


NAXOS
AudioBooks

**CLASSIC
FICTION**

Jane Austen

Northanger Abbey

THE
COMPLETE
CLASSICS

UNABRIDGED

Read by **Juliet Stevenson**



NA742712D

1	Chapter 1 No one who had ever seen Catherine Morland..	4:57
2	Mrs. Morland was a very good woman...	4:03
3	Chapter 2 In addition to what has been already said...	3:57
4	It is now expedient to give some description of Mrs. Allen...	4:18
5	They were not long able, however, to enjoy the repose...	3:10
6	After some time they received an offer of tea..	2:32
7	Chapter 3 Every morning now brought its regular duties...	3:51
8	'Shall I tell you what you ought to say?'	3:18
9	Mrs. Allen was quite struck by his genius.	3:55
10	Chapter 4 With more than usual eagerness...	3:50
11	The Miss Thorpes were introduced...	4:20
12	Chapter 5 Catherine was not so much engaged at the theatre...	4:11
13	The progress of the friendship between Catherine and Isabella...	3:51
14	Chapter 6 The following conversation, which took place...	4:13
15	'Oh, dear!' cried Catherine, colouring.	4:13
16	Catherine, in some amazement, complied...	2:17
17	Chapter 7 Half a minute conducted them through...	4:09
18	'You have lost an hour,' said Morland...	5:25
19	This brought on a dialogue of civilities...	3:37
20	These manners did not please Catherine...	4:37
21	Chapter 8 In spite of Udolpho and the dressmaker, however...	4:18
22	Mr. Tilney and his companion, who continued, though slowly...	4:21
23	Miss Tilney had a good figure, a pretty face...	3:31
24	In this commonplace chatter which lasted some time...	4:56
25	Chapter 9 The progress of Catherine's unhappiness...	4:51

26	Catherine followed her orders and turned away...	5:13
27	Thorpe's ideas then all reverted to the merits...	5:24
28	When they arrived at Mrs. Allen's door...	5:02
29	Chapter 10 The Allens, Thorpes, and Morlands all met...	2:56
30	Catherine's resolution of endeavouring to meet Miss Tilney...	4:25
31	She went home very happy.	3:17
32	Catherine had neither time nor inclination to answer.	3:01
33	This was the last sentence by which he could weary...	3:58
34	'Now you have given me a security worth having...'	3:27
35	Soon after their reaching the bottom of the set...	2:42
36	Chapter 11 The morrow brought a very sober-looking...	4:07
37	It was too dirty for Mrs. Allen to accompany her husband...	5:13
38	Catherine's feelings as she got into the carriage...	3:32
39	Their drive, even when this subject was over...	2:56
40	As she entered the house, the footman told her...	3:09
41	Chapter 12 'Mrs. Allen,' said Catherine the next morning...	5:19
42	The play concluded – the curtain fell – Henry Tilney...	4:09
43	While talking to each other, she had observed...	3:14
44	Chapter 13 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday...	3:50
45	Catherine thought this reproach equally strange...	3:58
46	Isabella's countenance was once more all smiles...	4:46
47	The affair thus happily settled, she was introduced...	2:49
48	Mr. Allen caught at it directly.	4:03
49	Chapter 14 The next morning was fair...	3:51
50	'Henry,' said Miss Tilney, 'you are very impertinent...'	5:40

51	Catherine assented – and a very warm panegyric from her...	4:38
52	The ladies stared. He laughed and added...	3:31
53	It was no effort to Catherine to believe...	3:06
54	Chapter 15 Early the next day, a note from Isabella...	3:34
55	This bold surmise, however, she soon learnt...	4:31
56	This charming sentiment, recommended as much...	3:34
57	Catherine was with her friend again the next day...	4:29
58	‘Then why do you stay away so long?’ replied Catherine...	4:13
59	Chapter 16 Catherine’s expectations of pleasure...	4:13
60	Isabella’s opinion of the Tilneys did not influence her friend...	3:01
61	‘Your brother will not mind it, I know,’ said she...	3:42
62	The friends were not able to get together...	3:12
63	‘It is very charming indeed,’ said Isabella...	3:30
64	Chapter 17 The Allens had now entered on the sixth week...	5:27
65	The circumstances of the morning had led Catherine’s feelings...	3:36
66	Chapter 18 With a mind thus full of happiness...	3:29
67	Catherine, with all the earnestness of truth...	5:51
68	Catherine, looking up, perceived Captain Tilney..	4:00
69	Chapter 19 A few days passed away...	4:40
70	Catherine blushed for her friend, and said...	5:10
71	Chapter 20 Mr. and Mrs. Allen were sorry to lose...	2:59
72	The bustle of going was not pleasant.	4:25
73	‘But how can that be?’ said Catherine.	4:02
74	‘Nothing further to alarm perhaps may occur the first night.’	3:52
75	As they drew near the end of their journey...	4:29

76	Chapter 21 A moment's glance was enough to satisfy...	4:20
77	She was gazing on it with the first blush of surprise...	3:46
78	The night was stormy; the wind had been rising at intervals...	4:20
79	In short, she could not sleep till she had examined it.	3:37
80	The dimness of the light her candle emitted made her turn...	3:14
81	Chapter 22 The housemaid's folding back...	4:08
82	She got away as soon as she could from a room...	3:37
83	Shortly after breakfast Henry left them for Woodston...	5:37
84	The kitchen-garden was to be next admired...	3:56
85	Catherine had never heard Mrs. Tilney mentioned...	4:42
86	Chapter 23 An hour passed away before the general...	4:18
87	With the walls of the kitchen ended all the antiquity...	3:29
88	The gallery was terminated by folding doors...	4:30
89	After an evening, the little variety and seeming length...	4:40
90	Chapter 24 The next day afforded no opportunity...	3:44
91	Her agitation as they entered the gallery was too much...	3:49
92	It was done; and Catherine found herself alone...	5:32
93	She could not contradict it, and therefore suffered herself...	5:51
94	Chapter 25 The visions of romance were over.	4:29
95	Her mind made up on these several points...	4:37
96	Catherine had not read three lines before her sudden change...	5:44
97	He gladly received the letter, and, having read it...	5:35
98	Chapter 26 From this time, the subject was frequently...	3:57
99	'And when do you think, sir, I may look forward...'	4:32
100	From Saturday to Wednesday, however, they were now...	3:57

101	The room in question was of a commodious, well-proportioned...	3:41
102	Chapter 27 The next morning brought the following...	4:48
103	Such a strain of shallow artifice could not impose...	3:43
104	Chapter 28 Soon after this, the general found himself...	3:56
105	Henry was not able to obey his father's injunction...	4:02
106	A new idea now darted into Catherine's mind...	5:37
107	It was with pain that Catherine could speak at all...	4:33
108	Soon after six Eleanor entered her room...	5:42
109	Chapter 29 Catherine was too wretched to be fearful.	4:49
110	With these feelings, she rather dreaded than sought...	3:41
111	Reluctantly, and with much hesitation, did she then begin...	3:49
112	As soon as breakfast was over, she sat down to fulfil...	4:34
113	She was received by the Allens with all the kindness...	4:52
114	Chapter 30 Catherine's disposition was not naturally...	2:51
115	Catherine said no more, and, with an endeavour to do right...	5:30
116	A very short visit to Mrs. Allen, in which Henry talked...	4:47
117	Catherine herself could not be more ignorant at the time...	5:16
118	Chapter 31 Mr. and Mrs. Morland's surprise...	4:06
119	The marriage of Eleanor Tilney, her removal from all the evils...	3:59

Total time: 8:17:22

Jane Austen

Northanger Abbey

In 1816, prior to the publication of *Northanger Abbey*, Jane Austen stated: 'The public are entreated to bear in mind that thirteen years have passed since it was finished, many more since it was begun, and that during that period, places, manners, books, and opinions have undergone considerable changes.' Her concerns arose from the fact that the popularity of the sentimental and Gothic novels which she was parodying in *Northanger Abbey* might have declined, and thus the point of her work could be lost. Similarly for us today, it is essential that we have some knowledge of those works, whose excesses Austen was quietly mocking, in order to fully understand and enjoy *Northanger Abbey*.

Jane Austen was born on 16 December 1775, the seventh child of the family. At that time, her father was Rector of the Hampshire village of Steventon, near Basingstoke. She was a well-educated young woman and her early years had already seen her producing works for the amusement and entertainment of her family. She particularly enjoyed penning burlesques of popular romances, and *A History of*

England by a Partial, Prejudiced and Ignorant Historian was one of her early, unpublished works which suggests her natural gift for gentle irony. Not surprisingly then, this is the style of *Northanger Abbey*.

Jane herself tells us in her advertisement for *Northanger Abbey* that the work was completed in 1803 but in fact she had been working on it as early as 1798 and 1799. Then entitled *Susan* it was purchased for £10 by Crosby, publishers of the then popular Gothic romances. These works, whilst retaining the romance of sentimental novels, added the elements of melodrama and fear. Crosby, however, did not publish Jane's work and in 1816 the manuscript was bought back, by which time she had made changes, including renaming her heroine Catherine. By then, also, her other great works had been published: *Sense and Sensibility* in 1811, *Pride and Prejudice* in 1813, *Mansfield Park* in 1814 and *Emma* in 1816. After Jane's death in 1817 *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* were published by her brother, Henry. He was the one to formally reveal her authorship since the four titles published in her lifetime were

done so anonymously. *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* were published together as a four-volumed work, the original *Northanger Abbey* being in two volumes, with Chapters 1 to 15, mainly concerning events in Bath, comprising Volume 1, and with Volume 2, containing Chapters 16 to 31, describing events at Northanger Abbey.

Jane Austen led a calm and unremarkable life. She did live for a while in fashionable, elegant Bath after her father retired in 1801, and following his death in 1805 she also lived in Southampton. However, in 1809, together with her mother and sister, she moved to the village of Chawton in Hampshire which she much preferred. She was said not to ‘. . . meddle with matters which she did not thoroughly understand,’ and, in spite of having two brothers in the Navy, she makes no references in her work to significant events of the time, notably the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, even though, living near the South Coast, invasion might have seemed a possible threat for her.

Although she herself said that, ‘Three or four families in a country village is the very thing to work on,’ in *Northanger Abbey* she chose to place her heroine in Bath. Here, as later at Northanger Abbey itself, Catherine Morland, a young woman about to enter

adult life, is placed in a new situation, where the way in which she handles the people and situations she meets allows readers to judge her. In Austen’s time readers would probably have experienced Bath for themselves and she therefore does not feel the need to provide lengthy descriptions of its appearance or of the pleasures available there. Similarly, sentimental and Gothic novels were well-known to readers at that time, and Austen makes reference to Mrs Radcliffe’s novel, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, expecting readers to appreciate her parody. She places Catherine in Northanger Abbey, a modern, comfortable home, but whose name suggests some sort of mysterious Gothic ruin. Similarly, Catherine herself is a parody of the heroines of sentimental novels. She is not prone to excesses of emotion, apart from her rather out-of-character behaviour when her imagination allows her to become somewhat deluded regarding the fate of General Tilney’s wife. Even abductions of heroines are parodied, with Catherine ‘abducted’ by John Thorpe for a carriage ride she does not really wish to accept, and by General Tilney who whisks her off to Northanger Abbey, his mistaken belief that she is an heiress being a further parody.

Jane Austen never married although she

was reputed to have become romantically attached in 1802. The man in question died in 1803, and in that same year Jane received a proposal of marriage from a wealthy Hampshire landowner. She accepted his proposal, only to retract it the following morning. In *Northanger Abbey* love and marriage provide an important theme, with Austen finally bringing Catherine and Henry together, after an enforced separation by her equivalent of the villain of the piece, General Tilney. She completes her work with one final parody of the sentimental novels, when, instead of their preaching conclusions she wonders whether her work will be seen to '...recommend parental tyranny, or reward filial disobedience.'

By 1816 Jane Austen had become seriously ill and was taken to Winchester to be under the care of the best doctors. However, within two months of arriving there she died, on July 18th, at the age of 42. Austen was very modest about her gift for writing, describing her work as '...that little bit (two inches wide) of ivory, in which I work with so fine a brush as produces little effect after much labour'. She was only moderately successful in her life-time, and it was not until the twentieth century that her works became established favourites.

Notes by Helen Davies

Jane Austen
Northanger Abbey

Read by **Juliet Stevenson**

When Catherine Morland, a country clergyman's daughter, is invited to spend a season in Bath with the fashionable high society, little does she imagine the delights and perils that await her. Captivated and disconcerted by what she finds, and introduced to the joys of 'Gothic novels' by her new friend, Isabella, Catherine longs for mystery and romance. When she is invited to stay with the beguiling Henry Tilney and his family at Northanger Abbey, she expects mystery and intrigue at every turn. However, the truth turns out to be even stranger than fiction.



Juliet Stevenson has worked extensively for the RSC and the Royal National Theatre. She received an Olivier Award for her role in *Death and the Maiden* at the Royal Court, and a number of other awards for her work in the film *Truly, Madly, Deeply*. Other film credits include *The Trial*, *Drowning by Numbers* and *Emma*. She has recorded *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *To The Lighthouse*, *Persuasion*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma* and *Hedda Gabler* for Naxos AudioBooks.

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