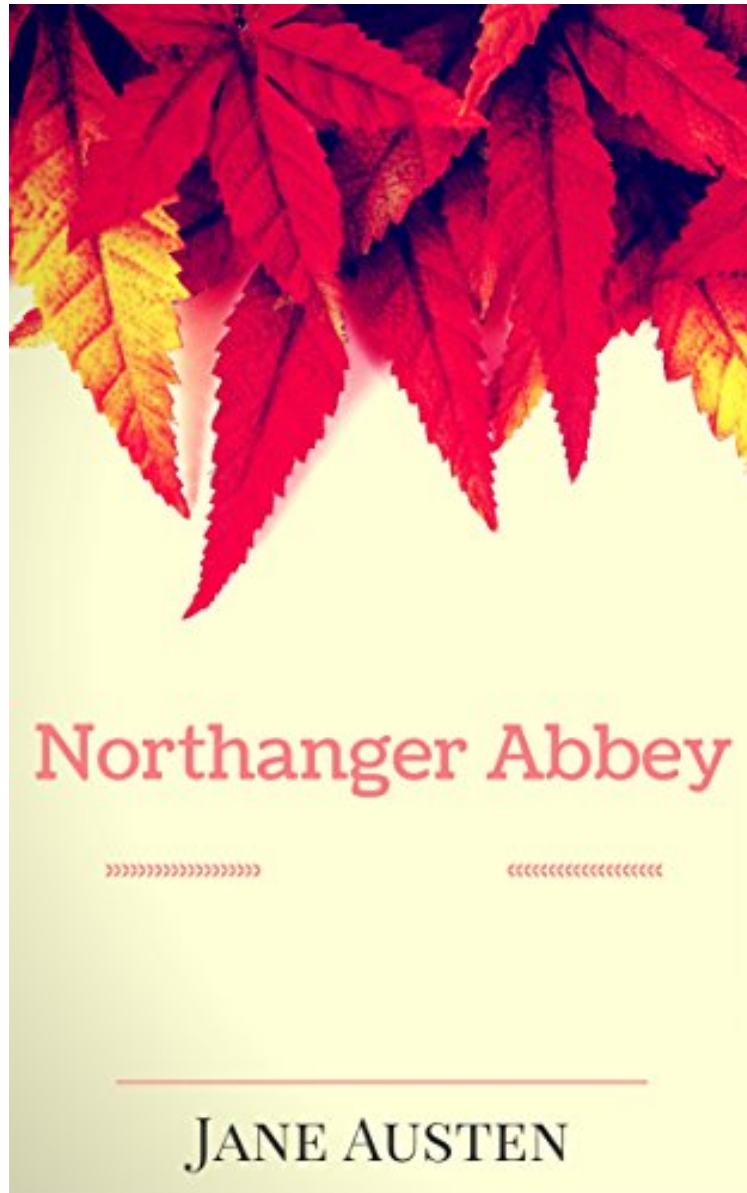


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Northanger Abbey: By Jane Austen: Illustrated (English Edition)

Von Jane Austen

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Kurzbeschreibung Northanger Abbey by Jane Austen How is this book unique? Tablet and e-reader formatted Original Unabridged Edition Author Biography included Illustrated version Northanger Abbey /nrr/ 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 10 that he had paid for it at the beginning, not knowing that the writer was by then the author of four popular novels. The novel was further revised by Austen in 1816/17, with the intention of having it published. Among 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(1818 given on the title page), as the first two volumes of a four-volume set that also featured another previously unpublished Austen novel, *Persuasion*.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 book's publication.

de Though *Northanger Abbey* is one of Jane Austen's earliest novels, it was not published until after her death--well after she'd established her reputation with works such as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, and *Sense and Sensibility*. Of all her novels, this one is the most explicitly literary in that it is primarily concerned with books and with readers. In it, Austen skewers the novelistic excesses of her day made popular in such 18th-century Gothic potboilers as Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Decrepit castles, locked rooms, mysterious chests, cryptic notes, and tyrannical fathers all figure into *Northanger Abbey*, but with a decidedly satirical twist. Consider Austen's introduction of her heroine: we are told on the very first page that "no one who had ever seen Catherine Morland in her infancy, would have supposed her born to be an heroine." The author goes on to explain that Miss Morland's father is a clergyman with "a considerable independence, besides two good livings--and he was not in the least addicted to locking up his daughters." Furthermore, her mother does not die giving birth to her, and Catherine herself, far from engaging in "the more heroic enjoyments of infancy, nursing a dormouse, feeding a canary-bird, or watering a rose-bush" vastly prefers playing cricket with her brothers to any girlish pastimes. Catherine grows up to be a passably pretty girl and is invited to spend a few weeks in Bath with a family friend. While there she meets Henry Tilney and his sister Eleanor, who invite her to visit their family estate, *Northanger Abbey*. Once there, Austen amuses herself and us as Catherine, a great reader of Gothic romances, allows her imagination to run wild, finding dreadful portents in the most wonderfully prosaic events. But Austen is after something more than mere parody; she uses her rapier wit to mock not only the essential silliness of "horrid" novels, but to expose the even more horrid workings of polite society, for nothing Catherine imagines could possibly rival the hypocrisy she experiences at the hands of her supposed friends. In many respects *Northanger Abbey* is the most lighthearted of Jane Austen's novels, yet at its core is a serious, unsentimental commentary on love and marriage, 19th-century British style. --Alix Wilber.com

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