The Gothic tale has been with us for over two hundred years, but this collection is the first to illustrate the continuing strength of this special fictional tradition from its origins in the late eighteenth century. Gothic fiction is generally identified from Horace Walpole's Castle of Otranto and the works of Ann Radcliffe, and with heroes and heroines menaced by feudal villains amid crumbling ruins. While the repertoire of claustrophobic settings, gloomy themes, and threatening atmosphere established the Gothic genre, later writers from Poe onwards achieved an ever greater sophistication, and a shift in emphasis from cruelty to decadence. Modern Gothic is distinguished by its imaginative variety of voice, from the chilling depiction of a disordered mind to the sinister suggestion of vampirism.

This anthology brings together the work of writers such as Le Fanu, Hawthorne, Hardy, Faulkner, and Borges with their earliest literary forebears, and emphasizes the central role of women writers from Anna Laetitia Aikin to Isabel Allende and Angela Carter. While the Gothic tale shares some characteristics with the ghost story and tales of horror and fantasy, the present volume triumphantly celebrates the distinctive features that define this powerful and unsettling literary form.
The Gothic tale has been with us for over two hundred years, but this collection is the first to illustrate the continuing strength of this special fictional tradition from its origins in the late eighteenth century. Gothic fiction is generally identified from Horace Walpole's Castle of Otranto and the works of Ann Radcliffe, and with heroes and heroines menaced by feudal villains amid crumbling ruins. While the repertoire of claustrophobic settings, gloomy themes, and threatening atmosphere e Start by marking "The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales" as Want to Read: Want to Read saving… Want to Read. This is a well-selected compilation of Gothic tales - appealing for its sheer entertainment value, but also for the overview of the genre which it provides (37 tales in all). An excellent intro by the editor (avoids heavy critical jargon/only one minor spoiler) distinguishes the gothic from other kinds of supernatural tales - a distinction which I'd never thought about - and makes a good case for summarising gothic fiction as a way of exercising anxieties about systems of tyranny and oppression. This is a well-selected compilation of Gothic tales - appealing for its sheer entertainment value. Read full description of the books: "But sometimes when I wake in the grey morning, and between waking and sleeping, think of all those things that I must shut out from my sleeping and waking thoughts, I wonder was I right or was he? Was he mad, or was I idiotically incredulous?" E. Nesbit's "The Hursts of Hurstcote" is only one of the many stories found in The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales, the first anthology of this spinetingling genre. Though Gothic fiction has generally been identified with Walpole's "Castle of Otranto" and the works of Ann Radcliffe, these thirty-seven selections compiled by Chris Baldick provide a unique look at the genre's development into its present-day forms.