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Persuasion



Synopsis

(Book Jacket Status: Jacketed)Of all Jane Austen's great and delightful novels, Persuasion is widely regarded as the most moving. It is the story of a second chance. Anne Elliot, daughter of the snobbish, spendthrift Sir Walter Elliot, is a woman of quiet charm and deep feelings. When she was nineteen, she fell in love with "and was engaged to" a naval officer, the fearless and headstrong Captain Wentworth. But the young man had no fortune, and Anne allowed herself to be persuaded, against her profoundest instinct, to give him up. Now, at twenty-seven, and believing that she has lost her bloom, Anne is startled to learn that Captain Wentworth has returned to the neighborhood, a rich man and still unwed. Her never-diminished love is muffled by her pride. He seems cold and unforgiving. Even worse, he appears to be infatuated by the flighty and pretty Louisa Musgrove. What happens as Anne and Wentworth are thrown together in the social world of Bath "and as an eager new suitor appears for Anne" is touchingly and wittily told in a masterpiece that is also one of the most entrancing novels in the English language. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Persuasion" is a great literary work, and, to my mind, Jane Austen's finest book. This was her final completed novel before her death, and was published posthumously. As is often the case with Ms. Austen's fiction, "Persuasion" deals with the social issues of the times and paints a fascinating portrait of Regency England, especially when dealing with the class system. Rigid social barriers existed - and everyone wanted to marry "up" to a higher station - and, of course, into wealth. This is

also a very poignant and passionate story of love, disappointment, loss and redemption. The point Austen makes here, is that one should not ever be persuaded to abandon core values and beliefs, especially for ignoble goals. There are consequences, always. Gillian Beer writes a fascinating Introduction in this Penguin Classic Edition, in which she discusses Miss Austen's portrayal of the double-edged nature of persuasion. This complete and unabridged edition also contains a biography of the author, an Afterword, a new chronology and full textual notes. Sir Walter Elliot, Lord of Kellynch Hall, is an extravagant, self-aggrandizing snob, and a bit of a dandy to boot. He has been a widower for many years and spends money beyond his means to increase his social stature. His eldest daughter, who he dotes on, is as conceited and spoiled as he is. The youngest daughter, Anne, is an intelligent, sensitive, capable and unassuming woman in her late twenties when the story opens. She had been quite pretty at one time, but life's disappointments have taken their toll and her looks are fading. She and her sister are both spinsters. Anne had once been very much in love with a young, and as yet untried, naval officer. A woman who had been a close friend to Anne's mother, persuaded Anne to "break the connection," convincing her that she could make a much better match. After much consideration, Anne did not follow her heart or her better instincts, and she and her young officer, Frederick Wentworth, separated. She has never again found the mutual love or companionship that she had with him. Anne's older sister never married either, because she hadn't found anyone good enough! She still hopes, however, for an earl or a viscount. The Elliot family is forced to financially retrench because of their extravagance. They lease Kellynch Hall to...of all people...Wentworth's sister and her husband. Elliot, his oldest daughter and her companion, move to a smaller lodging in Bath for the season, leaving Anne to pack up their belongings before joining them. She gets the Cinderella treatment throughout the book. Anne decides to first visit with her middle sister, an abominably spoiled, whiny hypochondriac, Mrs. Musgrove. She has made a good, but not brilliant match to a local squire. Her husband, Charles Musgrove, his parents, and their two younger, eligible daughters, Louisa and Henrietta, are delightful. They all tolerate Mrs. Musgrove, barely, and adore Anne. It is at the Musgrove estate that Anne meets Frederick Wentworth again, after his absence of seven years. He is in the neighborhood, because his sister is now in the area, residing at Kellynch, of course. Wentworth is now a Captain in the Royal Navy and quite wealthy. When their eyes meet for the first time, you can absolutely feel Anne's longing and remorse. He is aloof with Anne, although civil. The man was hurtfully rejected once before and it appears that he still feels her snub. Now Wentworth is on the marriage market and Louisa sets her cap for him. Accidents and various adventures ensue, from the resorts of Lyme and Bath to the Musgrove estate, bringing Anne and Wentworth closer

together. The passion between the two is sooo palpable, although Very understated, (this is Regency England after all). I think this is Ms. Austen at her most passionate. Some scholars say that she modeled Anne Elliot after herself. This remarkable novel, and the issues it tackles, is just as germane today as it was when written. And the romance...well, no one does romance better than Jane Austen. JANA

This book is one of my favorites of all time. Many people dislike it or don't like it as much when compared to *Pride and Prejudice* or *Emma*, but there are many reasons why *Persuasion* should not be compared to Austen's other novels. This novel was the last one that Austen wrote before she died. It is a more mature novel, dealing with many issues not found in Austen's previous novels. One reason why people find faults with the book is that Anne Elliot, the heroine, is not as spunky or witty as an Elizabeth Bennett or an Emma Woodhouse. There is not so much wit flowing in the dialogue between characters, or even dialogue in general. But these differences between the novels make this one so unique. It is a novel of second chances. Anne Elliot, no longer in the bloom of youth, is a grown woman of 27 or 28 years. Eight years ago she had been happily in love with a handsome man named Frederick Wentworth. But, unfortunately, due to his financial status, and Anne under the influence of her family and close friend, was forced to reject his marriage proposal and they parted ways. But now, he is within her closest circle once again. Circumstances led to Anne staying with her married sister, Mrs. Muskgrove, while her own house was being let to Wentworth's sister and husband. Wentworth visits his sister and on calling on the Muskgroves finds Anne among them. Anne finds Wentworth, not only looking as good as he ever did, but is now Captain Wentworth, who has made his fortune. Wentworth, still angry with Anne over being rejected, causes him to treat Anne very coolly. But over many weeks of contact here and there, you catch on that Captain Wentworth isn't all that oblivious to Anne anymore, because of all the little 'glimpses' he throws at Anne. The tension between the two is amazing. You can sense a connection between the two, even though they are on opposite ends of the room. In Bath, the tension builds and builds until it culminates into one of the most moving and romantic reunions ever. The letter that Wentworth writes to Anne declaring his love is bound to bring a tear to your eye and a pang in your heart. Happily, all ends well, but throughout the novel you can easily sympathize with Anne. No longer youthful and no longer as pretty as she used to be, she is full of self-consciousness and confusion. She still loves him after all those years, but she cannot act upon her desires. Austen, yet again, excels in portraying her characters. Anne and Captain Wentworth are full and delightful characters that one must love. Her descriptions of Anne's vain father and snobbish older sister,

Elizabeth, hit the mark on satirizing the members of society during that time. She wittingly describes how everyone tolerates Mrs. Muskgrove's hypochondriatic self and how everyone deals with her in their own way. There is not so much dialogue between characters in this book, compared to Austen's other novels. Most of the book is in observation of Anne's character and feelings, which makes it so much easier to relate to everything that Anne feels and you understand her situation all the more. This is a wonderful novel, with many qualities, differing from those of Austen's previous novels, to enjoy and admire.

Over the years, I have read "Persuasion" by Jane Austen at LEAST 10 times. Simply put, it is my favorite book. While not everyone holds this novel with the same high esteem that I do, I urge those who have NOT read "Persuasion" to buy it. This book has meant different things to me at different times in my life. I have often reflected why I find the story so fascinating and believe it is because it so accurately portrays the human spirit and exposes our flaws and strengths with such transparency. Jane Austen reveals those who are so superficial that they see no goodness or worth other than beauty and wealth (Anne's father and sister); those who are so dependent that they do not listen to their own heart - but instead leave their most important decisions for others to make (Anne herself); and those whose pride has been wounded. And perhaps what is so captivating, Austen lets the reader vicariously "undo" an error in judgment. This is an excellent and timeless novel.

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