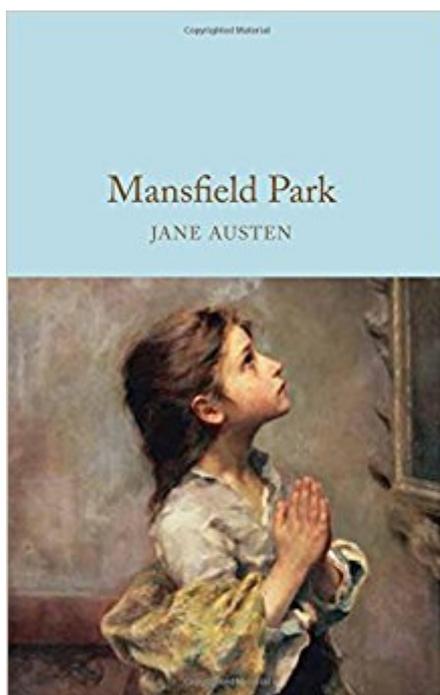


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Mansfield Park (Macmillan Collector's Library)



Synopsis

Mansfield Park is a novel about town and country, surface dazzle and lasting values. Fanny Price, a poor relation, is brought up at the wealthy Bertrams' country house and falls for Edmund, the younger son. Their lives are disrupted, however, by the arrival of the worldly Mary Crawford and her brother Henry. With her usual psychological insight and attention to detail, Jane Austen paints an irresistibly lifelike portrait of shifting values and split loyalties. Illustrated by Hugh Thomson, with an Afterword by Nigel Cliff. Designed to appeal to the book lover, the Macmillan Collector's Library is a series of beautifully bound gift editions of much loved classic titles. Bound in real cloth, printed on high quality paper, and featuring ribbon markers and gilt edges, Macmillan Collector's Library are books to love and treasure.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Mansfield Park" has always been Jane Austen's most controversial novel. The heroine of the book is Fanny Price, a powerless and socially marginal young woman. To almost everyone she knows, she barely exists. As a child, she is sent to live with the family of her wealthy uncle. Her parents give her up without regret, and her uncle only takes her in because he is deceived into doing so. Fanny's wealthy relations, when they deign to notice her at all, generally do so only to make sure she knows of her inferiority and keeps in her place. Fanny is thus almost completely alone, the only kindness she receives coming from her cousin Edmund. Forced by circumstances to be an observer, Fanny

is a faultlessly acute one, as well as the owner of a moral compass that always points true north. Those who dislike "Mansfield Park" almost invariably cite Fanny as the novel's central fault. She is generally accused of being two things: (1) too passive, and (2) too moral. The charge of passivity is perplexing. Surely it is evident that for her to challenge those in power over her is extremely dangerous - in fact, when she finally does challenge them, on a matter of the greatest importance to her and of next to no importance to them, she is swiftly reminded of the weakness of her situation by being deported back to the impoverished family of her parents, who receive her with indifference. The charge of morality is easier to understand - many readers feel themselves being silently accused by Fanny, and they don't like it. The interesting thing is that those same readers often enjoy "Pride and Prejudice", even though it is evident that the same moral standards are in place in both books. So, why do readers feel the prick of criticism in one and not the other?

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