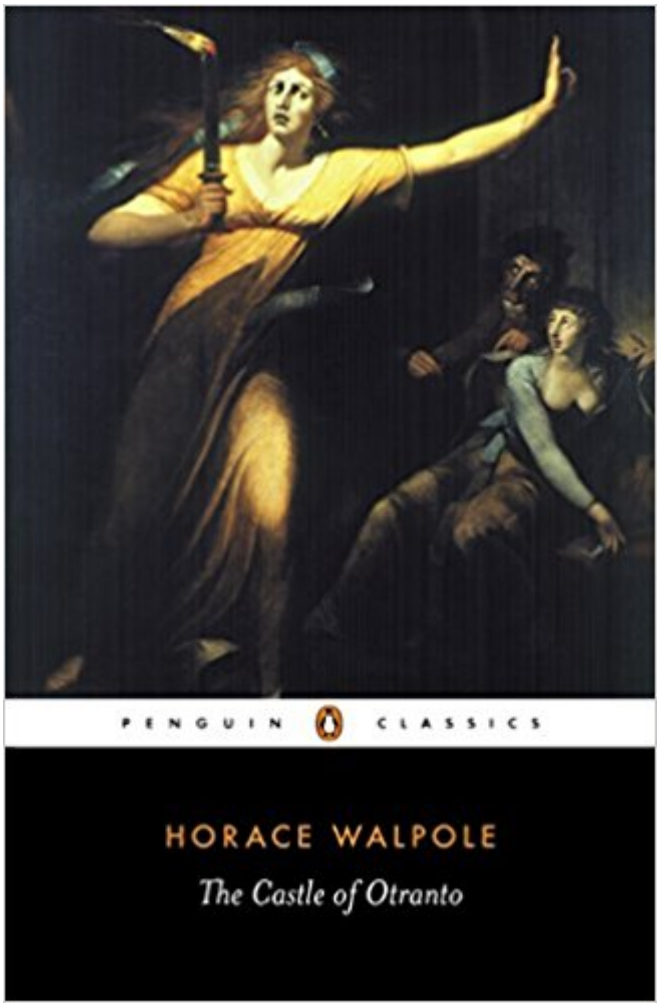
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The Castle Of Otranto



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Synopsis

The founding work of Gothic fictionOn the day of his wedding, Conrad, heir to the house of Otranto, is killed in mysterious circumstances. His calculating father Manfred fears that his dynasty will now come to an end and determines to marry his son’s bride himself - despite the fact he is already married. But a series of terrifying supernatural omens soon threaten this unlawful union, as the curse placed on Manfred’s ancestor, who usurped the lawful Prince of Otranto, begins to unfold. First published pseudonymously in 1764, purporting to be an ancient Italian text from the time of the crusades, The Castle of Otranto is a founding work of Gothic fiction. With its compelling blend of sinister portents, tempestuous passions and ghostly visitations, it spawned an entire literary tradition and influenced such writers as Ann Radcliffe and Bram Stoker.For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

Horror tale by Horace Walpole, published in 1765. The work is considered the first gothic novel in the English language; its supernatural happenings and mysterious ambiance were widely emulated in the genre. Manfred is the tyrannical usurper of the princedom of Otranto. On the day his son Conrad is to marry Isabella, Conrad is found dead in the courtyard, crushed by a mammoth plumed

helmet. Manfred decides to divorce his wife and marry Isabella in order to produce the heir he needs to retain control of the realm, but Isabella escapes to Father Jerome with the help of Theodore, a handsome young peasant. From a birthmark on Theodore's neck, Father Jerome discovers that the young man is really his natural son, born before he entered the priesthood, when he was the prince of Falconara. Later, the giant form of the martyred rightful prince Alfonso appears, proclaiming Theodore's right of succession, and then ascends to heaven. Manfred and his wife enter separate convents. Theodore marries Isabella and rules Otranto as prince. -- The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Horace Walpole (1717-97), 4th Earl of Orford, was the son of the Whig Prime Minister, Robert Walpole. In 1747 he moved to Strawberry Hill in Twickenham, which he transformed into his "little Gothic castle". He was at the centre of literary and political society and an arbiter of taste. He is remembered for his witty letters to a wide circle of friends. Michael Gamer is Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of Romanticism and the Gothic.

This reissue of "The Castle of Otranto" is a much needed updating of the book's supporting material for the 21st century. Groom has read the entire correspondence of Horace Walpole (which runs over 4000 letters, many of them long), and makes brilliant use of them in his new introduction to this book. The 29-page introduction places the novel in terms of the historical Goths, the archaism and sublimity that were all the rage in 1760s Britain, and the religious and political circumstances that led Walpole to write the book. Groom sifts recent scholarship with a profound knowledge of Walpole's life, times, and architectural proclivities. A new bibliography, chronology of Walpole (in paired columns labelled "Life" and "Historical and cultural background"), appendix with "Gothic contexts" (excerpts from other books by Walpole and Richard Hurd), and 20 pages of new explanatory notes on the text all make this edition essential. If you care about this novel, you must have this new edition of it.

I first read The Castle of Otranto, in college. It is reputedly the original horror story that caused Bram Stoker to create Dracula. It scared poor British boys so bad they lost sleep. I don't know about that, but I would bet money on the fact that Horace Walpole knew how a good scarey story would take the impressionable Englishmen. Walpole's friend, Thomas Grey wrote to him that his gothic horror story scared the students of Cambridge so much that it made ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“some of them cry a little, and all in general afraid to go to bed oÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ nights.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• It was

1765.So he had this dream... A castle, a staircase, a huge armored glove in a gallery.Then he sat down and wrote a book that he attributes to fictional character, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“William Marshal, gentleman, from the Italian of Onuphro Muralto, canon of the Church of St. Nicholas, at Otranto", which Walpole claims to have found and translated from the original Italian. Dating of the of the story is placed between the first and second Crusade, sometime between 1095 A.D. and 1243 A.D., though the fictional book itself was written in the 1500's. The real book was written in English and printed in 1765.He had a printing press... Yes, young peanut. Self publishing happened earlier then the twenty first century.The rest is history. The medieval fantasy / gothic horror franchises had opened their doors for business.Between the prophecy, the knights and castles, the Crusades, the zealous tyrant, the lost heir, the swooning damsels, the dying hermit, the dead knight returning to reclaim his daughter AND gigantic armor that kills people, well how can you turn that down?My favorite part was when something terrifying happened, it always happened when the Prince of Otranto was out of the room, but many of his staff and servants saw it. They would run to him, arriving breathlessly to warn him of the danger, then start these long rambling tales. He could switch from one person to the other, trying to figure out what happened and still not understand as they would quiver, lead up to the terror and go off on tangents, etc., until he would explode in anger and finally get off his privileged butt to go see what scared them. Funniest thing. Happens three times.Murder, mistaken identity, lost heirs, Crusaders, freed slaves, prophecies, big men with swords, saints, chases in burial vaults, secret passages, a runaway Princess, long lost parental units, a feisty priest, and a dying hermit with God on his side, not to mention the gigantic killing armor.Highly Recommended!

The book itself is average in merit, but the paperback edition listed here is TERRIBLE. Formatting is awful, especially the "illustrations" which were pixelated and blurry, and positioned poorly. I had to buy a physical copy for class, but I was constantly comparing the text to the free copy provided on Project Gutenberg because I didn't trust it, as the cover illustration looks cheap and the graphic design clashes. For the most part it's fine, but at one point, an entire page is blank and the text between it skips two lines of the novel completely. I'm a little concerned about other things I might have missed. Don't bother purchasing this edition from this seller, it's caused too much of a head ache.

I got this book for reference when I was doing research for my book, A Perfect Plan, which is set in the 1780s. Castle of Otranto was written about 250 years ago, in the style of that time. As the first

Gothic novel, it’s important and worth looking at. It is more readable than I expected it to be - highly dramatic, and kind of fun to read. For readers now, I think its value is more for historical than literary purposes. It is an important book and I’m very grateful to have been able to get it.

There is no information provided about the author, supposedly a teacher, who prepared annotations. Probably because the quality of this book is too embarrassing. I threw the book away. I have been an English teacher for 26 years. I never throw books away. This book is useless for both teachers and students.

Horatio Walpole, 4th Earl of Orford, was one of those British aristocrats who match up fairly well with the popular idea of British aristocrats. Besides, well, political things, he liked art and had strange tastes, or so his contemporaries thought at least. This book is a good reflection of Walpole’s personality. It is a mishmash of faint menace and broad comedy - of course, some of the comedy is unintentional because the plot and often the prose is justÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â|silly - but it was such a refreshing change from the reason-dominated literature of the eighteenth century that it was a controversial bestseller in its day. If you are looking to read THE Gothic novel, one that is both representative and transcendent, give this one a miss and try The Monk by M. G. Lewis. This story (a better word than novel in this case, as it’s really quite short) is historically valuable, and broke a lot of ground, but seems somewhat clumsily done. Still, we can thank The Right Honorable for inspiring hundreds of novels in the Strawberry Hill vein, some of which are quite a treat.Oxford Classics always does a great job. The cover fits well and the annotation provided by W. S. Lewis is helpful.

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