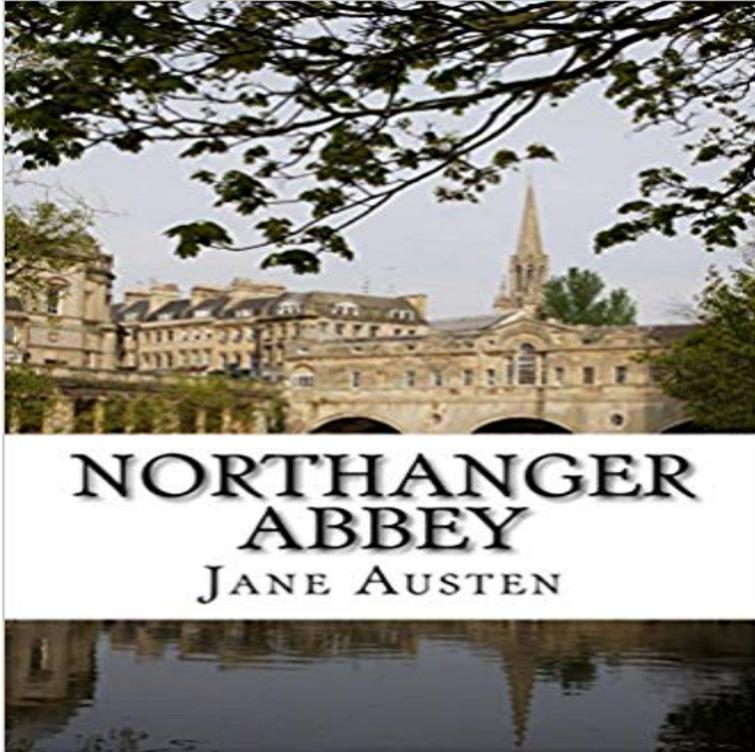


Northanger Abbey (Annotated Edition): by Jane Austen and Cascais Classic Editions (The World of Jane Austen Book 5)



Northanger Abbey was the first of Jane Austen's novels to be completed for publication, though she had previously made a start on *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. According to Cassandra Austen's Memorandum, *Susan* (as it was first called) was written circa 1798/99. It was revised by Austen for the press in 1803, and sold in the same year for £10 to a London bookseller, Crosby & Co., who decided against publishing. In the spring of 1816, the bookseller was content to sell it back to the novelist's brother, Henry Austen, for the exact sum of £10 that he had paid for it at the beginning, not knowing that the writer was by then the author of four popular novels. (Jane Austen had no public reputation as a writer during her lifetime, as all her novels were published anonymously.) The novel was further revised by Austen in 1817/18, with the intention of having it published. Amongst other changes, the lead character's name was changed from Susan to Catherine, and Austen retitled the book *Catherine* as a result. Austen died in July 1817. *Northanger Abbey* (as the novel was now called) was brought out posthumously in late December 1817 (1818 given on the title page), as the first two volumes of a four-volume set that also featured another previously unpublished Austen novel, *Persuasion*. Neither novel was published under the title Jane Austen had given it; the title *Northanger Abbey* is presumed to have been the invention of Henry Austen, who had arranged for the books' publication. In *Northanger Abbey*, seventeen-year-old Catherine Morland is one of ten children of a country clergyman. Although a tomboy in her childhood, by the age of 17 she is in training for a heroine and is excessively fond of reading Gothic novels, among which Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* is a favourite. Catherine is invited by the Allens, her wealthier neighbours in Fullerton, to accompany

them to visit the town of Bath and partake in the winter season of balls, theatre and other social delights. Although initially the excitement of Bath is dampened by her lack of acquaintances, she is soon introduced to a clever young gentleman, Henry Tilney, with whom she dances and converses. Much to Catherine's disappointment, Henry does not reappear in the subsequent week and, not knowing whether or not he has left Bath for good, she wonders if she will ever see him again.

Northanger Abbey is fundamentally a parody of Gothic fiction. Austen turns the conventions of eighteenth-century novels on their head, by making her heroine a plain and undistinguished girl from a middle-class family, allowing the heroine to fall in love with the hero before he has a serious thought of her, and exposing the heroine's romantic fears and curiosities as groundless. In this novel, several Gothic novels are mentioned, including most importantly *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian* by Ann Radcliffe. Austen also satirises *Clermont*, a Gothic novel by Regina Maria Roche. This last is included in a list of seven somewhat obscure Gothic works, known as the Northanger horrid novels as recommended by Isabella Thorpe to Catherine Morland. The directness with which Austen addresses the reader, especially at the end of the story, gives a unique insight into Austen's thoughts at the time, which is particularly important due to her letters having been burned at her request by her sister upon her death. Cascais Classic Editions is proud to offer you the best Kindle edition of this literary classic featuring one of the most acclaimed authors of the 19th century.

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