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**Sinopsis**

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A forerunner of psychological fiction, and considered a landmark work for its innovative use of narrative devices, *Tristram Shandy* was both celebrated and vilified when first published in 1759. While the narrative's endless digressions drew criticism, the novel's bawdy humor made it a cause for celebration in eighteenth-century London. Originally released in nine separate volumes, it is literature's famed "cock and bull" story, reveling in parody and satire.

Laurence Sterne's topsy-turvy masterpiece is, in effect, a novel about writing a novel—producing a fictional world that is as strange and wonderful as the process of its creation. Impulsive, addictive, and absurd, it begins at the moment of *Tristram Shandy's* conception and shifts relentlessly into a hilarious series of disconnected episodes starring the hero's family, friends, and neighbors. The memorable cast of characters wanders in and out of the playful web of Sterne's deliberately visual text treatment, which includes endless dashes and asterisks, one-sentence chapters, unusual graphic renderings, and blank pages that invite the reader to interact with the book.

Impossible to categorize—and absorbing and surprising even today—*Tristram Shandy* is a rare celebration of the art of fiction. It remains a beguiling milestone in the history of literature.