

Synopsis

In this #1 international bestseller, a young woman leaves everything behind to work as a librarian in a remote French village, where she finds her outlook on life and love challenged in every way. Prudencia Prim is a young woman of intelligence and achievement, with a deep knowledge of literature and several letters after her name. But when she accepts the post of private librarian in the village of San Ireneo de Arnois, she is unprepared for what she encounters there. Her employer, a book-loving intellectual, is dashing yet contrarian, always ready with a critique of her cherished Jane Austen and Louisa May Alcott. The neighbors, too, are capable of charm and eccentricity in equal measure, determined as they are to preserve their singular little community from the modern world outside. Prudencia hoped for friendship in San Ireneo but she didn't suspect that she might find love—nor that the course of her new life would run quite so rocky or would offer challenge and heartache as well as joy, discovery, and fireside debate. Set against a backdrop of steaming cups of tea, freshly baked cakes, and lovely company, *The Awakening of Miss Prim* is a distinctive and delightfully entertaining tale of literature, philosophy, and the search for happiness.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I received a free copy of the book in exchange for an honest review. A timeless love story mimics nature — “aspiring flowers, winding rivers, composting pasts. Debut novelist Natalia Sanmartin Fenollera captures the essence of plein air in *The Awakening of Miss Prim*. In the story, enlightenment and love are a vine that slowly curls around Miss Prim's life. Miss Prudencia Prim

possesses many academic degrees, but has yet to use any of them when she applies for the position of librarian for an eccentric gentleman in San Ireneo de Arnois. San Ireneo offers the backstory and amplifies the philosophies of Miss Prim's employer. The village is rural and tucked away from the clamor of modernity. Her employer, who she names "the Man in the Wingchair" for where she first met him, established San Ireneo in admiration of the "splendor of an ancient culture" and the "purity of old customs" minus any antediluvian inequalities between the sexes. The like-minded villagers hold fast to their principles of devotion to reading and study, participation in the education of the citizen's children, and respect for each other's contribution to the community. Life in San Ireneo is harmonious and a touch magical. Mystifying the paradise is a monk with an oracle's touch who is the Man in the Wingchair's spiritual guide. Miss Prim arrives in the principled town with well-examined opinions about human interactions and development. Her naming of her employer exemplifies her desire to have everything named, organized, and most importantly proved. Yet, she came to San Ireneo to escape an unrest she attributes to modern life. The unrest becomes a central discussion between Miss Prim and the Man in the Wingchair.

This is a truly amazing book. I loved about everything about the book, the characters, the story, the little insights that are shared, and above all, the little town where they live. It is the dream of anybody who has ever thought about getting rid of their regular job and move to a community where values like friendship and caring for each other are more important than money, careers and prestige. "[T]here was something hidden beneath the surface of the community. In the area around San Ireneo de Arnois there were no factories, large businesses or offices. All the shops sold high-quality goods, produces locally." "A quiet, peaceful community of home and business owners, that's what it was." The inhabitants have escaped the city, but not all for the same reasons. Miss Prim wants to escape the noise in her head and has found unexpected friendship and good conversation in the town and at her employer's house. The main character is funny, and witty, and very set in her ways and beliefs. Her new situation often tests her patience, and her employer infuriates her with his comments and always seems to win their debates. But at the same time, both of them enjoy crossing their swords verbally. It is a joy to read about their discussions, that are often philosophical, and also abstract, comical and absurd at times. "As usual, the discussion with him had given her a headache. She didn't understand the logic of the conversation. How had they reached this point? When had they gone from women's literature to the pathology of the emotions?". Small talk is frowned upon in the community, and people speak their mind and are very frank. Soon the feminist

society decides to find a husband for Miss Prim.

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