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NAXOS
AudioBooks

COMPLETE
CLASSICS
UNABRIDGED

Anthony Hope

*Rupert
of
Hentzau*

Read by **Rufus Wright**



1	Rupert of Hentzau by Anthony Hope – Chapter 1	4:09
2	Yet Sapt was in the right about him.	4:46
3	As time went on, the first impulse...	5:57
4	I left the queen and went to prepare...	5:23
5	To lay on the king the full blame...	5:14
6	Chapter 2: A Station Without a Cab	4:32
7	We arrived punctual to our appointed time.	4:44
8	'Well, there's no help for it,' said I...	4:50
9	On either side my hands were still pinned fast.	3:30
10	Then came Rischenheim's voice again...	3:47
11	Chapter 3: Again to Zenda	4:43
12	My battered head ached most consumedly.	4:01
13	Rudolf came, calm and serene.	4:57
14	'Come, Fritz,' he cried...	3:42
15	He was hardly gone...	3:30
16	Chapter 4: An Eddy on the Moat	3:33
17	The king rose with a yawn, and bade the colonel good-night.	5:24
18	Sapt ran on. Opening the gate that led to the bridge...	5:06
19	Yet there was in truth nothing strange...	4:03
20	Nevertheless it was a quarter of an hour...	5:08

21	Chapter 5: An Audience of The King	3:17
22	At ten minutes to eight o'clock...	3:43
23	The count advanced, bowing low...	3:58
24	Now Rudolf played his part well.	4:39
25	Bernenstein looked in again.	4:41
26	Now Sapt was resolved not to leave Rischenheim alone...	3:33
27	Inside the room, Rischenheim stood...	3:05
28	Chapter 6: The Task of The Queen's Servants	3:57
29	'I doubt if it would bring me,' grinned old Sapt...	4:21
30	A few moments later Bernenstein returned.	3:46
31	'Will it last forever?' she asked...	3:52
32	Thus she turned away, letting him go.	3:51
33	The queen made no sound...	3:50
34	Chapter 7: The Message of Simon the Huntsman	3:39
35	I hardly stayed to form a resolution.	4:36
36	'I wish a customer had come in...'	5:17
37	Now, after all our stir and runnings to and fro...	4:18
38	'Well, Simon, where is the king?' she asked...	3:39
39	'Suppose Rupert –' The Constable of Zenda broke in...	3:33
40	Chapter 8: The Temper of Boris the Hound	5:06

41	Suddenly Sapt, turning his head for the first time...	5:03
42	I looked where his hand now was.	4:13
43	'If the king asks more, tell him I have the packet...'	4:24
44	'You damned fool!' roared Rupert...	5:16
45	Chapter 9: The King in the Hunting Lodge	4:17
46	An hour or more had passed since our discovery...	4:51
47	So the plan was made.	5:06
48	The stableman had led the horse away...	3:52
49	However, not why the queen went, but that she had gone...	3:41
50	But at this moment I saw a man on the platform...	3:23
51	Chapter 10: The King in Strelsau	3:37
52	Reluctantly and ruefully the fat fellow stepped out...	4:46
53	Both to my wife and to Rudolf himself...	3:36
54	Mr Rassendyll asked no better than to meet his enemy...	4:06
55	Along they went; soon they came...	4:15
56	The half then, at least, of Rosa's attachment...	5:05
57	Chapter 11: What the Chancellor's Wife Saw	3:42
58	Now, it was plain that Bauer...	4:21
59	As he spoke Rudolf turned to knock at the door...	4:02
60	At this moment he heard horses' hoofs behind him.	4:00

61	A doubtful, puzzled little smile spread...	3:23
62	Flight was impossible.	4:15
63	Chapter 12: Before Them All!	4:59
64	There was nothing that Rudolf more desired...	4:18
65	Bernenstein, however, persuaded her to go...	3:32
66	A moment of absolute silence followed...	3:14
67	But every moment bore its peril...	4:19
68	Chapter 13: A King Up His Sleeve	4:15
69	The old woman shook her head.	5:17
70	Rischenheim was staring at him...	3:42
71	Then he walked across to the window...	3:48
72	Starting from this point, his audacious mind...	4:39
73	Chapter 14: The News Comes to Strelsau	4:45
74	The door of the room opened...	4:29
75	'Listen,' said Rudolf.	4:40
76	The three were standing round me...	2:59
77	Rudolf turned to me.	3:23
78	Chapter 15: A Pastime For Colonel Sapt	5:23
79	'In fact, sir, we were all overcome with fatigue...'	4:20
80	Sapt was still smiling in grim amusement...	4:07

81	Then and there they set about what they had to do.	4:00
82	'Yes, Simon, your brother will be here...'	4:04
83	Chapter 16: A Crowd in the Konigstrasse	4:21
84	I did not know what she intended...	4:52
85	As she rose, Rischenheim made a quick impulsive step...	5:19
86	Our way did not lie by the house...	4:26
87	The fellow whom I saw...	4:15
88	Chapter 17: Young Rupert and the Play-actor	4:58
89	'I've come to see the Count of Hentzau,' Rudolf continued.	3:49
90	'Ah, the play-actor!' said he...	4:34
91	But he had overshot the mark this time.	4:25
92	A sudden flush swept over Rupert of Hentzau's face.	3:55
93	Ignorant of the mind and heart of young Rupert...	3:46
94	Chapter 18: The Triumph of The King	4:33
95	The device that he adopted was nicely chosen.	5:01
96	I looked again at Rupert.	5:24
97	Moved by some impulse, I walked to the window...	3:53
98	Bernenstein had more presence of mind than I.	4:21
99	Young Bernenstein interrupted his cheering...	4:03
100	Chapter 19: For Our Love and Her Honour	4:03

101	'He'll take the throne,' I cried triumphantly.	4:47
102	The minutes seemed very long as we waited...	4:11
103	'In an hour I must be gone from here,' began Rudolf.	4:46
104	We rushed to the door of the room where he was.	4:58
105	He spoke firmly and coldly...	4:31
106	Chapter 20: The Decision of Heaven	4:07
107	Then he faltered; but he had not fallen.	4:54
108	'There's a chance for you...'	4:29
109	It might be that there was little reason in her words.	4:35
110	But now our attention was again diverted.	5:36
111	He opened his eyes, and his lips bent in a smile.	5:05
112	Chapter 21: The Coming of the Dream	3:30
113	A distant faint hum of voices reached us.	3:54
114	Times change for all of us.	2:59

Total time: 8:13:04

Anthony Hope

(1863–1933)

Rupert of Hentzau

True to the spirit of the adventure novel, Anthony Hope took an enormous chance by giving up a safe career in the law in 1894 to become a full-time writer. Although by most people's standards Hope was a popular success, he suffered bouts of despondency during which he feared his talent would desert him. His masterpiece *The Prisoner of Zenda* did not fail him, however; it became one of the most popular English novels ever written, appealing to all classes and nationalities. By the 1930s half a million copies had been sold world-wide, and in that same decade it was re-published in the first wave of the new, cheap paperback editions that emerged; it continues to sell as such to this day. Moreover, Hope sold the film rights to *The Prisoner of Zenda* and to *Rupert of Hentzau*, and both have

been filmed and adapted for TV and radio a number of times since.

Rupert of Hentzau is a sequel, and in common with most sequels lacks perhaps the vigour of its predecessor, *The Prisoner of Zenda*. This is partly accounted for by the fact that Anthony Hope didn't want to repeat himself in *Rupert*, as he was afraid his public would tire of mere heroics, so he approached the continuing saga from a different viewpoint. He gives the narration to a third party, Fritz von Tarlenheim, a character who had distinguished himself in the first novel during the struggle to save the true King of Ruritania. Though he is not actively involved in all the events of the novel, Fritz's narration gives the reader an opportunity to see the hero from an objective point of view. Rudolph Rassendyll, the reluctant

hero of *The Prisoner of Zenda*, finds that he cannot shake off the responsibility for his actions in that book: it is three years later and the relationship between Queen Flavia and her husband the King is not happy, as she recalls the love she had for his double, Rassendyll. A love-letter from her to Rassendyll is intercepted by Rupert of Hentzau, who uses it to torture the weak and jealous King. Rassendyll returns to help the Queen, but after Rupert kills the King he is once more forced to impersonate the monarch, with fatal consequences.

The role of fate and destiny hang like a shadow over this tragic story, but the dark tone gives Hope an opportunity to flesh out his characters. Rassendyll is pushed to the limits of his heroics, whilst always having a conscience over the deception that he must assume. Hope, in common with other writers of the day, infused into his character the 19th-century English public school spirit, where honour and doing one's duty are paramount, even at the expense of love. Hope helped to create the world's image of the strong, silent, noble Englishman.

Rassendyll became a literary type, and as such is often imitated, perhaps influencing the make-up of later British fictional heroes, such as James Bond.

In *Rupert of Hentzau*, by contrast, Hope makes Rassendyll a first-class Victorian villain: calculating, audacious and dashing handsome:

His image is one that memory holds clear and distinct, though time may blur the shape of greater and better men... such men do not repent; but it may be that he regretted the enterprise which had led him on so far and forced on him a deed so momentous; yet to those who knew him it seems more likely that the smile broadened on his firm full lips as he looked down on the unconscious city. I believe that he asked no better than to cross swords again with Rudolf Rassendyll and set his fortunes on the issue. (Chapter 17)

The famous duel between Rassendyll and Rupert became a blueprint for duels in dozens of Hollywood movies:

The next moment he had his revolver in his hand – none too soon, for Rupert of Hentzau's barrel faced him, and they stood thus, opposite to one another, with no more than three or four feet between the mouths of their weapons. There is, indeed, much that may be said against Rupert of Hentzau, the truth about him well-nigh forbidding that charity of judgment which we are taught to observe towards all men. But neither I nor any man who knew him ever found in him a shrinking from danger or a fear of death. It was no feeling such as these, but rather a cool calculation of chances, that now stayed his hand. Even if he were victorious in the duel, and both did not die, yet the noise of the firearms would greatly decrease his chances of escape. Moreover, he was a noted swordsman, and conceived that he was Mr Rassendyll's superior in that exercise. The steel offered him at once a better prospect for victory and more hope of a safe fight. So he did not pull his trigger, but,

maintaining his aim the while, said:

'I'm not a street bully, and I don't excel in a rough-and-tumble. Will you fight now like a gentleman? There's a pair of blades in the case yonder.' (Chapter17)

Rupert of Hentzau was made into a silent film in 1915, and again in 1923 when it was given a happy ending: Rudolph 'abdicates' to marry Flavia, and Ruritania becomes a republic! Sadly, since the arrival of sound Hollywood has not made a film of the sequel, though *The Prisoner of Zenda* has been filmed twice, firstly in 1937 (with Douglas Fairbanks Jr. as the most dastardly incarnation of Rupert) and later in 1952 (with James Mason playing a much colder Rupert).

Such a prototype story of derring-do has leant itself to several spoof versions, including one starring Stan Laurel in 1924, called *Rupert of Hee-Haw*. Later, in 1978, *The Prisoner of Zenda* became a comic vehicle for the talents of Peter Sellers. He played multiple parts in the film: the 'Ruthenian' King Rudolph V; the London cab driver, Sydney Frewin, who is brought

in to portray the missing King with whom he shares an uncanny resemblance; and the aged King Rudolph IV at the start of the film, before the character is killed in a hot air balloon accident.

The Prisoner of Zenda and *Rupert of Hentzau* spawned many literary imitations. They were known as the 'sword-and-cloak' romances, often set in a fictional country, like Ruritania, and often vaguely reminiscent of the Kaiser's Germany. These became the light fiction of the early 20th century. Today we can still recognise the format in the Flashman novels of George Macdonald Fraser, who actually parodied *The Prisoner of Zenda* in *Royal Flash* in 1970.

J.M. Barrie said that Anthony Hope 'made more people happy than any other author of our time'. The books are still in print today – testament to Hope's ability to provide much-needed escapist happiness far beyond his own time.

Notes by David Timson



Rufus Wright has appeared in many West End productions, including *Journey's End* and the Donmar Warehouse productions of *Mary Stuart* and *Frost/Nixon*. His film appearances include *Quantum of Solace* and he has worked extensively on TV, in comedies such as *The Thick of It* and *Extras*, and in many plays and readings on BBC Radio. This is his first reading for Naxos AudioBooks.

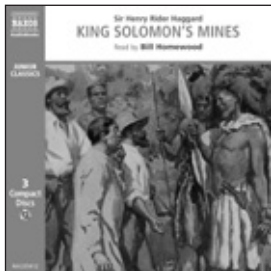
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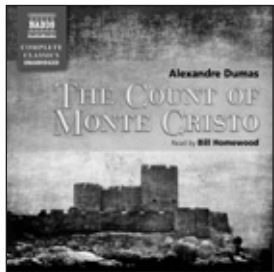
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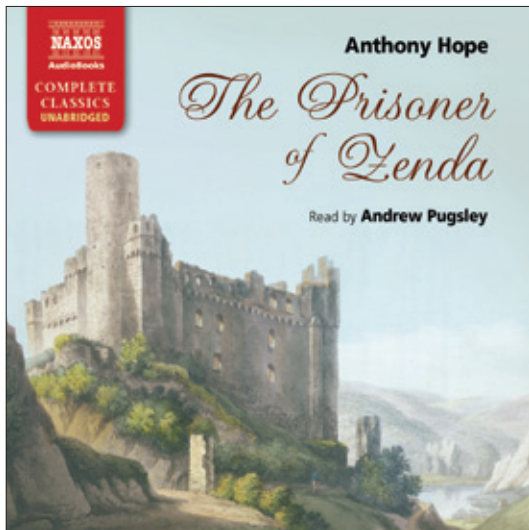
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The Prisoner of Zenda
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Anthony Hope

*Rupert
of
Hentzau*

Read by **Rufus Wright**

An incriminating love-letter from the Queen of Ruritania to Rudolph Rassendyll, the hero of *The Prisoner of Zenda*, is intercepted by the dastardly villain Rupert of Hentzau, who is intent on causing trouble for the Royal Family. Rassendyll is forced to return to save the day and again assume his impersonation of King Rudolph. Once more he is embroiled in a world of deception, intrigue, deadly swordfights and strained loyalties, but will he be able to restore peace to Ruritania a second time?



Rufus Wright's theatre credits include *Journey's End*, *Mary Stuart* and *Frost/Nixon*. His film credits include *Quantum of Solace* and his television credits include *The Thick of It* and *Extras*. This is his first reading for Naxos AudioBooks.

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