

The Jane Austen Collection

Volume I

Emma • Mansfield Park • Northanger Abbey • The Biography

Read by **Juliet Stevenson** and **Teresa Gallagher**

Each of the great novels by Jane Austen are distinguished by their heroines, and here, in *Northanger Abbey*, *Mansfield Park* and *Emma*, we have three very different heroines.

In *Northanger Abbey*, Catherine Morland, a country clergyman's daughter, longs for mystery and romance – a desire spurred by her reading of the fashionable Gothic novels. When she is invited to stay with the beguiling Henry Tilney at Northanger Abbey, she expects mystery and intrigue at every turn. However, the truth turns out to be even stranger than fiction.

At the tender age of ten, Fanny Price is adopted by her rich relations and is removed from the poverty of her home in Portsmouth to the opulence of Mansfield Park. Dependent, helpless, neglected and forgotten, Fanny struggles to come to terms with her new life until, tested almost to the limits of her endurance, she assumes her rightful role...

Arrogant, self-willed and egotistical, Emma is Jane Austen's most unusual heroine. Her interfering ways and inveterate matchmaking are at once shocking and comic and precipitate herself and her immediate circle into a web of misunderstanding and intrigue from which no one emerges unchanged.

The most intriguing heroine of them all, however, was Jane Austen herself, and in her classic biography of one of the greatest English novelists, Elizabeth Jenkins shows how often the settings and characters mirrored the writer's own life in Hampshire.

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