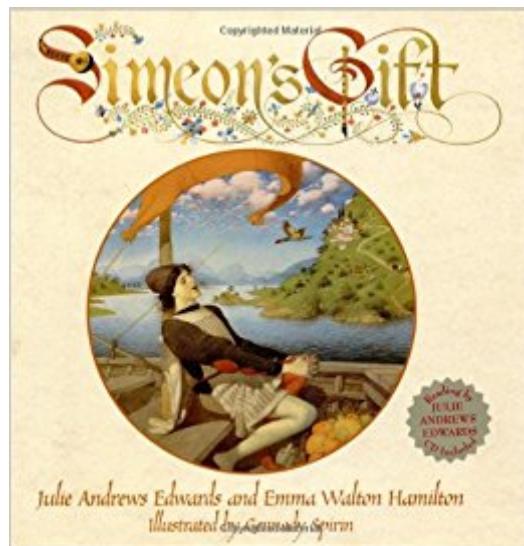


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# Simeon's Gift



## **Synopsis**

CD included with a reading by Julie Andrews EdwardsIn a faraway time and place, a humble musician named Simeon sets out on a quest. Thirsting for knowledge and eager to improve his craft, he risks losing all that is important to him, including the love of his beautiful Sorrel. The journey brings many discoveries, and though he tries hard to absorb the vast new tapestry of sounds and ideas before him, the scope of choices eventually becomes overwhelming. Dispirited, he turns for home -- and alone in the grace of nature, he experiences a series of wondrous events that lead him to the discovery of his own true self, and the glorious gift he has to offer. Julie Andrews Edwards and Emma Walton Hamilton -- with stunning illustrations from Gennady Spirin -- weave a magical tale with a timeless lesson about beauty, music, and the power of giving.

## **Book Information**

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins; 1st edition (September 30, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060089148

ISBN-13: 978-0060089146

Product Dimensions: 10 x 0.3 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #833,888 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #174 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Other #536 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Europe #1877 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Performing Arts

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: 2 - 4

## **Customer Reviews**

Convinced that his "lowly status" and the "simplicity of his art" will never provide more than a "meager existence" for his beloved, minstrel Simeon sets out on a fairy tale-like quest to free the music "deep in his soul." He encounters a veritable symphony of new sounds on his pilgrimage--the insistent beat of soldiers' drums, the harmonic chanting of monks, the general cacophony of a big city--but sadly, this barrage of new sounds bewilders and overwhelms Simeon, who feels his own attempts at song suffer in comparison. Lonely and weary, he abandons his quest and trades his lute

for a canoe to take him home. On the way, Simeon befriends a bright little bird, a beautiful fish, and lovely fawn who become his companions. Heartened by his new friends and overjoyed to see his beloved Sorrel, Simeon breaks into song and discovers the music of his soul. Julie Andrews Edwards, author of *The Last of the Really Great Whangdoodles* and star of *Mary Poppins* and *The Sound of Music*, has teamed up again with her daughter, Emma Walton Hamilton (Dumpy the Dumptruck, etc.), for an original story with all the elements of traditional fairy tales. Award-winning illustrator Gennady Spirin creates magical pictures that hearken back to Renaissance era artists. Also includes a reading by the charming Julie Andrews Edwards. (Ages 5 to 8) --Emilie Coulter

Ã¢ "The illustratorÃ¢ "s ornate, gorgeous watercolors add substance to a purposeful tale.Ã¢ • (School Library Journal)

That's what my daughter, 37, said about it as I finished tucking in my granddaughter on her 7th birthday. I'd just given her the book with our cake 'n ice cream celebration and was about to burst to read it to her. My daughter, sadly, is NOT a bookaholic like her mother, but it took her no time at all to see how truly special this book is. Others have mentioned human values, art, and music especially. I'd first mention the look of the book itself, whose marvelous illustrations ("illuminations" better describes the art therein) give immediate evidence that THIS is a book to be reckoned with! Having seen many incunabula and medieval illuminated ms. in my lifetime, I was still blown away by the sheer beauty of any spot one could randomly choose, from cover to cover. To comments about the story, already given "weight" or prominence by what one has seen as one turned to the first page of text, I'd add its wholeness: love, desire for self-improvement, the totality of Creation, persistence in The Search even in the face of much disillusionment, even failure; hope, ever present; the beauty 'round us; eyes to see and ears to hear; creativity; the desire to be worthy of one's Beloved; compassion; empathy, courage, and increasing spirituality. If there were a single word to summarize it I'd say "integrity." I can't imagine being a child and learning this story over and over, to ponder after one's night prayers into the dreams of sleep. This is a book to give every Seeker you know, to every new parent and/or grandparent, to a high school graduate sent on his or her Journey. It is a treasure, and yes, it's breathtaking.

"Simeon's Gift," written by Julie Andrews and her daughter Emma Walton Hamilton is a beautifully written and illustrated children's book. It is a magical story of a young roving musician who leaves the woman he loves to prove his worthiness by experiencing the world beyond. He finds his music

and self in nature and returns to his beloved Sorrel. This passionate fable blends both music and the arts, which are captured in Gennady Spirin's gorgeous illustrations. I highly recommend this book for children and adults alike. I had the opportunity to see the premier of the musical adaptation of "Simeon's Gift" July 11, 2008 with the Louisville Orchestra, with Ian Fraser conducting. Julie collaborated with Ian Fraser, who wrote the music, and John Buccino the lyrics, to bring this magical tale to life on stage. Five costumed singers played the major roles, with Julie narrating. It was a very magical, exciting and memorable evening. "Simeon's Gift" will tour the country in a show called "A Gift of Music."

One of the most enjoyable books one can enjoy. Thank for your writing enjoyed by so many!! Set to music was a brilliant and wonderful addition! You and Emma have such wonderful ideas in your books. God has not only blessed you with what seems a wonderful family, but talent, even in your grand kids who seem to be an inspiration in all the poems floating through your blood!!! God bless

Not a great story, but a very nice one. The illustrations are great and help to carry the story along, but it does bog down in places. Held the children's interest though, and , after all they are the critics that matter. Vocabulary is just right....nothing to explain or hinder the story. Good and obvious moral.

Perhaps this book was aimed to be read by children. I had interest in reading it in order to find out its connection with Julie Andrews' next concert, at O2 Arena-London, next May, because it has been announced that it will be narrated there. I've discovered a magical book, both for children, but mainly for adults. I recommend it for those who still believe in human values, nowadays almost considered "out of fashion".

I purchased this book for my 7 year old granddaughters, and they loved the story. We have all of Julie Andrew's Little Bo books, and everyone loves them, so thought this would be good. She is a great storyteller, and gifted writer. It keeps the girls attention, and is a great read. Would definitely recommend.

I bought this for my Mother. It's a beautiful book with memorable artwork. What a work of art it is. My mother was thrilled to receive it.

Anything Julie Andrews and her daughter write and publish are great for young and old alike! You can't go wrong!

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