

THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO/NIGHTMARE ABBEY/VATHEK PDF, EPUB, EBOOK



Horace Walpole | 272 pages | 05 Aug 2009 | Wordsworth Editions Ltd | 9781840221848 | English | Herts, United Kingdom

Publication: The Castle of Otranto, Vathek & Nightmare Abbey

Each of these tales is delicious in their execution, with Vathek earning the fifth star. Beckford's offering is haunting and enchanting and a joy from start to finish. There are one or two earlier works, e. In his first preface he claims the story is a tale from some earlier time that was discovered and which he has brought to light. In the preface to his second edition he admits responsibility for the story and explains his original distancing of himself from the authorship as being due to his fear that the blending of old and new romance styles would not be accepted. Given the popularity of the

first edition he was more than happy to own up to having written the story. As a Gothic tale it has all the elements one would expect: there is a castle with vaults and a secret passageway; a family with a dark secret; damsels who are put in peril; a tyrant to focus the readers detestation; a young hero to give the reader hope; a crypt in a monastery; and elements of the supernatural to bring our story to the boil.

Much of the terror of the tale is created by the machinations of the human characters in the story rather than by fear of the supernatural. As someone who likes Gothic stories I have to admit to feeling a degree of regret and shame for not having read this story earlier in my life. *Vathek* I came to this work knowing nothing about its origins, its author, or its content. All I knew was that it was written in the early days of Gothic novels, that it was Gothic in nature, and that there was some evil in its content. When reading fiction for the first time I like to know as little as possible about it so that I can develop my own impressions of the work without any risk of preconception or bias gleaned from the views of others.

The language was very florid and convolute with not a few litotes employed throughout the eighty-two pages of the work. Descriptions were detailed and exotic; greetings between characters were extravagant and hyperbolic, while the scale and grandeur of buildings and events were on a par with that of deities. Very early in the story the reader learns that the Caliph, *Vathek*, is vainglorious, opulent and self-indulgent. He has regard for neither the well-being of his subjects nor the tenets of his Muslim faith. While he pays lip service to his obligations in public he makes no effort to conduct himself by the strictures of expected convention.

He is supported in his opulence and disregard for morals by his mother, *Carathis*, who is a devotee of the dark sciences and the demons who rule the underworld. Temptation and the consequences of giving in to temptation are key themes of this story. Right from the beginning it is made perfectly clear to the reader that *Vathek* is open to temptation and is just too happy to succumb to it. There are a couple of occasions when the Caliph repents of his evil ways but his mother rapidly puts him back on the dark and narrow path of self aggrandisement through following the conditions laid down in a parchment from the mysterious magician, referred to as the *Giaour* a derogatory term for a non-Muslim, promising power and riches. Evil deeds carried out by *Vathek* include the sacrifice of fifty young boys, murder and destruction. Having strayed from the evil path and then wanting to redeem his credentials as a sinner against Allah, he commits many crimes as he moves towards the final destination of his journey.

In several parts of the story there were thinly disguised descriptions of paedophilia, something that it turns out Beckford was accused of in real life, accusations that forced him to flee England to escape the consequences of scandal. It's fun. *Vathek* revels in its exoticism and it's a good idea to remember that the *Arabian Nights* was translated around the same time so there's a lot of genie stuff going on and some of the black magic stuff is super weird and may offend the more sensitive readers out there, but this is the early 19th century, remember, and there is a kind of weirdness the Victorians managed to squelch that is kind of profoundly modern. *Nightmare Abbey* is hilarious.

Recommended for fans of the gothic novel, and novels that make fun of gothic novels. Aug 11, Konstanze rated it really liked it Shelves: books , read-in-english. I'm a sucker for Gothic novels - they're my guilty pleasure. But, with all the fair damsels in distress, dark castles, dashing heroes and villainous villains, the eye-rolling starts to overshadow the giggle factor at some point. I do realize that these books were the first of this genre so that it's sort of unfair to complain about the overuse of tropes.

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This book is hilarious. Dec 15, Sarra. Alright so I'm done reading this collection of Gothic tales and it's been a rather good reading experience! What do you expect from the very first Gothic novel? Gloomy sceneries, supernatural apparitions, a dreary setting *Vathek* on the other had, I gave 3. Despite the lyrical and picturesque descriptions of the oriental setting and tone, I find it kinda dragging and over the top. Most reviews say that the ending is disappointing and underwhelming but, as a Muslim myself, I was satisfied with it but I still find the story boring at times. Now the piece of resistance, *Nightmare Abbey* got a 5 stars and I loved every part of it. If the *Castle of Otranto* is the embodiment of Gothic fiction, than *Nightmare Abbey* is simply a parody and a satire of your typical Gothic novel. Review on *The Castle of Otranto* I actually really enjoyed this. It was way over-dramatic, ridiculous and quite funny but I still found it interesting and enjoyable.

I liked particularly the action and how short this novel was. You get novels of this time that are soo long and horrendously over descriptive and dragging. This novel was filled with gothic elements perhaps too many a lot of the time! I loved the language, it was old-fashioned and read like a simpler version of Shakespeare. As a Renaissance student, I could see a lot of similarities between this and plays written in Shakespeare's time. I would love to see this made into a stage play, I think it would be great and very funny! I plan to read the other two novels in this volume soon. I originally got this collection because I wanted to read *The Castle of Otranto*, which is generally regarded as the first Gothic novel and thus a classic that I knew I needed to read. And I really did enjoy it quite a lot. It is a very classic novel in every sense of the word - the good are good, the bad are bad, the morals are old-fashioned.

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For all his faults I found Scythrop an immensely sympathetic character. Before entering into my review i must say that i will more or less divide it, as the book is also divided into 3 stories. Concerning the first story "The Castle of Otranto", i thought it was a more or less interesting story. It reminded me a bit of "The Monk" in the sense that a kind soul meets an untimely death as well both at the hands of "evil" men. I thought that the story would be a lot more engaging, but it wasn't so bad. As for "Vathek" i couldn't care less about it, i think it is an annoy Before entering into my review i must say that i will more or less divide it, as the book is also divided into 3 stories. As for "Vathek" i couldn't care less about it, i think it is an annoying story.

I can see the point of it, but it is painful to read to the end. Finally, "Nightmare Abbey" has a very slow start. I told me a lot of time to re-start from the first page because as a initial reading that first page is really really uninteresting. However as the story progresses with some small twists and turns i came to think that maybe Nightmare Abbey is the superior story of the three.

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Jan 12, VG rated it liked it. Nov 09, Max Rudd rated it it was amazing. What a wonderful autumn read. Back to the roots of gothic romance. Each of these tales is delicious in their execution, with Vathek earning the fifth star. Beckford's offering is haunting and enchanting and a joy from start to finish. Sep 08, Justine rated it really liked it Shelves: gothic , classics. Great way to discover the Gothic genre! Castle of Otranto was extremely entertaining and over the top. Nightmare Abbey was also good.

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Within United Kingdom. Quantity: 1. Condition: Very Good. Very Good: a copy that has been read, but is in excellent condition. Pages are intact and not marred by notes or highlighting. The spine remains undamaged. Most items will be dispatched the same or the next working day. Used - Softcover Condition: Good. Condition: Good. All orders are dispatched the following working day from our UK warehouse. Established in , we have over , books in stock. No quibble refund if not completely satisfied. Beckford had a large monastery like building constructed on his property which contained all forms of riches.

He even had two dwarves in his service, a feature reflected in Vathek. Apparently, like Vathek, Beckford was not one to resist temptation and indulged himself in his chosen pleasures on his private estate. To talk of a moral message in Vathek one could discuss the issue of temptation and the consequences of wantonly giving into temptation. Another moral message that can be inferred from the story is a reflection of what is becoming a bigger and bigger issue in modern day USA: the positioning of Science by some with an anti-religious position. Beckford had translated the story into English but was not happy with his efforts and engaged Henley to polish it for him.

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