

<<爱玛>>

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内容概要

爱玛出生在海伯里村一个乡绅家庭中，母亲早故，她在家庭女教师泰勒小姐的教育下长大，后泰勒小姐和威斯顿先生结婚，离开了爱玛家。

爱玛和本村寄宿学校中一位无家可归的少女哈里特成了朋友，她把自己视作哈里特的保护人，决心为她找一个合适的丈夫。

青年农民马丁倾心于哈里特，但哈里特受爱玛的等级门第观念影响拒绝了他。

爱玛一心想促成哈里特和牧师爱尔顿的结合，最终却发现爱尔顿爱慕的是自己，而失望的爱尔顿也只好另娶了。

海伯里村还住着贝茨母女二人。

贝茨太太的另一个女儿婚后去世，留下一个孤女珍妮。

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作者简介

简·奥斯汀(1775~1817):英国女小说家。
生于乡村小镇斯蒂文顿。
奥斯汀没有上过正规学校,在父母指导下阅读了大量文学作品。
她20岁左右开始写作,共发表了6部长篇小说。
1811年出版的《理智和感伤》是她的处女作,随后又接连发表了《傲慢与偏见》(1813)、《曼斯菲尔德花园》(1814)和《爱玛》(1815)。
《诺桑觉寺》和《劝导》(1818)是在她去世后第二年发表的,并署上了作者真名。

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She exerted herself; and did try to make her comfortable, by considering all that had passed as a mere trifle, and quite unworthy of being dwelt on. It might be distressing, for the moment, said she; but you seem to have behaved extremely well; and it is over—and may never—can never, as a first meeting, occur again, and therefore you need not think about it. Harriet said, very true; and she would not think about it; but still she talked of it—still she could talk of nothing else; and Emma, at last, in order to put the Martins out of her head, was obliged to hurry on the news, which she had meant to give with so much tender caution; hardly knowing herself whether to rejoice or be angry, ashamed or only amused, at such a state of mind in poor Harriet—such a conclusion of Mr. Elton's importance with her! Mr. Elton's rights, however, gradually revived. Though she did not feel the first intelligence as she might have done the day before, or an hour before, its interest soon increased, and before their first conversation was over, she had talked herself into all the sensations of curiosity, wonder and regret, pain and pleasure, as to this fortunate Miss Hawkins, which could conduce to place the Martins under proper subordination in her fancy. Emma learned to be rather glad that there had been such a meeting. It had been serviceable in deadening the first shock, without retaining any influence to alarm. As Harriet now lived, the Martins could not get at her, without seeking her, where hitherto they had wanted either the courage or the condescension to seek her; for since her refusal of the brother, the sisters had never been at Mrs. Goddard's; and a twelvemonth might pass without their being thrown together again with any necessity, or even any power of speech. MR. KNIGHTLEY might quarrel with her, but Emma could not quarrel with herself. He was so much displeased, that it was longer than usual before he came to Hartfield again; and when they did meet, his grave looks shewed that she was not forgiven. She was sorry, but could not repent. On the contrary, her plans and proceedings were more and more justified, and endeared to her by the general appearances of the next few days. The Picture, elegantly framed, came safely to hand soon after Mr. Elton's return, and being hung over the mantelpiece of the common sitting-room, he got up to look at it, and sighed out his half sentences of admiration just as he ought; and as for Harriet's feelings, they were visibly forming themselves into as strong and steady an attachment as her youth and sort of mind admitted. Emma was soon perfectly satisfied of Mr. Martin's being no otherwise remembered, than as he furnished a contrast with Mr. Elton, of the utmost advantage to the latter. Her views of improving her little friend's mind, by a great deal of useful reading and conversation, had never yet led to more than a few first chapters, and the intention of going on to-morrow. It was much easier to chat than to study; much easier to let her imagination range and work at Harriet's fortune, than to be labouring to enlarge her comprehension or exercise it on sober facts; and the only literary pursuit which engaged Harriet at present, the only mental provision she was making for the evening of life, was the collecting and transcribing all the riddles of every sort that she could meet with, into a thin quarto of hot-pressed paper, made up by her friend, and ornamented with cyphers and trophies. In this age of literature, such collections on a very grand scale are not uncommon. Miss Nash, head-teacher at Mrs. Goddard's, had written out at least three hundred; and Harriet, who had taken the first hint of it from her, hoped, with Miss Woodhouse's help, to get a great many more. Emma assisted with her invention, memory and taste; and as Harriet wrote a very pretty hand, it was likely to be an arrangement of the first order, in form as well as quantity. Mr. Woodhouse was almost as much interested in the business as the girls, and tried very often to recollect something worth their putting in. So many clever riddles as there used to be when he was young—he wondered he could not remember them! but he hoped he should in time. And it always ended in Kitty, a fair but frozen maid. His good friend Perry too, whom he had spoken to on the subject, did not at present recollect any thing of the riddle kind; but he had desired Perry to be upon the watch, and as he went about so much, something, he thought, might come from that quarter. EMMA and Harriet had been walking together one morning, and, in Emma's opinion, been talking enough of Mr. Elton for that day. She could not think that Harriet's solace or her own sins required more; and she was therefore industriously getting rid of the subject as they returned;—but it burst out again when she thought she had succeeded, and after speaking some time of what the poor must suffer in winter, and receiving no other answer than a very plain five—Mr. Elton is so good to the

poor! she found something else must be done. They were just approaching the house where lived Mrs. and Miss Bates. She determined to call upon them and safety in numbers. There was always sufficient reason for such an attention; Mrs. and Miss Bates loved to be called on, and she knew she was considered by the very few who presumed ever to see imperfection in her, as rather negligent in that respect, and as not contributing what she ought to the stock of their scanty comforts. She had had many a hint from Mr. Knightley and some from her own heart, as to her deficiency—but none were equal to counteract the persuasion of its being very disagreeable,—a waste of time—tiresome women—and all the horror of being in danger of falling in with the second rate and third rate of Highbury, who were calling on them for ever, and therefore she seldom went near them. But now she made the sudden resolution of not passing their door without going in—observing, as she proposed it to Harriet, that, as well as she could calculate, they were just now quite safe from any letter from Jane Fairfax. EMMA could not forgive her;—but as neither provocation nor resentment were discerned by Mr. Knightley, who had been of the party, and had seen only proper attention and pleasing behaviour on each side, he was expressing the next morning, being at Hartfield again on business with Mr. Woodhouse, his approbation of the whole; not so openly as he might have done had her father been out of the room, but speaking plain enough to be very intelligible to Emma. He had been used to think her unjust to Jane, and had now great pleasure in marking an improvement.

A very pleasant evening, he began, as soon as Mr. Woodhouse had been talked into what was necessary, told that he understood, and the papers swept away;—particularly pleasant. You and Miss Fairfax gave us some very good music. I do not know a more luxurious state, sir, than sitting at one's ease to be entertained a whole evening by two such young women; sometimes with music and sometimes with conversation. I am sure Miss Fairfax must have found the evening pleasant, Emma. You left nothing undone. I was glad you made her play so much, for having no instrument at her grandmothers, it must have been a real indulgence. I am happy you approved, said Emma, smiling; but I hope I am not often deficient in what is due to guests at Hartfield. No, my dear, said her father instantly; that I am sure you are not. There is nobody half so attentive and civil as you are. If any thing, you are too attentive. The muffin last night—if it had been handed round once, I think it would have been enough. No, said Mr. Knightley, nearly at the same time; you are not often deficient; not often deficient either in manner or comprehension. I think you understand me, therefore. An arch look expressed—I understand you well enough; but she said only, Miss Fairfax is reserved. I always told you she was—a little; but you will soon overcome all that part of her reserve which ought to be overcome, all that has its foundation in diffidence. What arises from discretion must be honoured.

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编辑推荐

有一句很经典的话：世界上这一半人的乐趣，那一半人永远不会懂。这句话就出自这部简·奥斯汀的小说《爱玛》。可以说，它是简·奥斯汀的小说中最"搞笑"的一部，如果你爱上了可爱的女主人公，一点儿也不奇怪，因为她会为你带来了快乐。

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