

《MANSFIELD PARK (ISBN=9780553212761) 》

书籍信息

版次：1

页数：499

字数：

印刷时间：1983年01月01日

开本：32开

纸张：胶版纸

包装：平装

是否套装：否

国际标准书号ISBN：9780553212761

编辑推荐

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Though Jane Austen was writing at a time when Gothic potboilers such as Ann Ward Radcliffe's [The Mysteries of Udolpho](#) and Horace Walpole's [The Castle of Otranto](#) were all the rage, she never got carried away by romance in her own novels. In Austen's ordered world, the passions that ruled Gothic fiction would be horridly out of place; marriage was, first and foremost, a contract, the bedrock of polite society. Certain rules applied to who was eligible and who was not, how one courted and married and what one expected afterwards. To flout these rules was to tear at the basic fabric of society, and the consequences could be terrible. Each of the six novels she completed in her lifetime are, in effect, comic cautionary tales that end happily for those characters who play by the rules and badly for those who don't. In *Mansfield Park*, for example, Austen gives us Fanny Price, a poor young woman who has grown up in her wealthy relatives' household without ever being accepted as an equal. The only one who has truly been kind to Fanny is Edmund Bertram, the younger of the family's two sons.

内容简介

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In *Mansfield Park*, first published in 1814, when the author had reached her full maturity as a novelist, Jane Austen paints some of her most witty and perceptive studies of character. Against a genteel country landscape of formal parks and stately homes, the gossipy Mrs. Norris becomes a masterful comic creation; the fickle young suitor Henry Crawford provides an unequalled portrait of an unscrupulous young man; and the complexly drawn Fanny Price emerges as one of Jane Austen's finest achievements—the poor cousin who comes to stay with her wealthy relatives at *Mansfield Park* and learns how the game of love can too easily turn to folly. More intricately plotted and wider in scope than Austen's earlier works, *Mansfield Park* continues to enchant and delight us as a superb example of a great author's craft.

作者简介

Though the domain of Jane Austen's novels was as circumscribed as her life, her caustic wit and keen observation made her the equal of the greatest novelists in any language. Born the seventh child of the rector of Steventon, Hampshire, on December 16, 1775, she was educated mainly at home. At an early age she began writing sketches and satires of popular novels for her family's entertainment. As a clergyman's daughter from a well-connected family, she had an ample opportunity to study the habits of the middle class, the gentry, and the aristocracy. At twenty-one, she began a novel called "The First Impressions" an early version of *Pride and Prejudice*. In 1801, on her father's retirement, the family moved to the fashionable resort of Bath. Two years later she sold the first version of *Northanger Abbey* to a London publisher, but the first of her novels to appear was *Sense and Sensibility*, published at her own expense in 1811. It was followed by *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), and *Emma* (1815).

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在线试读部分章节

From Amanda Claybaugh's Introduction to *Mansfield Park* Mary Crawford is, or so it seems, the very model of a Jane Austen heroine. Spirited, warm-hearted, and, above all else, witty, she displays all the familiar Austen virtues, and she stands in need of the familiar Austen lessons as well. Like Elizabeth Bennet, the heroine of *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), she banters sarchly with the man she is falling in love with, and, like Elizabeth, she must learn to set aside her preconceptions in order to recognize that love. Like Emma Woodhouse, the heroine of *Emma* (1816), she speaks more brilliantly and speculates more dazzlingly than anyone around her, and, like Emma, she must learn to rein in the wit that tempts her at times to impropriety. But Mary Crawford is not the heroine of *Mansfield Park* (1814)—Fanny Price is, and therein lies the novel's great surprise. For Fanny differs not merely from Mary, but also from our most basic expectations of what a novel's protagonist should do and be. In Fanny, we have a heroine who seldom moves and seldom speaks, and never errs or alters.

"I must move," Mary announces, "'resting fatigues me'." Before her arrival at Mansfield, she had made a glamorous circuit of winters in London and summers at the country houses of friends, with stops at fashionable watering places in between, and at Mansfield she is no less mobile. A vigorous walker, she soon takes up riding, cantering as soon as she mounts. Fanny, by contrast, has hardly left the grounds of Mansfield since her arrival eight years before, and she is further immobilized by her weakness and timidity. A half-mile walk is beyond her, a ball, she fears, will exhaust her, and she is prostrated by headache after picking roses. She must be lifted onto the horse she was long too terrified to approach, and her exercise consists of being led by a groom.

"Now, do not be suspecting me of a pun, I entreat," says Mary to her listeners, who have not, in fact, caught the joke at all. So dazzling a talker is Mary that she must serve as her own best audience, amusing herself with witticisms the others cannot hear. With a keener eye and a sharper tongue than

those around her, Mary sets her words dancing alongside the inanities, vulgarities, and hypocrisies that make up the other characters' speech. Fanny, by contrast, barely speaks at all, and when she does, it is in the silencing language of moral certainty. "Very indecorous," Edmund says of Mary's far more captivating discourse, and Fanny is quick to agree and contribute a judgment of her own: "and very ungrateful." There is little that can be said after that.

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