



## **Sanditon: Jane Austen's Unfinished Masterpiece Completed**

*Juliette Shapiro, Jane Austen*

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## **Sanditon: Jane Austen's Unfinished Masterpiece Completed** Juliette Shapiro , Jane Austen

Had Jane Austen lived to complete *Sanditon*, it would have been as treasured as her other novels. In the half-finished masterpiece, Austen fashions one of her classic heroines—Charlotte Heywood. The surviving fragment also sets the story well on its path as Charlotte begins an adventure to Sanditon where a full cast of characters becomes intertwined in various intrigues.

At first, Charlotte finds amusement enough standing at her ample Venetian window looking over the placid seafront. However, before long, Charlotte discovers that scandals abound. She becomes captivated by the romance of the seaside lifestyle. But is the town of Sanditon truly a haven and will Charlotte find happiness there?

Now, fully completed by respected author and Austen expert Juliette Shapiro, this new edition of *Sanditon* finishes the original story in a vivid style recognizable to any fan. Shapiro's prose and plot twists stay true to Austen's sensibilities at all times while capturing her romance, tragedy, humor and sardonic wit.

## **Sanditon: Jane Austen's Unfinished Masterpiece Completed Details**

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# From Reader Review Sanditon: Jane Austen's Unfinished Masterpiece Completed for online ebook

## Devon Hernandez says

If I could I would give this 3.5 stars. It was good...but you can definitely tell when Ms. Shapiro takes over the writing from Dear Jane. I'm actually kind of sad now, because I feel the book was ended too soon, the second half, especially toward the end, felt rushed, and it makes me long for a REAL completed manuscript by Jane. I keep wondering what it would have been like if she had gotten to finish it before she died. I know it would have been longer and more well-paced. Charlotte would still have ended up marrying Sidney but there would be more to their separation and reunion than was given in the completion. I do think Ms. Shapiro did well, but she is no Jane Austen. :-) I also really liked "Rebecca's" review, in that points out that this novel made the finer qualities of Austen's writing stand out for her: her thoughtful tone, language, social commentary and criticism, her polite sarcasm (that's me), plot and character development. That's why Austen is such a celebrated novelist. Ms. Shapiro has to take over the real plot, as Austen only got to the 11th chapter, before heroine and hero, let alone other characters, are truly developed, and before plot can be solidified. Her contribution is, as Rebecca astutely points out, very one-dimensional and doesn't wield character development and social commentary as Jane does. She basically uses other published Austen novels as a sort of template. It's worth reading in that it's the last thing Dear Jane gave us, and it makes you appreciate her completed/published novels even more than you already do.

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## Ana says

This book was not memorable. It was not bad, just *meh!*

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## Alice says

Pour commencer, un petit rappel rapide de l'histoire de ce livre: Jane Austen en a commencé l'écriture quelques mois avant sa mort mais n'a malheureusement pas eu le temps, ni la force de le terminer. Cela laissa place à de nombreuses spéculations et différents auteurs ont depuis décidé de l'achever, avec plus ou moins de brio.

Nous y rencontrons les Parker, un couple fort sympathique vivant à Sanditon et ayant décidés de faire de leur village, la nouvelle destination à la mode. Et pour lui faire découvrir toutes ses merveilles, ils y inviteront la jeune Charlotte Heywood, notre héroïne.

Je dois dire qu'avant même d'ouvrir cet ouvrage, j'étais déjà mal disposé envers lui, je plaide coupable. Non seulement j'ai adoré la version de Marie Dobbs mais les critiques des lecteurs anglais et américains me laissaient craindre le pire et déplorer, une fois de plus, les choix de Milady.

Pourtant, j'ai essayé de mettre tout cela de côté et de juger de façon impartiale mais les éléments perturbateurs et agaçants n'ont fait que s'enchaîner les uns après les autres et m'énerver d'autant plus.

Le premier, et non des moindres, est qu'il n'est spécifié à aucun endroit quelle est la partie du texte écrite par Jane Austen. C'est déjà pour moi un manque de respect total et une mauvaise entrée en matière mais les choses ne s'arrangent pas vraiment avec la traduction de ce fragment. Passons sur ces petits inconvénients et concentrons nous sur la partie de Juliette Shapiro.

Dès que nous basculons de son côté, il se passe deux choses: au moins trois des personnages principaux changent complètement de caractère et pas cinq pages ont été tournées qu'une jeune fille est retrouvée échevelée dans les fourrées. Seriously????

Du coup, vous êtes en train de vous demander pourquoi j'ai quand même mis 3 sur 5 à ce roman. J'ai beaucoup hésité je dois dire mais comme c'est souvent le cas avec ces austeneries, le livre en lui-même est sympathique et agréable et se lit facilement, ce qui explique cette note. Mais si je devais juger seulement de son rapport à notre auteur adorée, je n'aurais mis qu'1/5. Une fois encore, un auteur prend Jane Austen pour prétexte pour faire vendre ses livres, tout en écrivant quelque chose qui n'a rien à voir avec elle et ça m'agace. Si je comprends les motivations de ces auteurs et autres éditeurs, il faut bien se rendre compte que ceux que l'on prend pour des imbéciles une fois de plus, c'est nous. A vous de voir si vous êtes prêt à passer au-dessus de cela pour lire un livre agréable ou si c'est pour vous rédhibitoire.

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<http://janeausten.hautetfort.com/arch...>

### **Jacq Jardin says**

i didn't know there have been several completions of Sanditon by other writers. i would've picked two so i could compare but this is the only one available at the library. i have to say it was more fun reading elizabeth bennet than charlotte heywood. bennet was more interesting, moer feisty. then again, i should remember that jane austen never finished this book, and probably never even got to revise the first few chapters she wrote. i really, really wonder how Jane Austen might've ended this had she lived to complete it.

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### **Mary Alice says**

Appalling. I don't mind that someone finished Austen's novel: I find such ventures fun when a talented contemporary author undertakes such a project. Jane Austen's novels are all about fun, and I have seen the fragments of Sanditon and the Watsons completed in interesting fashions by competent authors.

But Ms. Shapiro's completion is deplorable. Shapiro is completely unfaithful to Austen's intentions and redefines characters that Austen had already drawn carefully. And where Austen's characters are revealed by means of their own dialog, Shapiro's characters are constantly having their innermost thoughts explained to us over and over again by Shapiro.

At one horrible point, Shapiro strays woefully from Austen's policy of leaving torrid details out of her stories: Clara Brereton (intended to be a Jane Fairfax type) is found ravished in a field...the supposed victim of one of Austen's handsome comic characters. Not only is this scene impossible in Austen fiction, but neither of these two characters, as Austen created them, would have been caught up in such an event.

In Shapiro's completion, the details of the relationship between the novel's hero and heroine are ripped straight from *Pride and Prejudice*. And I suspect that this is the only one of Austen's books that Shapiro has read. (Shapiro admits in her strangely worded biography at the end of the book that she has read *Pride and Prejudice* many times. Charlotte, our lovely heroine, is turned into a cheap imitation of Elizabeth Bennett.)

Shapiro populates her completion with so many characters that were not in Austen's story that the book becomes her own, and a jumbled mess it is. Shapiro even changes the name of one minor character. Austen names a young girl Mary at the beginning of the last chapter of her fragment; Shapiro completes the chapter by renaming the child Alice. Sloppy.

At the end of the book, in what is really the Austenesque last chapter, when hero and heroine are united properly in marriage, Shapiro finds that she must wrap up the destinies of all her other hastily created characters. What ensues is three insane chapters of "surprises", new stories and contrived outcomes for all stray characters. Awful.

Yes. I own a copy of this book. Please someone take it off my hands!

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### **flourgirl says**

Did not like at all. Poorly written in my opinion. So much of the storyline felt rushed...almost like a summary instead of a novel. Don't bother...read Anne Telscombe version.

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### **Robin Sencenbach Ferguson says**

This is a tough one to review. On the one hand, I want to be particularly harsh, because someone had the audacity to finish an Austen masterpiece. On the other hand, I want to be particularly kind, because...well...someone had the audacity to finish an Austen masterpiece. And that's a pretty daunting thing to do, really. So, I will shift to the middle of these two extremes. It was okay. Not brilliant or horrible. Just okay.

The unfinished novel "Sandition" was written during the twilight of Austen's too-short life. One has to wonder if Austen, finally reaching a point of poor health herself, wasn't purposely writing a book about laughable hypochondriacs to cheer both her ailing spirits and body. In any case, Austen's novel opens with a carriage accident, which brings forth the introduction of Mr. Parker, a wealthy and earnest gentlemen, and Charlotte Heywood, a sensible, practical young lady who enjoys observing others. He and his wife invite her to stay with them at Sandition, a small coastal town similar to Bath, home to hypochondriacs, wealthy people, and schemers. I would have loved to see how Austen would have tied this odd but intriguing cast together--however, it is Juliette Shapiro who finished the rest of novel (really 3/4 of the book).

I will say this about Shapiro--she really knows her Austen. She knows her Austen canon from stem to stern. And she uses her knowledge extensively. I can't even tell you how many Austen-like tropes she uses here (mixing up which brother/sister is engaged from "Sense and Sensibility", a mistaken impression leading to a hastily refused and regretted proposal from "Pride and Prejudice," pretty much the entire character of Sydney from "Northanger Abbey's" Henry Tilney). And it works. Because she is using Austen storylines to finish an Austen novel. But it's just not very interesting

On the other hand, she breaks away from Austen rather painfully in other ways--word choice (seriously, Austen would not say the word "corset" in her books) and questionable character reactions, specifically. It's unpleasantly jarring--Shapiro both almost slavishly follows Austen's writing but also breaks away from it in disagreeable ways.

However, Shapiro does succeed in demonstrating her Austen-like wit for the supporting cast. The imperious Lady Denham and her eager future heirs waiting on bated breath for her last breath, Mr. Parker's younger siblings, who are in remarkable ill health yet are so willing to bustle about to tell everyone about their terrible suffering, Sir Edward Denham, the shameless poetic flirt, and Mr. Parker, the foolishly eager self-proclaimed representative of Sandition. All are amusingly written and are the high points of the novel. Charlotte is an uninspiring heroine, and her romance with Sydney is even less so. But hey, it could be worse, it could be Fanny Price and Edmund Bertram (I'm just kidding, "Mansfield Park" fans).

I could go on, but I think the point has been made. The Shapiro part of the book mimics Austen's writing, but misses that engaging and elusive narrative style, as well as the firm and characteristic moral backbone which holds all of Austen's novels together. But of course it won't have these things--because Shapiro is not Austen. So, if you are curious to see how "Sandition" could have ended, then read this book. If you are unsatisfied, then you are free to write your own version!

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### **Emily says**

It started out strong and interesting but ended weakly. You could tell where it was no longer Austen's work as the story sagged quite a bit and drifted into the rather ridiculous and far fetched. There was also little depth to the story line - you were presented with facts, but no longer had a fleshed out story so what plot there was was hard to follow and understand.

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### **QNPoohBear says**

by Juliette Shapiro

The small seaside town of Sandition is without a doctor preventing it from becoming a fashionable resort for invalids and hypochondriacs. Mr. and Mrs. Parker of Sandition head off to Willingdon in search of a doctor to bring to Sandition. Upon arrival, their carriage meets with an accident and Mr. Parker's foot is strained. It seems that his injury was in vain, for the Parkers have come to the wrong place and one without a doctor! However, they are taken in by the Heywoods, a local gentry family and return to Sandition with Charlotte, the eldest Heywood daughter still at home. Mr. Parker sings the praises of the inhabitants of the small town he loves and Charlotte is eager to meet them. Her unbiased eye reveals that Sandition's residents are not as pleasant as they seem. The most prominent resident is Lady Denham, a wealthy, elderly, miserly woman who is quick to judge. She has survived two husbands and the young relatives of those husbands hover around her hoping to be rewarded with her fortune. Also in hopes of some good fortune is Lady Denham's companion, Clara Brereton, a sober minded young lady. Chief among the fortune hunters is Sir Edward Denham who praises Charlotte's beauty and spouts poetry in her ear, giving her a disgust of the flirtatious young man. The Parkers are kindly and well-meaning and soon Charlotte becomes well-acquainted with Mr. Parker's eccentric family of hypochondriacs. Only one among them shares Charlotte's sarcasm and sense of humor at the ridiculousness of the characters who make up the residents of Sanditon. All through the summer

flirtations and love affairs happen, misunderstands occur and hearts are broken and before the season is over, Charlotte's life will change in ways she never expected. Austen's story is told with her usual sly, subtle humor and if she had been given the time to fully develop the story, the characters would have been as memorable as Lizzie Bennet, Lady Catherine and Mr. Woodhouse. Shapiro captures Austen's style well enough so that it isn't obvious where she picks up the thread of the narrative. The minor characters are every bit as quirky and funny as Austen imagined them. The story is rather lacking in action though. Most of the events are told by the narrator and things happen without the heroine being an active part of the story. There's almost no romance and certainly not the grand passion of Lizzie and Darcy or the quiet pining of Elinor Dashwood. The story spends too much time on the secondary characters and then the author rushes through the end to wrap up Charlotte's story before tying up loose ends with the other minor characters. I would have stopped at the end of Charlotte's story. The rest made it took long and I lost interest. There were also too many characters to keep track of. The novel isn't bad, it's hard to live up to Jane Austen's reputation and I think Shapiro does a credible job with the material she had to work with. I would recommend this above the tawdry sequels and adaptations and even some of the other Austen adaptations. I have not yet read any other versions of Sanditon.

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### **Karla says**

I didn't think this was that well done at all. The main romance has no more than a few pages devoted to it, and I just didn't think the writing was that great. I could tell exactly where the switcheroo took place from Jane Austen to Juliette Shapiro (and verified it later). It introduced additional characters that basically took up the last third of the book and were unnecessary. It wasn't anything special.

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### **Maria Grazia says**

I made up my mind to read Jane's fragment of Sanditon (12 chapters) first in the original version I've got in my edition of her MINOR WORKS (including also LADY SUSAN and THE WATSONS). Then I went on reading what Sanditon has become in J. Shapiro's hands and imagination.

You all probably know that Jane was seriously ill when she wrote the opening chapters of Sanditon; she had less than six months to live. It is thus remarkable that the book is so fresh, innovative, and original. In her last completed novel, Persuasion, Austen had depicted how men of merit and small means could rise to affluence and position by means of service in the British navy. Sanditon builds on this theme, depicting the commercial development of a small watering place and the social confusion of its society (one character is a mulatto heiress from the West Indies, Miss Lambe).

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<http://flyhigh-by-learnonline.blogspot.com>

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### **Estance Moriarty says**

This completed version of Sanditon is vastly inferior to the version published by Anne Telscombe & Marie Dobbs.

The liberty taken with the narration style!! Austen brought indirect dialogue to life, but she did not address the "reader" directly, using a misguided attempt at humor, falling flat because we don't side with the joke.

We love Prinny, but he has no place in this book. Austen would never have mentioned him, especially not while calling him Prinny.

Shapiro doesn't write a lot more than the original book, but when she does... Anachronism after anachronism... From reference to psychological terms to mentions of people - I kid you not - kissing just after becoming engaged, yes, kissing, written explicitly on page. Completely ridiculous.

Charlotte was given too short a story, leaving the romance arc underdeveloped & the characters having learned nothing, not owning up to their misguided prior behavior.

The rest of the book, though. Pure fantasy. An outlandish tale about the serving class which would have never been written by Austen.

Altogether, this was very disappointing.

I recommend you not read it. Read the other one.

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### **Nat says**

What an insult to link Jane Austen's name to that poorly written, pathetically plotted pile of garbage.

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### **Lynne-marie says**

One always hopes that these attempts will be intelligently done, but in this case, the "co-author" rumble up Jane Austen with Jane Eyre and forgot to read her primer on Regency romances. The cross should be amber NOT topaz. Austen never spoke of women as become "animal[s:] from childbearing"; her characters were too solidly middle class to be brought down so violently. She never spoke of her characters as "gushing"; she demonstrated it in their flow of words. Anachronisms abound. The plot line is not straight-forward and Austen-like. I despair to say more.

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### **Jane Greensmith says**

I enjoyed the part that Austen wrote, tried to keep an open mind about the part that Shapiro wrote, but found myself skimming and gritting my teeth. I found the completion dull, the heroine self-righteous, and the writing just so-so.

I wanted to love this but I think the completion from the 1970's, by Another Lady, to be much better. It's silly in part, but at least it made me laugh and held my interest.

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