



Pride and Prejudice

Jane Austen (1775 - 1815)

Read by:	Elizabeth Klett	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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Genre:	Romance		

Pride and Prejudice, a novel of manners, was first published in 1813 and remains one of the best loved novels of all time. Although its characters, Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, the Bennet family and others, are steeped in the insular world of Britain's landed gentry at the end of the Napoleonic wars, they are timeless, as attractive to today's audience as they were to readers in the Georgian and Regency Eras. It has been said that God draws straight with crooked lines, and perhaps nowhere is that more evident than in the comings and goings, false starts, premature endings, dead ends and yellow brick roads that mark the unlikely courtship of equals destined to be together. Such are the tortured, though light comedic journeys of Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy as they initially repulse one another like the wrong ends of magnets – only to be

drawn ineluctably together by the power of a love so strong and determined that it watches over the best laid plans of man and woman and laughs. This is the kind of novel that speaks to the fact of “soul mates,” of love destined, of a world in the hands of a loving God or Fate, who knows better and works His will so that characters such as Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy can find each other and the love that has been waiting for them despite themselves.

Pride and Prejudice is woven deeply into the fabric of our culture; it has been adapted to stage and screen countless times and has sold over twenty million copies world-wide.

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.