyde	Grandfather
Zikhroyne livrokhe	Blessed be his memory
Zise	Sweet one
Zol zayn mit mazel	Wishing you luck
Zol zayn shah	Be quiet
Zoyne	Whore

Hebrew

B'sham Hashem	In the name of God, a prayer before going to sleep, a lullaby
El Malay rakhamim	God, full of mercy, prayer for the departed, sung a funerals.
Mah nishtanah	What is different (From the Passover Haggadah)
Mi Shebeirakh avoteinu,	May the source of strength who blessed our ancestors, prayer for healing
Nashim	Tractate of the Talmud, Women/Family law
Nedrim	A Section of Nashim, Oaths/Vows
Shema Yisroel	Hear, O Israel, the LORD (is) our God, the LORD is One
Shehekheyanu	Special Jewish prayer to celebrate special occasions
Y'hi ratzon milfanekha	May it be Your will – prayer for journeys
Yis'gadal v'yis'kadash sh'mey raba (Aramaic)	An ancient prayer recited for the dead - May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified