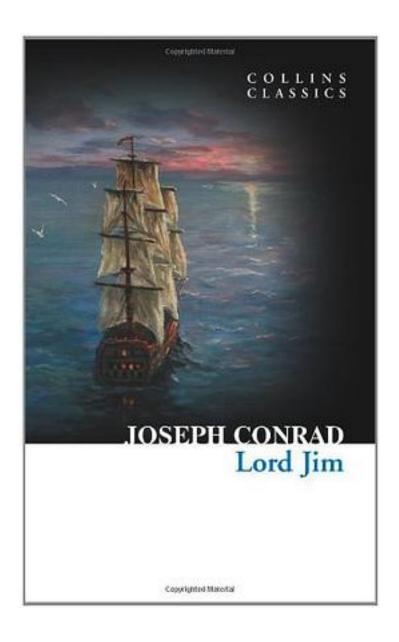
Lord Jim



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著者:Conrad, Joseph

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JOSEPH CONRAD (1857-1924) was one of the most remarkable figures in English literature. Born in Poland, and originally named Josef Teodor Konrad Walecz Korzeniowski, he went to sea at the age of seventeen and eventually joined the crew of an English vessel, becoming a British citizen in the process. He retired from the sea in 1894 and took up the pen, writing all his works in English, a language he had only learned as an adult. Despite this, he was a master stylist, both lush and precise. His outsider's eye gave him special insights into the moral dangers of the great age of European empires. In his prefactory note to this novel, Conrad said, "When this novel first appeared in book form a notion got about that I had been bolted away with. Some reviewers maintained that the work starting as a short story had got beyond the writer's control. One or two discovered internal evidence of the fact, which seemed to amuse them. They pointed out the limitations of the narrative form. They argued that no man could have been expected to talk all that time, and other men to listen so long. It was not, they said, very credible. After thinking it over for something like sixteen years, I am not so sure about that. Men have been known, both in the tropics and in the temperate zone, to sit up half the night 'swapping yarns.' This, however, is but one yarn, yet with interruptions affording some measure of relief. . . . "

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