



## Fanshawe

*Nathaniel Hawthorne*

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**Fanshawe** Nathaniel Hawthorne

Hawthorne's first "romance", first published three years after he graduated from Bowdoin College.

## Fanshawe Details

Date : Published October 12th 2007 by Book Jungle (first published 1828)

ISBN : 9781604244052

Author : Nathaniel Hawthorne

Format : Paperback 116 pages

Genre : Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, Classics, Literature, 19th Century, Romance, American

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# From Reader Review Fanshawe for online ebook

## Jamie says

I liked this story despite the fact that it is not a maturely written piece and has poor organization. Hawthorne has a lovely way with words and detail. I thought the ending was rather abrupt and the story missed some helpful details, but overall, it was an intriguing plot. Had this story been written later in Hawthorne's career I think it would have been much better.

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## Metaphorosis says

reviews.metaphorosis.com

2 stars

The beautiful Ellen Langton comes to live with her father's old friend at Harley College. She attracts two admirers, but is then caught up in an intrigue from which they strive to rescue her.

Hawthorne was apparently ashamed of this debut effort, and it's certainly not his best work. It is a readable short novel, but in no way outstanding. It's an attempt at a mysterious romance, but it gives the impression that Hawthorne simply threw together many stock elements without troubling to put much of a plot around them. Much of the story simply doesn't make much sense. One knows that because of the type of story it is, such and such should happen, so it's not hard to follow, but within the story itself, there's remarkably little support for it all.

This is not the place to start with Hawthorne. In fact, unless you're a serious Hawthorne completist, it's not really worth reading.

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## Nutty says

Wooden language. This must have been the start of Hollywood. Still, it was an interesting reading experience.

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## Scott says

*After reading *House of the Seven Gables* in the LOA collected novels edition I have, I decided to go back to the beginning and read through Hawthorne's work chronologically... just finished this one.*

*An interesting look into Hawthorne's undergraduate work. It's short, and its chapters are short, which made for a quick read. This means that situations and characters are drawn briefly with less detail than would be*

*possible in a longer book. But nothing feels incomplete— it's a tight, self-contained novel. Hawthorne's prose style of later works is definitely visible in Fanshawe. A pretty routine, predictable plot, but worth reading for its length and for a view of this author's early work.*

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### **Lisa (Harmonybites) says**

I can't imagine anyone today reading this were it not this was by Nathaniel Hawthorne, who'd later write such classics as *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of Seven Gables*. Note, that came later. When he wrote this he was barely out of college, he published it anonymously, then later would try to destroy every copy in existence. I'm not sorry he didn't succeed. I can imagine this, his first novel, is a goldmine for scholars of American literature.

And it's not really burn-worthy. I *can* see glimmers of the genius he'd later display in his novels and short stories. I first saw that in the confrontation between "the Angler" and Hugh Crombie: "Your good resolutions were always like cobwebs, and your evil habits like five-inch cables." Great line--and I can see some of the classic Hawthorne themes here concerning good and evil and redemption. But oh, the melodrama! And Ellen Langton is no Hester Prynne, but a rather dull, insipid, damsel-in-distress. There's also far too much tell, not show here--Hawthorne would get much, much better. I find I do enjoy even Jane Austen's *Juvenalia*--I think because she's my crack--there's something about her wit, her humor, that just tickles me. I think you need to feel about Hawthorne the way I do about Austen to really, really relish this novel and rate it highly. If for some weird reason this is your introduction to Hawthorne--please don't judge him by it. He would be appalled if you did. He's one of the true greats of American literature--but you wouldn't guess that on this basis. It took decades more of maturity to create *The Scarlet Letter*.

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### **Faith Bradham says**

Oh Hawthorne. This was not a very good first effort, but then I suppose everyone has to start somewhere! He forgot to let his characters have any sort of personality or growth, and he beat the idea of the marriage plot to death.

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### **Shaun says**

I read this as part of a Library of America collection, Hawthorne: Collected Novels. In the chronology provided at the end, this is how Hawthorne's debut novel is described:

*1828 - Fanshawe published in Boston at his own expense (\$100 according to his sister Elizabeth, but in view of the contemporary publishing costs more likely \$200. Ashamed of this first effort (which does not bear his name on its title page), he forbids his friends to mention his authorship and refuses to discuss the book in later years. His wife does not learn of its existence until after his death. It is not republished until 1876.*

Kind of says it all.

However, as a completist, who finds the process equally of fascinating as the product, I think this offers something worthwhile.

Though he didn't quite pull this off, there are glimpses of the Hawthorne that was to come.

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### **susan haris says**

Read it because of its background and because Fanshawe is such a good name, if I were him I can imagine writing it quite beautifully whatever my handwriting may be. That Hawthorne should disown it and his wife would not even acknowledge its existence is the best thing about this book, I mean what a cool thing to do!

I hate modern novels for having made me dislike virtue or virtuous women which translate as whiny in my head or into exclamations such as "oh jeez", or thoughts such as all you need is a tight slap.

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### **Ana Rînceanu says**

This novel started out strong so I was pumped. Hawthorne's use of language is great and the premise was interesting. We are introduced to a love triangle between the heiress Ellen, the immature student Edward and the sickly scholar Fanshawe and things start to go south after the villain steps in. The pacing of this novel is beyond weird and not in a good way. After the first half of the novel, all suspense is gone, even though the quest to recover the kidnapped maiden has just started.

All in all, it was okay, but an experienced editor would have made this better. Unfortunately they were scarce in Hawthorne's day and he self-published. Upon comparing this to *The Scarlet Letter*, I think fans will appreciate how much more the author improved.

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### **Andres says**

I don't know why I'm keeping on with this attempt to read all of an author's books in a row (in the order they were written) since I've failed with everyone except the first (sorry Austen, Forster) and now I can add Hawthorne to the list. I seem to bomb out after reading the first two books of any author, but then again I've chosen some heavy hitters...

Anyway, *Fanshawe* was kind of a surprise. I know that Hawthorne tried desperately to disown the book and have all copies in existence destroyed, but it survived to be read by people like me, foolhardy enough to read it because, well, just because!

I haven't read any Hawthorne for years (except for a couple of short stories) and *The Scarlet Letter* was even farther back in time (when I was in high school). I didn't like anything I read in high school (anything that

was assigned, anyway) so I tried to approach this with an open mind.

The reason *Fanshawe* surprised me was because it is, essentially, a kidnapping story, something straight out of a TV show. There's some place setting at the beginning, setting up the story and characters, painting a nice picture of the idyllic location for this little school and its headmaster and students.

But it really gets interesting when the stranger in a black cape appears, menacing the pure young girl just with his look alone. You're not even sure if he's real or not because he pops up out of nowhere and disappears just as quickly, but you eventually learn who he is and what his intentions are. Fanshawe is the sickly student who loves the girl and does what he can with his friend (who also loves her) to save the girl.

Throw in a chase and a rather harrowing (but maybe too easy) resolution and you have a kind of swashbuckling adventure that entertains fairly well. The only potential drawback is the writing: Hawthorne's prose is very dense. I wouldn't say he uses more words than necessary but what he does use manages to pack in a lot. I am a picky reader when it comes to writers who use twenty words when five would suffice, but I never found any passage to be overly wordy. Not to say there weren't some slow spots but I had fun with this shorter novel (I think the shortest of all Hawthorne's novels).

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### **Jake says**

I know a lot of people didn't like this book, and I will admit it is not nearly as good as his later novels, but I enjoyed this. The writing style drew me in. The characters kept me in. And the plot was, well workable, but interesting enough. What I really enjoyed was his incredible ability to use description. I was there in the cabin, the woods. I went along on the horse ride. While the end seemed quick, all in all I think this was a good first work, even if he didn't.

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### **Amber says**

This was Hawthorne's first novel, published I think when he was in college. He published it anonymously, and later in life tried to suppress it. I just wish that my first novel could be this good! I noticed that his character development isn't as intense as in his other novels I've read, but I feel like the plot/story line was more climatic...even if it did conclude in a sudden rush. I liked it.

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### **Miles Smith says**

Fanshawe(1828) was Hawthorne's first major work of fiction. He disliked the novel in later years and destroyed every copy he could find. Fortunately twelve survived. Fanshawe is in many ways superior to his later novels. It foreshadows the unique nexus of Calvinist and Romanticist thought that typified the New England of the Early Republic. In many ways the novel is a forerunner to the works of British author such as Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh. Christological figures are prominent in the work, and certain characters exemplify the sort of sacramental love that appears in Calvinist and Roman Catholic-influenced novels of the 20th century.

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### **K.M. Weiland says**

This is a completely forgettable romp, but it's much better than other early novels of classic authors—and it's much more readable and enjoyable than Hawthorne's *House of the Seven Gables*.

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### **Mike says**

**2.5 stars.** Hawthorne wrote this short novel while still a college student, and it shows. Later in life he tried to suppress the novel and avoided any connection with it, although that reaction may have been a little extreme. It's wasn't *that* bad. The plot is a simple love triangle among two college boys and an innocent maiden who is kidnapped by a dastardly devil. Which young hero will rescue the fair damsel? Will her virtue remain intact? The events play out like a cross between a cheesy Gothic romance and a silent film. The novel begins slowly, but soon picks up speed as the chase commences. If this hadn't been written by a young Hawthorne, it would have been long forgotten. Even so, it was an enjoyable way to spend a couple afternoons.

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### **JD Brazil says**

Hawthorne must really think himself a fancy-dan, hoity toity cock sucker. You know why people like him? They like him because they can read all that stuffy bull shit and feel smarter for it. Someone might say to a Hawthorne fan, "How did you like the latest Grisham or Koontz novel?" and the Hawthorne fan would say all smug, "Oh please, they don't hold a candle to all of the archaic symbolism that Hawthorne writes with." They like Hawthorne because he uses big words, but they are able to figure them out in context. Figuring big words out in context does not make you any smarter than anyone else; it actually puts you on an even playing field with a fifth grade special ed class. Here is a big word for you Hawthorne fans: suckmyballs. Here, let me put it in context, "You need to suckmyballs."

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### **Julie says**

To be honest, I thought it was a bit weird. I wasn't a huge fan of the story, or the ending, but I gave it three stars because I loved the language and the descriptions.

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### **Megan says**

Had I been able to, I would have given this 3.5 stars. I'm not sure that I understand why Hawthorne was so ashamed of this work as I quite enjoyed it. It was simple in its plot and deliverance and yet it was an easy enough read with enough detail as made it likeable. The ending was shorter than one might like, and as one of the characters died it's a bit sad, but in the end, it all becomes happy so that it can be thought of as a bittersweet ending rather than a saddened one.

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### **Steve Albert says**

Halfway decent for a first book. The language can easily be seen as beyond pretentious by modern standards, but don't let that stop you from catching some decent sarcasm. Story-wise it's a very lightweight "pretty girl gets kidnapped by a greedy sleazebag and may or may not require being rescued by a nice young man" bit of romantic pulp. No two characters are alike, but most of them are stock. I get why Hawthorne tried to bury it as it wasn't up to his later standards, but it honestly wasn't bad.

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### **Justin says**

Interesting to read as Nathaniel Hawthorne's first book, and the very first "college novel."

Too good to be dismissed as mere "juvenilia," but so all over the place that it seems like the work of someone suffering ADD-like symptoms.

Worth reading, but for the most part only as an important literary footnote.

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