

《EMMA (ISBN=9780679405818) 》

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编辑推荐

《爱玛》是英国乡村中产阶级生活的工笔浮世绘，也是奥斯丁六部小说中*成功的一部，它以滑稽曲折的情节而独占鳌头，讲述一个任性自负的女子如何发现真爱就在身边的故事。奥斯丁笔下的女主人公大多热情聪明独立、言谈机智风趣，与现代女性心理有灵犀，处处相通。

内容简介

(Book Jacket Status: Jacketed) The most perfect of Jane Austen's perfect novels begins with twenty-one-year-old Emma Woodhouse comfortably dominating the social order in the village of Highbury, convinced that she has both the understanding and the right to manage other people's lives-for their own good, of course. Her well-meant interfering centers on the aloof Jane Fairfax, the dangerously attractive Frank Churchill, the foolish if appealing Harriet Smith, and the ambitious young vicar Mr. Elton-and ends with her complacency shattered, her mind awakened to some of life's more intractable dilemmas, and her happiness assured. Jane Austen's comic imagination was so deft and beautifully fluent that she could use it to probe the deepest human ironies while setting before us a dazzling gallery of characters-some pretentious or ridiculous, some admirable and moving, all utterly true.

作者简介

Jane Austen (1775-1817) was extremely modest about her own genius but has become one of English literature's most famous women writers. She is the author of Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, Emma, Persuasion, Mansfield Park and Northanger Abbey.

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在线试读部分章节

From Steven Marcus's Introduction to Emma
The first sentence of Emma is only less well known than the legendary opening of *Pride and Prejudice*. "Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her." The immediate effect of this statement is to stop us, we readers, in our tracks. It is also aheads-up or alert, signaling to us as the narrator's adherents and collaborators to step up the volume and fine-tune the attentiveness that we direct toward the page. It begins with a broadside of affirmations and modulates into a conclusion that intimates serious problems may exist in the offing. Emma is very good looking in a rather striking and forceful way (not pretty or, here, beautiful); she is intelligent and quick-witted; and she is more than affluent when it comes to material means. She takes pleasure as well in the amenities of an established place in which to live, the establishment being part of a settled order in which she also feels at home. And best of all, perhaps, she is blessed with a "happy" temperament or general tone of well-being. With all these fortunate and combined bestowals, is there anything else to ask for? Well, yes—since they amount, the narrator remarks without pausing, to no more than "seemed." The dubiety carried in that ironic reservation turns the sentence around and prepares us for vexation and distress.

Emma has also reached a conventional juncture or locus of passage in the life cycle of European women and men. And this reference to numbers leads to a series of statements that inform us about how, in turn, those twenty-one years are to be regarded. Emma's mother has been dead for about sixteen years, since that is the interval during which Miss Taylor has been employed as her beloved governess—Emma's memory of her goes back to the age of five. Emma's older married sister, Isabella, is at least six years her senior, since we soon learn that she has been married for seven years and already has five children, the youngest of whom is less than a year old. It is reasonable to assume that Emma "had been mistress" of her father's house since she was about thirteen (a number that will come up later). Her father's age we will get to in a bit.

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