



Well-Read Women: Portraits of Fiction's Most Beloved Heroines

Samantha Hahn

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A treasure of a gift for the well-read woman, this collection brings together 50 stirring portraits, in watercolour and in word, of literature's most well-read female characters. Anna Karenina, Clarissa Dalloway, Daisy Buchanan...each seems to live on the page through celebrated artist Samantha Hahn's evocative portraits and hand-lettered quotations, with the pairing of art and text capturing all the spirit of the character as she was originally written. The book itself evokes vintage grace re-imagined for contemporary taste, with a cloth spine silk-screened in a graphic pattern, debossed cover, and pages that turn with the tactile satisfaction of watercolour paper. In the hand and in the reading, here is a new classic for the book lover's library.

Well-Read Women: Portraits of Fiction's Most Beloved Heroines Details

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Author : Samantha Hahn

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From Reader Review Well-Read Women: Portraits of Fiction's Most Beloved Heroines for online ebook

Emily (Obsessed Reader) says

Absolutely stunning book. Well worth the money to have on your shelf as a collector's item. I borrowed this from the library, but I loved it so much that I will definitely get my own copy for my personal collection.

Vanessa says

A stunning collection of watercolour paintings, depicting famous literary ladies and their quotes. I wasn't familiar with each and every one, but I know I will seek out those new to me, and linger over these pages again and again.

Saya says

Read for the challenge of: "Read a book about books."

What a marvelous piece of art! The portraits are gorgeous and the quotes are beautifully written and chosen. It makes me want to read every single book in this book. I'm definitely checking more of this artist's.

Ana says

This was cute, but a little disappointing. I like the art style and I agree with some depictions of popular heroines like Emma or Daisy. But I just think it's too pretty and, especially in the case of Pecola and Lady Kirtsubo, way too white.

Kelly says

This is the second time I have read this book and it is just as captivating as the first time I read it. The pictures are breathtaking and the quotes just emphasise the strength of these female characters and why they have earned their legendary status. It's a book that allows you to appreciate wonderful literary figures and stunning artwork.

Jenny Bunting says

I got this from the library because I wanted to look at it. I read it in 10 minutes and now I kinda want my own copy.

Let me start off by saying: IT'S SO PRETTY.

I love the selection. I love the watercolors. I love how the women looked like normal women. I love the quotes chosen. I made a mental note of about 10 classics I need to read because I love a fierce female character. It's a well made book. The cover feel substantial and the paper is high-quality and feel luxurious.

Flip through this. Simply amazing.

La Mala 🌸 says

Una joyita.

Tantas mujeres hermosas e inolvidables para conocer y otras para volver a visitar.

Amé sobre todo el retrato de Dolores Haze, la frase representa su tragedia (*I was a daisy-fresh girl...*"), y la imagen acompaña- no sensualmente como tantos Humbert Humbert en potencia han decidido retratarla, sino con honestidad brutal, la tristeza en la cara.

Aquí me tomo el atrevimiento de compartir otro par de favoritas...

Jessica says

This is an absolutely stunning book, both in terms of content and just the way it's been put together. Hahn's watercolour art style is so enchanting, very soft and delicate. For the books and characters included that I have read so far, I felt the quotes chosen to accompany each picture were very apt. Would have been nice to see more women of colour included, but that's my only qualm, and there's always the possibility for a second instalment I guess. Will definitely be dipping in and out of this again in future, such a lovely book to own!

Cindy says

I've been wanting this book for a long time because the cover is so beautiful and I thought I'd really enjoy looking at the beautiful illustrations, but once I sat down to read every page, I realized she decided to turn every literary figure into some type of Barbie doll--even the children are made to look like beautiful models instead of children. I thought this book was going to be about celebrating great literary characters, but

unfortunately, I think it sought to make "beautiful women" talk about love--I thought many of the quotes could have been chosen better. It doesn't even matter what you think a character would look like because Hahn will surely have tried to paint her as a Barbie doll. I also realized how badly this book lacks in diversity. There are two characters of "color" in here, and each is made to look as least ethnic as possible. I feel like Pecola had to wear a hat just so we wouldn't have to see her hair. I guess Hahn just wanted to paint beautiful blondes...

I was excited to get this book and hoped to display it in my home, but honestly, now I'd just be embarrassed to display such a Eurocentric book that mostly turns women into stereotypes in love.

Melina Souza says

Que livro lindo *-*

Ophelia says

What a marvelous piece of art!

The portraits are so gorgeous and the quotes are so artsy and beautifully chosen. It makes me want to pick up every single story mentioned in this book.

More people need to know of this book!

Joey Woolfardis says

One of my favourite parts of reading is meeting new characters and forming an opinion about them. I find I don't always love the characters others do, but neither do I hate the ones others do, either. However, I've never really felt myself looking up to characters in a way I've read some people do, and I feel like I've missed out slightly. There have been certain characters-of both genders-that I have always felt empathy for and perhaps identified with to a certain degree, but at no point have I become so enveloped within a character's aura that I have felt anything other than a slight fondness for them.

Well-Read Women brings together some of my other favourite things together, namely watercolour and quotes. The great thing about this book is that it doesn't contain that one type of woman that these days we are pressurised to become because people don't understand what Feminism actually is. There are heroines, damsels in distress, women who simply exist for themselves or for others, or all of those things and more. It is entirely possible to look up to two women for entirely different reasons.

The illustrations are just beautiful. Abstract in places, incomplete in others, but within each we gain a true sense of how these characters looked, but also what they thought, how they felt and why they existed within the narrative they did. The quotes are well chosen: often well-known and often not. It contains well-loved quotes from well-loved books, but also lesser known quotes from some characters you'd be forgiven for thinking were simply background characters. There is something here for every single reader and definitely not just for women, either. Yes, it's a coffee table book and no, it won't tax you incredibly, but it will transport you to over thirty different worlds within about five minutes, and there's not a lot of books that can claim that.

Jessica says

It certainly didn't take me days, but this book took longer than I expected to get through. I relished in the intricate, delicate detail of each heroine. I read and reread the lines, trying to remember the passages from books I knew, while imagining the context of those I didn't. Samantha Hahn's impressions of each woman is worthy of study, and I was introduced to some books I had forsaken as "simply not for me." After having a brief encounter with the heroine of Crime and Punishment, for example, Les Misérables, or even Dracula, I concluded that I have assumed I know more about literature than I thought I did. Whether I read them is not as important as the fact that my world has just become a bit bigger, and that is entirely thanks to Hahn's curation of the Western canon.* Find this book whether you are an admirer of art, the female form, looking to expand your TBR, or are simply a reader of English prose. You can't go wrong.

*I'm not mathematician, but 99% is WC.

Juliette says

This coffee table book features stunning watercolors of literary heroines. My favorites are Alice, Hester Prynne, Nancy Drew, Ophelia, Cosette, Juliet and Antigone. I would love for Chronicle Books to release a wall calendar and note cards by this artist. Also, a portion of this book's proceeds are donated to Room to Read, a charity that supports literacy and gender equality. A beautiful book & meaningful cause!

Latie says

This would make a fantastic gift for those who have a hard time buying, especially for picky book worms! The book is comprised of vividly rendered photos in stunning water colour portraying various female characters of literature. Each stunning portrait is accompanied by a quote handwritten in water colour. the most stand out part of the book was the artistry- it's the main reason why I just had to own it. I felt some of the quotes chosen where either a little vague, or cliche- but the majority were beautiful, meaningful, or curious- enough to make you want to learn about the story behind the character.

"What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult to each other?"
-Dorothea Brooke, Middlemarch by George Eliot (p.p. 89, Samantha Hahn)

In other words, this book serves as a vivid gateway to new stories for the avid female (or male) reader to enjoy.
