



Madame Bovary (Dover Thrift Editions)

By Gustave Flaubert

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Bored and unhappy in a lifeless marriage, Emma Bovary yearns to escape from the dull circumstances of provincial life. Married to a simple-minded but indulgent country doctor, she takes one lover, then another, hastens her husband's financial ruin with her extravagance, and eventually commits suicide.

Gustave Flaubert (1821–1880) was brought to trial by the French government on the grounds of this novel's alleged immorality, but unlike his less fortunate contemporary, Baudelaire, he narrowly escaped conviction.

Flaubert's powerful and deeply moving examination of the moral degeneration of a middle-class Frenchwoman is universally regarded as one of the landmarks of 19th-century fiction. It is reproduced here, complete and unabridged, in the classic translation by Eleanor Marx-Aveling, daughter of Karl Marx.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Madame Bovary is like the railroad stations erected in its epoch: graceful, even floral, but cast of iron." --
John Updike

From the Trade Paperback edition.

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: French

From the Back Cover

The year 1857 propelled Flaubert into the law courts and into celebrity. It was not exactly the kind of celebrity he had wished for. 'Madame Bovary' had appeared serially in 'La Revue de Paris'. Now the imperial prosecutor was attacking the work for being offensive to religion and morality. Not only the seduction scenes, but the episodes dealing with religion and the description of Emma's death, came under direct censure. More than the subject, the general tone of the novel was denounced as immoral: the pervasive eroticism, the poetry of adultery, the so-called 'realism' of the style. Flaubert, excellently defended by his lawyer, was acquitted. The book was published soon after, benefiting from the advance courtroom publicity.

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Tom Carter:

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