Contrast the description of the castle in Radcliffe with *Northanger Abbey*.

Towards the close of day, the road wound into a deep valley. Mountains, whose shaggy steeps appeared to be inaccessible, almost surrounded it. To the east, a vista opened, that exhibited the Apennines in their darkest horrors; and the long perspective of retiring summits, rising over each other, their ridges clothed with pines, exhibited a stronger image of grandeur, than any that Emily had yet seen. The sun had just sunk below the top of the mountains she was descending, whose long shadow stretched athwart the valley, but his sloping rays, shooting through an opening of the cliffs, touched with a yellow gleam the summits of the forest, that hung upon the opposite steeps, and streamed in full splendour upon the towers and battlements of a castle, that spread its extensive ramparts along the brow of a precipice above. The splendour of these illumined objects was heightened by the contrasted shade, which involved the valley below.

"There," said Montoni, speaking for the first time in several hours, "is Udolpho."

Emily gazed with melancholy awe upon the castle, which she understood to be Montoni's; for, though it was now lighted up by the setting sun, the gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark grey stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object. As she gazed, the light died away on its walls, leaving a melancholy purple tint, which spread deeper and deeper, as the thin vapour crept up the mountain, while the battlements above were still tipped with splendour. From those too, the rays soon faded, and the whole edifice was invested with the solemn duskiness of evening. Silent, lonely and sublime, it seemed to stand the sovereign of the scene, and to frown defiance on all who dared to invade its solitary reign. As the twilight deepened, its features became more awful in obscurity, and Emily continued to gaze, till its clustering towers were alone seen, rising over the tops of the woods, beneath whose thick shade the carriages soon after began to ascend. 226-227

As they drew near the end of their journey, her impatience for a sight of the abbey--for some time suspended by his conversation on subjects very different--returned in full force, and every bend in the road was expected with solemn awe to afford a glimpse of its massy walls of grey stone, rising amidst a grove of ancient oaks, with the last beams of the sun playing in beautiful splendour on its high Gothic windows. But so low did the building stand, that she found herself passing through the great gates of the lodge into the very grounds of Northanger, without having discerned even an antique chimney.

She knew not that she had any right to be surprised, but there was a something in this mode of approach which she certainly had not expected. To pass between lodges of a modern appearance, to find herself with such ease in the very precincts of the abbey, and driven so rapidly along a smooth, level road of fine gravel, without obstacle, alarm, or solemnity of any kind, struck her as odd and inconsistent. She was not long at leisure, however, for such considerations. A sudden scud of rain, driving full in her face, made it impossible for her to observe anything further, and fixed all her thoughts on the welfare of her new straw bonnet; and she was actually under the abbey walls, was springing, with Henry's assistance, from the carriage, was beneath the shelter of the old porch, and had even passed on to the hall, where her friend and the general were waiting to welcome her, without feeling one awful foreboding of future misery to herself, or one moment's suspicion of any past scenes of horror being acted within the solemn edifice. The breeze had not seemed to waft the sighs of the murdered to her; it had wafted nothing worse than a thick mizzling rain; and having given a good shake to her habit, she was ready to be shown into the common drawing-room, and capable of considering where she was. 152-153

*The Gothic Wanderer* was launched in August 2012 in conjunction with the release of Tyler R. Tichelaar’s new book The Gothic Wanderer: From Transgression to Redemption, Gothic Literature from 1794-present.

Tyler R. Tichelaar holds a Ph.D. in Literature from Western Michigan University where he wrote his dissertation on Gothic literature, a work that later evolved into his book The Gothic Wanderer: From Transgression to Redemption, Gothic Literature from 1794—present. He also holds Bachelor and Master’s Degrees in English from Northern Michigan University. He has lectured on writing and literature at Clemson University, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of London. Tyler is the regular guest host of Authors Access Internet Radio and the current President of the Upper Peninsula Publishers and Authors Association. He is the owner of his own publishing company Marquette Fiction and Superior Book Promotions, a professional book review, editing, and proofreading service.

For years the seven Northanger novels were titles invented by Jane Austen, but research has now restored all of them to us. Tichelaar recommends readers curious about Gothic fiction and these novels in particular to start out by reading Northanger Abbey, then Radcliffe’s The Mysteries of Udolpho, and maybe The Italian, though he is not a big fan of it and prefers her other novelThe Romance of the Forest (1791). Once you understand the superb Gothic of Radcliffe, you can appreciate the works of her imitators, and all seven of these Northanger novels are in imitation of her except perhaps Parson’s Castle Wolfenbach which was published the year before Udolpho but not before The Romance of the Forest.

From the moment Vincentio di Vivaldi, a young nobleman, sets eyes on the veiled figure of Ellena, he is captivated by her enigmatic beauty and grace. But his haughty and manipulative mother is against the match and enlists the help of her confessor to come between them. Schedoni, previously a leading figure of the Inquisition, is a demonic, scheming monk with no qualms about the task, whether it entails abduction, torture - or even murder. *The Italian* secured Ann Radcliffe's position as the leading writer of Gothic romance of the age, for its atmosphere of supernatural and nightmarish horrors, combined with her evocation of sublime landscapes and chilling narrative.

Ann Radcliffe was an English author, a pioneer of the gothic novel.  
  
Radcliffe was born Ann Ward. Her father, William, was a haberdasher, who moved the family to Bath to manage a china shop in 1772. Radcliffe occasionally lived with her uncle, Thomas Bentley, in Chelsea, who was in partnership with a fellow Unitarian, Josiah Wedgwood. Although mixing in some distinguished circles, Radcliffe seems to have made little impression in this society and was described by Wedgwood as "Bentley's shy niece".  
  
In 1787, she married the Oxford graduate and journalist William Radcliffe. He often came home late, and to occupy her time she began to write, and read her work to him when he returned. Theirs was a childless, but seemingly happy marriage. Radcliffe called him her "nearest relative and friend". The money she earned from her novels later allowed them to travel together, along with their dog, Chance.  
  
She published *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*in 1789. It set the tone for the majority of her work, which tended to involve innocent, but heroic young women who find themselves in gloomy, mysterious castles ruled by even more mysterious barons with dark pasts.  
  
Her works were extremely popular among the upper class and the growing middle class, especially among young women. Her works included *A Sicilian Romance* (1790), *The Romance of the Forest* (1791), *The Mysteries of Udolpho*(1794), and *The Italian* (1796). She published a travelogue, *A Journey Through Holland and the Western Frontier of Germany* in 1795.  
  
The success of *The Romance of the Forest*established Radcliffe as the leading exponent of the historical Gothic romance. Her later novels met with even greater attention, and produced many imitators, and famously, Jane Austen's burlesque of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* in *Northanger Abbey*, as well as influencing the works of Sir Walter Scott.  
  
Stylistically, Radcliffe was noted for her vivid descriptions of exotic and sinister locales, though in reality the author had rarely or never visited the actual locations. Shy by nature, she did not encourage her fame and abandoned literature as a pursuit.  
  
She died on February 7, 1823 and was buried in Saint George's Church, Hanover Square, London.

*Horrid Mysteries* is more of a picaresque novel of a young man’s adventures in the style of *Tom Jones* than a Gothic one. There are plenty of sexual trysts and adulterous relationships to make Catherine Morland or any young female reader blush—perhaps no Gothic novel is so sexual except perhaps the much better written *The Monk* (1796) by Matthew Lewis.

Matthew Lewis’s novel *The Monk* (1796) marked a turning point in the history of Gothic literature. With its emphasis firmly on the horrific and the shocking, the book moved Gothic away from the gentle terrors of earlier authors such as Horace Walpole and, instead, confronted readers with an onslaught of horror in the form of spectral bleeding nuns, mob violence, murder, sorcery and incest. Unsurprisingly the book met with outrage and condemnation from critics. Equally unsurprisingly it was hugely popular with the public.

With its twin themes of erotic obsession and the corrupting influence of power, *The Monk* deals with important issues and contains moments of impressive psychological insight. At heart, however, it remains a morality tale about one man’s fall from grace through greed, pride and lust. The entire plot of the book is summarised in lurid headings such as ‘Artifices of a Female Demon’; ‘Her Mother Whom He Murdered’; ‘Assassinates with a Dagger’ and, finally, ‘Most Ignominious Death’.

**Early reviews**

*The Monk* first became widely available in an edition published by Joseph Bell in 1796. The title-page only carried Lewis’s initials, rather than his full name, but the first reviews were – somewhat surprisingly given the content – favourable. Encouraged, Lewis announced his authorship in the second edition, adding for good measure his new title of Member of Parliament. Unfortunately, with his name now firmly associated with the book (so much so that he was known as ‘Monk’ Lewis for the rest of his life) the novel became the subject of critical condemnation and accusations of blasphemy. The poet [Samuel Taylor Coleridge](http://www.bl.uk/people/samuel-taylor-coleridge)attacked the book in the *Critical Review* of February 1797 arguing that its scenes of lust and depravity were likely to corrupt readers. Coleridge observed further that *The Monk* was a novel ‘which if a parent saw in the hands of a son or daughter he might reasonably turn pale’. Worse was to follow when the writer Thomas James Mathias argued that certain passages in the book, especially those containing comments on the Bible, were open to legal action on the grounds that they were sacrilegious. Chastened by the intense criticism, Lewis removed several controversial passages from the book and from the fourth edition onwards the novel appeared in a somewhat subdued form. *The Monk*, however, never lost its popularity with readers keen to test their morality against its allegedly depraved content.

Clermont. **Regina Maria Roche** (1764–1845) is considered today to be a minor [Gothic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_novel) novelist who wrote in the shadow of [Ann Radcliffe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ann_Radcliffe). She was, however, a best seller in her own time. The popularity of her third novel, *The Children of the Abbey*, rivaled that of [Ann Radcliffe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ann_Radcliffe)’s [*The Mysteries of Udolpho*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Mysteries_of_Udolpho).

[*The Children of the Abbey*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Children_of_the_Abbey) was one of the period’s most popular novels, a sentimental Gothic Romance. Her book, [*Clermont*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clermont_(novel)), was Roche’s only real attempt at writing a truly Gothic novel, and is decidedly darker in tone than anything else she wrote. Both novels went through several editions and were translated into both French and Spanish. *Clermont* was one of the [Northanger Horrid Novels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northanger_Horrid_Novels) satirized by [Jane Austen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Austen) in her novel [*Northanger Abbey*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northanger_Abbey).

She was born in [Waterford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waterford) in 1764, moving to [Dublin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dublin) as a child and then to England in 1794 after her marriage. Her first two novels were published under her maiden name (Dalton) before the success of *The Children of the Abbey* and *Clermont*. Both were translated into French and Spanish and went through several editions. However, after her fifth novel, *The Nocturnal Visit*, was published in 1800, Roche suffered financial difficulties after falling afoul of a duplicitous solicitor and did not write again until 1807, after she received aid from the [Royal Literary Fund](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Literary_Fund). She wrote 11 more novels, most set in the rural Ireland she returned to in the 1820s, but none matched her earlier successes. After suffering bouts of depression, she died in relative obscurity in the town of her birth at the age of 81.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regina_Maria_Roche#cite_note-1)

Her obituary in [The Gentleman's Magazine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Gentleman%27s_Magazine) remembers her as a ‘distinguished writer (who) had retired from the world and the world had forgotten her. But many young hearts, now old must remember the effect upon them of her graceful and touching compositions.’

"The Italian" by Ann Radcliffe is a classic gothic novel, renowned throughout history. The protagonist, Vivaldi, falls in love and plans to marry Ellena, a young woman with a secret family history, against his family's wishes. His mother and Schedoni conspire to separate them by kidnapping and imprisoning Vivaldi. Eventually, Ellena's family history is revealed, allowing her to be acknowledged as a suitable match for Vivaldi. "The Italian" is a tale of secrecy and intrigue that incorporates seemingly supernatural events to explain a very complicated plot.

The story opens with an Italian priest offering to allow an English traveler to read a strange narrative in which the story of Vivaldi and Ellena is relayed. Vivaldi meets and falls in love with Ellena, but their nuptials are delayed by the death of Signora Bianchi, Ellena's aunt. Additionally, Vivaldi's parents disapprove of the match, and Marchesa di Vivaldi and Scheoni, a priest, plot to separate the young lovers. Ellena is kidnapped and taken to the convent at San Stefano where the abbess treats her cruelly and she is befriended by Sister Olivia. With Olivia's help, Vivaldi rescues Ellena, and they travel to Lake Celano with the intent to marry.

During the ceremony, Vivaldi is imprisoned by the Inquisition, and Ellena is kidnapped again. Ellena is imprisoned in a house on the beach by Spalatro who intends to murder her on Schedoni's orders. When Spalatro objects to killing Ellena, Schedoni plans to commit the deed but is prevented by recognizing Ellena as his daughter. Schedoni takes Ellena to the convent of Santa Maria della Pieta where she learns that Olivia is her mother and Schedoni is her uncle.

Schedoni travels to Rome to obtain Vivaldi's release from prison. On her deathbed, Marchesa di Vivaldi repents of her schemes against Vivaldi and Ellena and decides to promote the marriage through a deathbed promise from her husband to allow Vivaldi to marry Ellena. Paulo escapes from the prison of the Inquisition and returns to Naples to advise Marchese di Vivaldi of his son's circumstances. Meanwhile, at the prison of the Inquisition, a mysterious monk urges Vivaldi to summon Schedoni and Father Ansaldo, resulting in the revelation of Schedoni's past crimes as the Count di Bruno.

Vivaldi is released from prison, and when the Marchese offers Paulo his freedom as a reward for his services to Vivaldi, Paulo refuses, choosing instead to continue serving Vivaldi. Vivaldi visits Ellena at the convent of Santa Maria della Pieta where he learns that Olivia is her mother and Schedoni is not her father. After verifying Ellena's parentage, the Marchese approves of his son's choice, and Vivaldi and Ellena are married happily. The Marchese holds a festival several months later to celebrate their nuptials.