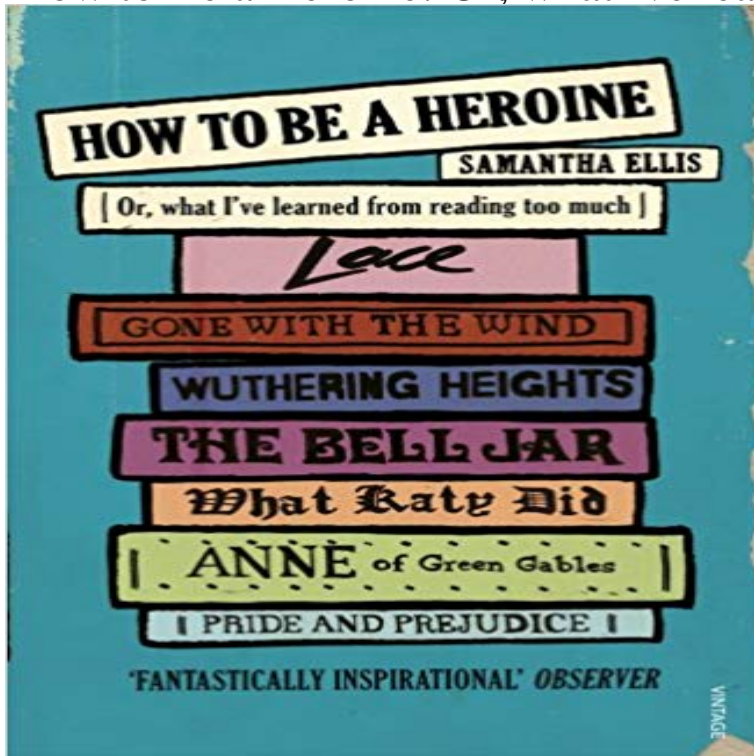


How to Be a Heroine: Or, what Ive learned from reading too much



A funny, touching, inspiring exploration of the role of heroines, and our favourite books, in all our lives. Cathy Earnshaw or Jane Eyre? Petrova or Posy? Scarlett or Melanie? Lace or Valley of the Dolls? On a pilgrimage to Wuthering Heights, Samantha Ellis found herself arguing with her best friend about which heroine was best: Jane Eyre or Cathy Earnshaw. She was all for wild, passionate Cathy; but her friend found Cathy silly, a snob, while courageous Jane makes her own way. And that's when Samantha realised that all her life she'd been trying to be Cathy when she should have been trying to be Jane. So she decided to look again at her heroines -- the girls, women, books that had shaped her ideas of the world and how to live. Some of them stood up to the scrutiny (she will always love Lizzy Bennet); some of them most decidedly did not (turns out Katy Carr from What Katy Did isn't a carefree rebel, she's a drip). There were revelations (the real heroine of Gone with the Wind? It's Melanie), joyous reunions (Anne of Green Gables), poignant memories (Sylvia Plath) and tearful goodbyes (Lucy Honeychurch). And then there was Jilly Cooper. How To Be A Heroine is Samantha's funny, touching, inspiring exploration of the role of heroines, and our favourite books, in all our lives -- and how they change over time, for better or worse, just as we do.

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