



Mansfield Park

Jane Austen (1775 - 1815)

Read by:	Karen Savage	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	14 hours 24 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1021
Language:	English	UPC:	0684758936059
Style:	Solo	MSLP:	\$11.99
Genre:	Romance		

Fanny Price is the eldest daughter in a family of nine children struggling to get by on a naval officer's disability pension. At the age of ten she is sent to live with her wealthy aunt and family at **Mansfield Park**, where she lives the life of a Cinderella. Her good-natured cousin Edmund is the only family member who treats her well; Lady Bertram is lazy and indolent; her son Tom has a taste for gambling and the high life; and her daughters are vain and spoiled. Her other aunt, Mrs. Norris, lives at Mansfield Place and is openly contemptuous of Jane. Things get interesting with the arrival of the worldly and wealthy and Henry Crawford and his sister Mary and the loveless betrothal of her cousin Maria to the rich dullard Mr. Rushworth. Passions supercede good sense, and the result is a comedy of missed opportunities, betrayal, adultery, scandals and ruptured

relationships. The rules of the well-ordered world of polite society ultimately prevail: those who lack scruples and respect for the social contract get their comeuppance, while those that play by the rules find a happy ending. *Mansfield Park* is the third, the longest and the most controversial of Jane Austen's novels. It was published in 1813 following the success of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. Some find the character of Fanny timid and insipid; others find her complex and admire her faith, courage and inner growth over the course of the novel. The differing perspectives are a telling commentary on the challenges faced by women of her time.

Jane Austen (December 16, 1775 – July 18, 1817) was the seventh of eight children born to George and Cassandra Austen. Both parents were members of the lower ranks of the landed gentry. Her father was the rector of Anglican parishes in Steventon, Hampshire. She was educated by her father and brothers, and her family was supportive of her artistic ambitions. In her early twenties she began publishing novels of romantic fiction set among the landed gentry that focus on relationships and marriage as the only path available for women to achieve economic security and social standing. Although the plots of her books are quite comic, she is unsparing in her depiction of the people and the manners of the times and finds abundant opportunities for satire and trenchant social commentary.

Jane Austen was relatively unknown in her lifetime. Although she published four popular novels in rapid succession between 1811 and 1815, they were published anonymously and she had few reviews and little recognition. Her nephew published *A Memoir of Jane Austen* in 1869 that introduced her to a broader audience, and by the middle of the 20th century she was recognized by academia as one of the great English writers. Her focus on the realities of the lives of women in the late 18th and early 19th centuries gained even greater currency with the advent of feminism and women's studies. Her work has a large and ardent fan base that results in her works consistently ranking among the top best selling and most highly regarded classics in all literature.