**Agnes Grey**

Anne Brontë

Anne Brontë’s first novel about a young governess with a new introduction by historian and biographer, Juliet Barker.

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Drawing on her own experience, Anne Brontë exposes the isolated world of a nineteenth century governess in her debut novel, *Agnes Grey*. This edition is introduced by historian and biographer, Juliet Barker.

When Agnes Grey’s family falls on hard times she insists on being allowed to find work as a governess, but her idealistic spirit is challenged in her first position with the unruly Bloomfield children and their callous parents. She then moves on to work for the even wealthier Murray family, whose scheming daughters jeopardize the only bright spot in Agnes’s life, Edward Weston.

Anne Brontë was born in Yorkshire in 1820. She was the youngest of six and the sister of fellow novelist Charlotte and Emily. Her mother died when she was a baby and she was raised by her aunt and her father. Anne worked as a governess before returning home to Haworth where she and her sisters published poems under the pseudonyms Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell. She published her first novel, *Agnes Grey* in 1847 followed by *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* in 1848. She died from tuberculosis in 1849.
American Classics Collection

A beautiful box set containing four of the most loved American classics: The Beautiful and Damned, The House of Mirth, The Scarlet Letter and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

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Whether you love the glamour of upper class New York, are passionate about the history of Puritan New England or are intrigued by the hard times of late 19th century Mississippi, pivotal American literature unfolds in this collection of classic novels.

Each box set includes four beautifully designed, pocket sized editions of The Beautiful and Damned by F. Scott Fitzgerald, The House of Mirth by Edith Wharton, The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain, with new introductions and bespoke covers.

F. Scott Fitzgerald was born in Minnesota in 1896.

Edith Wharton was born in New York in 1862.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in Salem in 1804.

Mark Twain is the pseudonym for Samuel Langhorne Clemens. He was born in 1835 Missouri.
Far From the Madding Crowd

Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy’s classic novel of rivalry and misplaced love with a new introduction by academic and poet, Mark Ford.

The novel that bought Thomas Hardy fame and the first to be set in a richly imagined, rural Wessex. With original illustrations by Helen Allingham and an introduction by academic and poet, Mark Ford.

Gabriel Oak is only one of three suitors for the hand of the beautiful and spirited Bathsheba Everdene. He must compete with the dashing young soldier Sergeant Troy and respectable, middle-aged Farmer Boldwood. And while their fates depend upon the choice Bathsheba makes, she discovers the terrible consequences of an inconstant heart. Far from the Madding Crowd was the first of Hardy's novels to give the name of Wessex to the landscape of south-west England, and is set against the backdrop of the unchanging natural cycle of the year. The story both upholds and questions rural values with a startlingly modern sensibility.

Thomas Hardy was born in Dorset in 1840. At the age of 16 he apprenticed as an architect while continuing his classical education. His first published novel was Desperate Remedies in 1871. Such was the success of these early works, which included Far From the Madding Crowd (1874), that he gave up his work as an architect to concentrate on his writing. He had difficulty publishing Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1889) and was forced to make changes in order for it to be judged suitable. This, and the ...
Much Ado About Nothing

William Shakespeare

A complete and illustrated edition of Shakespeare’s romantic and tragic comedy, with a new introduction by Professor Tiffany Stern

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Comedy turns to tragedy as two couples fall in and out of love in Much Ado About Nothing, one of Shakespeare’s most frequently performed plays. This edition features illustrations by renowned artist Sir John Gilbert and a new introduction from Professor Tiffany Stern.

Whilst Beatrice and Benedick both despise love, exchanging insults and banter rather than vows, for Hero and Claudio it is love at first sight. But as their marriage preparations begin so do Don John’s dirty tricks, resulting in humiliation, rejection and disguise. Through masqued layers of deception and tight prosaic wit Shakespeare weaves together a comedy full of tragedy and romance in which nothing is as it seems.

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, in 1564. The date of his birth is unknown but is celebrated on 23 April, which happens to be St George's Day, and the day in 1616 on which Shakespeare died. In all, he wrote thirty-seven plays and much poetry, and earned enormous fame in his own lifetime in prelude to his immortality.
The Age of Innocence

Edith Wharton

Edith Wharton was the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for Literature with this witty satire of New York’s upper classes. This edition is introduced by award-winning novelist Rachel Cusk.

Edith Wharton’s Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *The Age of Innocence*, is both a poignant story of frustrated love and an extraordinarily vivid, delightfully satirical record of a vanished world. This edition features an introduction by award-winning novelist, Amanda Cusk.

As the scion of one of New York’s leading families, Newland Archer has been born into a life of sumptuous privilege and strict duty. A sensitive, intelligent young man, he still respects the rigid social code by which his class lives. As he contemplates his forthcoming marriage to the striking and equally well-born May Welland, he gives thanks that she is ‘one of his own kind’. But the arrival of the Countess Olenska, a free spirit who breathes clouds of European sophistication, makes him question the path on which his upbringing has set him. As his fascination with her grows, he discovers just how hard it is to escape the bonds of the society that has shaped him.

Edith Wharton was born in 1862 to a prominent New York family. She married Boston socialite ‘Teddy’ Wharton but they later divorced. The couple travelled frequently to Europe and settled in France, where Wharton stayed until her death in 1937. Her first major novel was *The House of Mirth* (1905); many short stories, travel books, memoirs and novels followed. She was the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for Literature with *The Age of Innocence* (1920) and she was thrice nominated for the Nobel...
George Eliot’s masterful portrayal of rural Victorian society with a new introduction by Professor Kathryn Hughes.

With enchanting detail and precise plotting, George Eliot’s most autobiographical novel tells the story of a brother and sister pulled apart. This edition of The Mill on the Floss features a new introduction by Professor Kathryn Hughes.

Maggie Tulliver and her brother Tom enjoy a close childhood friendship and a rural childhood on the banks of the river Floss. But the approach of adulthood brings tension to their relationship; Intelligent and fiery Maggie tests the boundaries of Victorian society in her search for love whilst Tom embraces convention and accepts his father’s desire for him to become a businessman. Increasingly self-righteous, Tom disapproves of his sister’s suitors and when he discovers that she took a fateful boat trip with Stephen Guest, her cousin’s fiancé, he turns his back on her. Maggie is ostracised by her beloved brother and her own community and it’s only through tragic events that the siblings are reunited.

George Eliot was born Mary Ann Evans in 1819. Her father was the land agent of Arbury Hall in Warwickshire, in the library of which Eliot embarked upon her self-education. She moved to London in 1850 and shone in its literary circles. It was her novels of English rural life published under her pen-name that brought her fame. She went on to publish novels including Middlemarch as well as poetry and nonfiction of which Queen Victoria was one of her most devoted readers. She died in 1880.
The Tempest

William Shakespeare

A complete and illustrated edition of Shakespeare’s late comedy with a new introduction by actor, writer and director Simon Callow.

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A magical escapist fantasy centered around the disruption of social order, The Tempest is one of Shakespeare’s most poetic and political comedies. This edition features illustrations by renowned artist Sir John Gilbert and a new introduction by actor, writer and director Simon Callow.

As tumultuous waves roar over an uninhabited Mediterranean island, Prospero has been banished from Italy, Ferdinand and Miranda become entwined in a love knot, Sebastian and Antonia plot a murder, a drunken butler wants the throne and Ariel and Caliban have lost power over their home. Shakespeare lyrically transforms the stage into a shipwreck leaving his characters to fight for control of the island.

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, in 1564. The date of his birth is unknown but is celebrated on 23 April, which happens to be St George's Day, and the day in 1616 on which Shakespeare died. In all, he wrote thirty-seven plays and much poetry, and earned enormous fame in his own lifetime in prelude to his immortality.
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