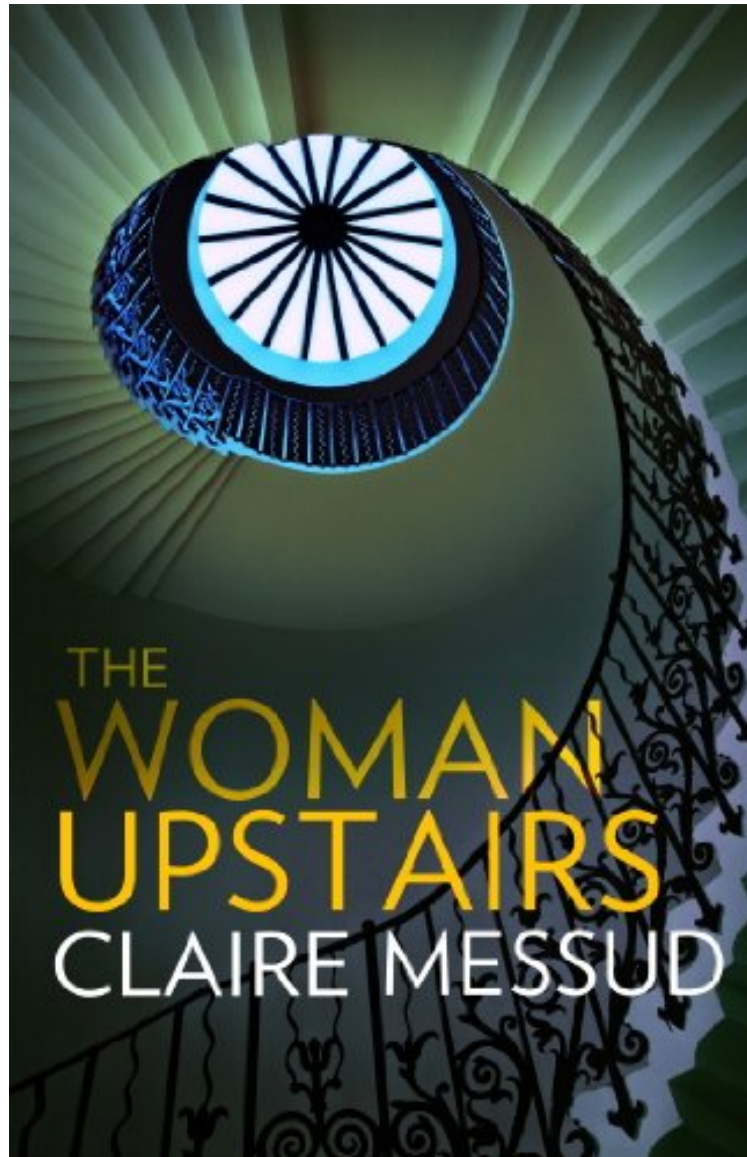


[Pdf free] The Woman Upstairs (English Edition)

## The Woman Upstairs (English Edition)

*Von Claire Messud*

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**Von Claire Messud : The Woman Upstairs (English Edition)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Woman Upstairs (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. BrilliantVon Susan NeimanThis is a brilliant and courageous novel about love and friendship and the boundaries thereof, beautifully written and hard to put down. You may see the world differently after reading this book; you will

certainly come away convinced that great literary fiction is still very much alive.<sup>2</sup> von 3 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Nora von oben Von Gerbrand Nora, eine alleinstehende Frau von 42 Jahren, Lehrerin an einer Grundschule, zieht Bilanz. Sie ist wütend, rasend. Viele Jahre war sie die 'Frau aus dem zweiten Stock', unauffällig, pflichtbewusst, freundlich, still. Einst hatte sie künstlerische Ambitionen, aber der Einfluss der Eltern und das eigene Naturell ließen einen blöhen, weil so häufigen Verlauf folgen: erst einen ordentlichen Beruf lernen, eine Basis legen. Oft ist so etwas die entscheidende Ausbremsung - erst etwas anderes machen als man eigentlich machen will. Mit 37 hat sie ihren Lucy-Jordan-Moment: "At the age of thirty-seven she realised she'd never ride through Paris in a sports car with the warm wind in her hair". Hat sie ein Scheinleben geführt, gibt es noch eine Chance für das Echte Leben? Gibt es dieses sogenannte Echte Leben überhaupt? Als sie bei einem neuen Schüler dessen Eltern kennenlernt, scheint die Chance da zu sein, öffnen sich Türen. Sie verliebt sich in den 8-jährigen Reza, in Sirena, seine Mutter, Italienerin und als Künstlerin kurz vor dem Durchbruch stehend, und in ihren Mann Skandar aus Beirut, Akademiker, der einen Auftrag an der Harvard University hat. Die Familie bietet ihr Freundschaft an. Als Sirena ihr vorschlägt, gemeinsam ein Atelier zu mieten, erhält ihr Wunsch, doch noch selbst ihre wahre Bestimmung als Künstlerin zu leben, neue Nahrung und Hoffnung. Sie gibt sich ihren Gefühlen für die drei hin, ergreift ihre Chance, wird durch ihre Verliebtheit eine andere Person - wie sie glaubt. Aber im ersten Kapitel war sie doch so wütend, es muss also etwas falsch gelaufen sein. Dieses Gefühl, dass irgendetwas merkwürdig ist, dass etwas ganz und gar nicht stimmt, hat man beim Lesen die ganze Zeit und das macht die Geschichte fesselnd und spannend. An einem Punkt dachte ich, oh nee, das wird doch jetzt nicht auf eine ganz banale Betrug/Seitensprung-Klitsche hinauslaufen - ja, irgendwie schon, aber doch auch ganz anders. Es gibt ein sehr überraschendes Ende. Wie Claire Messud den Charakter der Protagonistin entwickelt und sie exemplarisch werden lässt für die 'Frau aus dem zweiten Stock' ist sehr überzeugend und macht die Geschichte zu etwas Besonderem. Denn zwar ist Nora eine von vielen, deren Leben eigentlich nicht besonders genug ist, um erzählt zu werden, so lässt die Autorin durch ihre Art zu schreiben, eine Fremdheit, eine Faszination und Tiefe entstehen, die einen fortwährend neugierig bleiben lässt. Und nach der letzten Seite denkt man noch so manches Mal an Nora von oben.<sup>1</sup> von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Clever, intelligent and worthwhile Von annabel The plot, as such as there is one, is not new, nor is the story telling but the writing is superb. It allows you to feel fully in tune with the character, feel her emotional journey and literally will her to change her life. Typical of the Woman Upstairs she appears real and the inner emotional world separate from the appearance world. Many of the critics are spot on but it does not detract from a great read. Everything a book should be. Highly recommended.

Kurzbeschreibung Nora Eldridge has always been a good girl: a good daughter, colleague, friend, employee. She teaches at an elementary school where the children and the parents adore her; but her real passion is her art, which she makes alone, unseen. One day Reza Shahid appears in her classroom: eight years old, a perfect, beautiful boy. Reza's father has a fellowship at Harvard and his mother is a glamorous and successful installation artist. Nora is admitted into their charmed circle, and everything is transformed. Or so she believes. Liberation from her old life is not quite what it seems, and she is about to suffer a betrayal more monstrous than anything she could have imagined. Pressestimmen "A self-described 'good girl' lifts her mask in Messud's new novel. 'How angry am I?' Nora Eldridge rhetorically asks in her opening sentence. 'You don't want to know.' Nora is furious with herself: for failing to commit to being an artist, for settling for life as a third-grade teacher, for lacking the guts even to be openly enraged. Instead she is the woman upstairs, 'whose trash is always tidy, who smiles brightly in the stairwell.' So when the exotic Shahid family enters her life, Nora sees them as saviors. Reza is in her class; after another student attacks and calls the half-Lebanese boy 'a terrorist,' she meets his Italian mother, Sirena, the kind of bold, assertive artist Nora longs to be. . . . Nora's untrustworthy narration, a feminine counterpoint to the rantings of Dostoevsky's Underground Man, is an astonishing feat of creative imagination: at once self-lacerating and self-pitying, containing enough truth to induce squirms. Messud persuasively plunges us into the tortured psyche of a conflicted soul . . . Brilliant and terrifying." -- "Kirkus" (starred review) "With exhilarating velocity, fury, and wit, the superlative Messud immolates an iconic figure--the good, quiet, self-sacrificing woman--in this acid bath of a novel, while taking on the vicissitudes of family life and the paradoxes of art. Nora, our archly funny, venomous, and raging narrator, recounts her thirty-seventh year, when she was living alone and teaching third grade after the death of her mother. Nora longs to make art but hasn't mustered the necessary conviction. Enter the Paris-based Shahids. Reza, her new student, is a magnet for bullies stirred up by post-9/11 xenophobia. His Palestinian Lebanese father is a prominent academic spending a year at Harvard. His Italian mother, Sirena, is an artist in need of a studio mate. She promptly recruits Nora. A confident and passionate conduit for mythological powers, Sirena creates 'lush gardens and jungles made out of household items and refuse.' Nora, a veritable daughter of Ibsen, builds dollhouses--replicas of the rooms occupied by artists ranging from Emily Dickinson to Edie Sedgwick. Messud's scorching social anatomy, red-hot psychology, galvanizing story, and incandescent language make for an all-circuits-firing novel about enthrallment, ambition, envy, and betrayal. A tour de force portraying a no longer invisible or silent 'woman upstairs.'" --Donna Seaman, "Booklist" (starred review) "Claire

Messud's daring, Jamesian new novel takes so many chances and provokes so many questions. . . . Messud is a truth teller about the ruthlessness of art [and] makes a key point about creative work: It means smashing boundaries, using imagination to remake the world. . . . Messud is such a gifted painter of our choices and their consequences. She's never gone this deep before in showing us how our reality and our pipe dreams intersect. Her portrait of Nora Eldridge, a decent woman who has perhaps crossed the wrong bridges in her life, would move stone. What's going to become of Nora? What will the Shahids do?"Corrosively funny . . . Nora--a not-quite 40 schoolteacher as disappointed in her Katy Perry-obsessed students as she is in her own failed potential--finds her dormant creative passions awakened by a student's worldly mother, an artist who shows in Paris. An ardent friendship unfolds, ending in a betrayal that unleashes in Nora an eloquent, primal rage. Fifty years ago, Simone de Beauvoir faulted creative women for their unwillingness to 'dare to irritate, explore, explode,' Two generations later, anger this combustible still feels refreshing." --Megan O'Grady, "Vogue" "Heartfelt and profound. . . . From the outset, it's been clear that Claire Messud has all the necessary equipment--a fertile imagination, a grown-up sensibility, and writerly ambition in spades--to write very good fiction, perhaps even a novel that defined our times. Her latest novel is an absolute page-turner, from its grab-you-by-the-collar opening to its final rumination on the creative uses of anger. . . . For another, it may well be the first truly feminist (in the best, least didactic sense) novel I have read in ages--the novel, candid about sex and the intricacies of female desire, that Virginia Woolf hoped someone would write, given a room and income of her own. "The Woman Upstairs" takes on, at full throttle, the ways in which women are socialized into being accommodating 'nice girls, ' and the ruthlessness--the 'myopia'--that is necessary to pursue artistic ambition. It shows Messud at the height of her considerable powers, articulating the quandary of being alive and sentient, covetous and confused in the twenty-first century. . . . "The Woman Upstairs" is an extraordinary novel, a psychological suspense story of the highest sort that will leave you thinking about its implications for days afterward. Messud's skills are all on display here, [in] a work of fiction that is not just beautifully observed but also palpably inhabited by its gifted writer in a manner she has not quite da"Terrifyingly perceptive . . . "The Emperor's Children "is a quite good novel, [but] "The Woman Upstairs" does far more with a smaller cast [and] has much greater weight. Messud wants to make a point that even successful people can suffer from a lethal celebrity complex. Nora Eldridge is a kind of Madame Bovary for our time, someone who dreams not of romantic passion but of personal fame, in which the envy of the less fortunate figures importantly. . . . Nora is like Emma Bovary in the conviction that she needs the love of glamorous and important individuals to give her life meaning. . . . One particular triumph of "The Woman Upstairs" is that Messud's heroine is so sympathetic, and so eloquent and convincing, that the depth of her illusions is not always apparent. . . . Because Messud has lent Nora her own outstanding gifts as a writer we cannot help believing what she tells us, at least for a while." --Alison Lurie, "The New York of Books" "The new novel by the author of "The Emperor's Children "is like "Gone Girl "meets "The Bell Jar" A lonely teacher's fixation on a student's family slowly drives her insane. Messud's magic power? Keeping her flawed protagonist relatable to the very end." --Megan Angelo, "Glamour" "In this literary page-turner, a Boston teacher with dreams of becoming an artist is first enamored of, and then feels betrayed by, a seductive couple who've relocated from Paris." --Abbe Wright, "O, The Oprah Magazine" "Almost without knowing it, I was hungry for Nora Eldridge, the hero of Messud's new novel. The title names an archetype: the nice, unmarried lady on the third floor who smiles in the lobby and is quickly forgotten. Nora is a caring schoolteacher seemingly content to look after her ailing father, her dreams of living the life of an artist subsumed by the act of simply living a life. Bitterly funny and self-aware, she claims to be having a 'Lucy Jordan moment, ' name-checking the Marianne Faithfull song ."Exhilarating . . . Messud's previous novels, extraordinarily intelligent and well-crafted, are characterized by rationed or distant emotion. [But] "The Woman Upstairs" is utterly different--its language urgent, its conflicts outsize and unmooring, its mood incendiary. This psychologically charged story feels like a liberation. Messud's prose grabs the reader by the collar . . . Reading Nora's turbulent testament of belief and betrayal, you feel less like a spectator than a witness. . . . In this ingenious, disquieting novel, Messud has assembled an intricate puzzle of self-belief and self-doubt, showing the peril of seeking your own image in someone else's distorted mirror--or even, sometimes, in your own." --Liesl Schillinger, "The New York Times Book " "From its opening lines, Messud's new novel grips like a choke hold. . . .The most unlikely hero, Nora, self-identifies with scornful wit and rage as the titular Woman Upstairs. But oh how Messud, whose last novel was the sharp and brilliant "The Emperor's Children," gives her woman room to roar. . . . Sirena awakens in her an unapologetic lust of life that Nora was previously too good or too scared to claim. The narrative burns toward an inevitable betrayal of startling proportions, one that instead of diminishing Nora lights her ablaze. This is a book sweating with rage, and an exhilarating one. Read it in an openmouthed gulp. After the final powerful paragraphs, in which Nora howls in galvanized fury, throw it down and have a drink, or a dreamless nap. Don't be surprised if you then pick it back up and start all over again. A" --Karen Valby, "Entertainment Weekly" "In the ongoing debate over whether or not women can 'have it all' comes a Molotov cocktail thrown by an unlikely provocateur: Claire Messud's new novel . . . of friendship and betrayal . . . [which] posits that the natural state of womanhood, at least after age 40, is to have nothing, and that satisfaction of any sort can come on"Riveting . . . Messud is adept at evoking complex psychological territory, and here favors a controlled and notably unreliable style of narration. She is interested in the identities that women construct for

themselves, and in the maddening chasm that often divides intensity of aspiration from reality of achievement." --"The New Yorker" "Smoldering . . . a furious account of betrayal, the true source of which is withheld until the final pages. . . Messud crams much into her portrait of Nora's life: tart meditations on the creative impulse and the artistic ego, on the interplay between reality and fantasy and the often-pitiful limits of human communication. . . . Nora's world is piercingly evoked." --Hephzibah Anderson, "Bloomberg Businessweek" "You know a Woman Upstairs; maybe you are one. . . . This is not a simple story of a sidekick woman thwarted by her own fear, and the betrayal that haunts the 'Shahid years' explodes in a sudden, cruel flash, forcing Nora's long-simmering anger to boil over into a justified rage. Messud is an immensely talented writer, and in Nora she gives us a compelling, complex, and unforgettable narrator. "The Woman Upstairs" is a brilliantly paced story of fearsome love and obsessive longing, and the boundaries and sacrifices of what is to be a woman and to be an artist in the world." --Amanda Bullock, "Everyday eBook" "[A] powerful psychological thriller . . . As in a fairy tale, Nora becomes spellbound by a family that seems to embody what she is missing. The power of self-deception is one of the key themes. . . . This is not just a novel of real psychological insight. It is also a supremely well-crafted page-turner with a shocker of an ending." --Julia M. Klein, "The Boston Globe" " "Thrums with fury . . . Startling: a psychological and intellectual thriller." --"Los Angeles Times" "Tightly focused and intensely first-person . . . Nora storms onto the page in a fury to tell us the story of" Messud has many gifts as a novelist: She writes well, dramatizes, has a sharp ear, a literary critic's knack for marshaling and reverberating themes and, most crucially, a broad and deep empathy that enables her to portray a wide range of characters from the inside. . . . "The Woman Upstairs" is first-rate: It asks unsettling, unanswerable questions: How much do those who are not our family or our partners really owe us? How close can we really be to them before we start to become needy or creepy? The characters are fully alive." --John Broening, "The Denver Post" "Messud is a tremendously smart, accomplished writer, [and] Nora's fury explodes from the very first sentence of "The Woman Upstairs. . ." . . . The novel gives a voiceless woman a chance to howl." --Yvonne Zipp, "The Christian Science Monitor" "Engrossing . . . Think of her as the woman who leans out: the A student who puts others' needs first, plays by the rules, teaches instead of doing. Through the ensuing drama, which includes one of the more shocking betrayals in recent fiction, Messud raises questions about women's still-circumscribed roles and the price of success." --Kim Hubbard, "People" (A "People's" Pick) "Messud's account of [Nora's] search for recognition and release is as tight and vivid as Nora's pent-up passion. I was pulled in." --Mary Rawson, "Pittsburgh Post-Gazette" "Messud's crystallization of how it feels to crash into a midlife reckoning that resonated most and haunted me in the days after finishing her mesmerizing novel. . . . It boils and 'burns, ' and Messud gives us a double whammy to ensure we feel the pangs of midlife. . . . Messud is most interested in the collision between our inner lives and our reality. . . . While it was Messud's achingly beautiful characters that drew me in, it was her portrait of an inner life free to swell, untethered to the realities of children, a spouse and a mortgage that made me think. Seeing Nora live so obsessively in "Fantastic--one of those seemingly small stories that so burst with rage and desire that they barely squeeze between hard covers. The prose is impeccable. . . . Messud writes about happiness, and about infatuation--about love--more convincingly than any author I've encountered in years. She fills [her] protagonist with an inner life so rich and furious that you will never again nod hello in the hall to 'the woman upstairs' without thinking twice. . . . Is Nora's entrancement erotic, or bigger and stranger than sex? I'm not telling. Read the book." --Lionel Shriver, National Public Radio, "All Things Considered" "Bracing . . . not so much the story of the road not taken as that of the longed-for road that never appeared. . . . Nora's anger electrifies the narrative, and Messud masterfully controls the tension and pace. In this fierce, feminist novel, the reader serves as Nora's confessor, and it's a pleasure to listen to someone so eloquent, whose insights about how women are valued in society and art are sharp." --Jenny Shank, "Dallas News" "An elegant winner of a novel . . . quietly, tensely unfolding . . . Remarkably, Messud lets us experience Nora's betrayal as if it were our own, and what finally happens really is a punch in the stomach. Highly recommended." --Barbara Hoffert, "Library Journal" "Utterly compelling . . . Crisply illuminated." --Katherine Rowland, "Guernica" "Messud has many gifts as a novelist: She writes well, dramatizes, has a sharp ear, a literary critic's knack for marshaling and reverberating themes and, most crucially, a broad and deep empathy that enables her to portray a wide range of characters from the inside. . . . "The Woman Upstairs" is first-rate: It asks unsettling, unanswerable questions: How much do those who are not our family or our partners really owe us? How close can we really be to them before we start to become needy or creepy? The characters are fully alive." --John Broening, "The Denver PVerbetextThe stunning new novel from Claire Messud, author of The Emperor's Children, a top ten NYT bestseller