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NAXOS
AudioBooks

COMPLETE
CLASSICS
UNABRIDGED

R.D. Blackmore

LORNA DOONE

Read by **Jonathan Keeble**



1	Lorna Doone. A Romance of Exmoor by R.D. Blackmore –	
	Chapter 1: Elements of Education	5:43
2	‘Other customs, no less worthy...’	4:02
3	Chapter 2: An Important Item	5:07
4	The other little chaps pointed at me...	5:37
5	By this time the question of fighting was gone...	4:46
6	Then up to me came Robin Snell...	5:22
7	Chapter 3: The War-Path of The Doones	5:09
8	It is the manner of all good boys to be careless of apparel...	4:47
9	Now, up to the end of Dulverton town...	4:45
10	John Fry was bowing forward with sleep...	5:45
11	We rode very carefully down our side...	4:05
12	It touched me so to see that child...	3:26
13	Chapter 4: A Very Rash Visit	6:03
14	Fourteen cots my mother counted...	4:31
15	‘This matter must be seen to...’	4:36
16	The square man with the long grey beard...	3:56
17	Chapter 5: An Illegal Settlement	5:20
18	And here let me, as a solid man...	5:11
19	For not to mention the strength of the place...	4:18
20	Chapter 6: Necessary Practice	5:24

21	Now in the depth of the winter month...	5:11
22	There was still some daylight here and there...	5:22
23	Chapter 7: Hard it is to Climb	5:32
24	But now, although my sister Annie...	4:51
25	'Or if your loach should not be abroad...'	5:02
26	I found it strongly over-woven...	5:28
27	Therefore, seeing hard strife before me...	5:59
28	Chapter 8: A Boy and a Girl	4:54
29	Here was I, a yeoman's boy...	3:53
30	'Come with me down the waterfall...'	3:42
31	Presently one of the great rough men...	4:13
32	Chapter 9: There is no Place Like Home	3:22
33	How I clomb up...	4:42
34	Nevertheless, I worked hard at the gun...	3:11
35	But all this is beyond the children...	3:25
36	Chapter 10: A Brave Rescue and a Rough Ride	4:40
37	For a moment I could not help laughing...	4:58
38	He looked at me with a dry little whistle...	3:37
39	Something of this occurred to him...	3:53
40	Chapter 11: Tom Deserves His Supper	5:02

41	But before he was truly gone...	5:26
42	Tom Faggus was a jovial soul...	5:38
43	Chapter 12: A Man Justly Popular	4:59
44	And in sooth it did seem, for a while...	4:13
45	Now I feel that of those boyish days...	5:09
46	Some folk, who had wiser attended to their own affairs...	4:40
47	One old man who lived at Lynmouth...	4:18
48	Chapter 13: Master Huckaback Comes in	4:11
49	Now when I came in...	4:37
50	I followed the track on the side of the hill...	5:04
51	Yet here again I was disappointed...	3:53
52	'He shall marry Ruth,' he said by-and-by...	3:19
53	Chapter 14: A Motion Which Ends in a Mull	5:27
54	Here mother fetched out her handkerchief...	5:09
55	Chapter 15: Quo Warranto?	5:12
56	Uncle Reuben made his very best scrape...	5:21
57	I forget how we came out of it...	4:21
58	To return now to my Uncle Ben...	4:04
59	The chine of highland, whereon we stood...	3:21
60	Chapter 16: Lorna Growing Formidable	5:34

61	While I was forgetting much of many things...	2:58
62	She knew me at once, from my manner...	4:35
63	Chapter 17: John is Bewitched	3:35
64	The spring being now too forward...	4:42
65	Now this I have not told...	5:06
66	Mother Melldrum had two houses...	5:30
67	Chapter 18: Witchery Leads to Witchcraft	5:52
68	Being so ashamed and bashful...	4:43
69	Chapter 19: Another Dangerous Interview	5:16
70	This was very pleasant to me...	5:02
71	'It is nothing done by you, Master Ridd,' she answered...	3:47
72	Chapter 20: Lorna Begins her Story	4:47
73	'It does not happen many times that I give way...'	3:53
74	'By your face, Master Ridd...'	4:05
75	'Gweny took me for an Angel...'	3:52
76	Chapter 21: Lorna Ends Her Story	5:16
77	'Upon hearing this I looked at him...'	4:05
78	'Cousin, have no fear,' he said...	4:39
79	'This minded me of my grandfather...'	5:14
80	Chapter 22: A Long Spring Month	4:15

81	Though young Squire Marwood was so thirsty...	4:04
82	However, I am too easy, there is no doubt...	3:10
83	So we were compelled to go down the field...	4:11
84	Chapter 23: A Royal Invitation	4:48
85	The next afternoon, when work was over...	5:10
86	He touched me with the white thing...	4:59
87	Now though my mother was so willing...	5:26
88	Chapter 23: A Safe Pass for King's Messenger	5:28
89	Now be that matter as you please...	5:26
90	The only things that pleased me much...	4:22
91	'Having no knowledge of these great men...'	3:56
92	Chapter 25: A Great Man Attends to Business	5:22
93	With this I was hasting away from him...	5:50
94	I thanked him for his good advice...	4:03
95	'John Ridd,' said the Lord Chief Justice...	4:20
96	Chapter 26: John is Drained and Cast Aside	5:53
97	Saying these words rather slowly...	3:39
98	Here the Lord Justice gave me such a glare...	4:31
99	Anyhow, it was a reason of much grief...	4:25
100	Chapter 27: Home Again at Last	4:42

101	But bless your heart, and my own as well...	4:26
102	Chapter 28: John has Hope of Lorna	5:07
103	While yet we dread for the coming event...	5:06
104	Many birds came twittering round me...	5:13
105	'Darling, do you love me?' was all that I could say...	5:03
106	But recovering comfort quickly...	5:41
107	Chapter 29: Reaping Leads to Revelling	4:58
108	Then Parson Bowden read some verses...	5:16
109	'Latt me dowun, or I can't tell 'e,' John answered...	3:59
110	Exmoor Harvest-Song	3:50
111	Chapter 30: Annie Gets the Best of It	5:25
112	At this I was so thunderstruck...	4:45
113	'Can your love do a collop, John?'	3:42
114	'She loves you with all her heart, John...'	3:52
115	'Do you know how old she is, you numskull?'	3:46
116	Chapter 31: John Fry's Errand	2:50
117	Now many people may wish to know...	5:13
118	But when I came home in the evening...	4:39
119	'But though we were dashed to the ground...'	5:47
120	John knew that the man who was riding...	3:41

121	Of this horrible quagmire...	4:53
122	Chapter 32: Feeding of the Pigs	5:22
123	By this time, the harvest being done...	4:48
124	Now let no one suppose for a minute...	4:28
125	Sore trouble had I to keep close quarters...	4:17
126	While I was wondering how my chance...	5:12
127	Chapter 33: An Early Morning Call	5:24
128	She made for awhile as if she dreamed...	4:30
129	Chapter 34: Two Negatives Make an Affirmative	4:30
130	'Oh, John, dear John, you won't tell her...'	4:00
131	Now, while we sat on the garden bench...	3:32
132	Chapter 35: Ruth is Not Like Lorna	3:53
133	She turned, and by her side...	4:31
134	After this, for another month...	3:54
135	She looked at me in such a manner...	3:27
136	Chapter 36: John Returns to Business	4:41
137	'Things are changed since you were in town...'	4:49
138	So for the present a breach was made...	5:35
139	Chapter 37: A Very Desperate Venture	5:11
140	But the cleverest of their devices...	5:37

141	And then, like a giddy fool as I was...	4:56
142	Warm with this idea, I hurried after...	4:30
143	Meanwhile he had done me the kindest service...	3:48
144	However, it was only Gwenny Carfax...	4:32
145	Chapter 38: A Good Turn for Jeremy	5:06
146	One day Squire Faggus had dropped in upon us...	3:44
147	All by the hedge ran a little stream...	5:05
148	At that I drew my breath again...	4:27
149	'We shall see him better in there,' said Carver...	5:32
150	Chapter 39: A Troubled State and a Foolish Joke	3:06
151	Now – to reduce high figures of speech...	5:15
152	'Thou art the staunchest of all staunch Tories,' cried Stickles...	4:59
153	There is nothing England hates so much...	4:56
154	We always liked John's stories...	4:31
155	'Putt thee pot on the fire, old 'ooman...'	4:12
156	Then a waving of hats began...	3:48
157	Chapter 40: Two Fools Together	5:02
158	However, no impatience of mine...	4:45
159	Therefore, with great misgiving of myself...	3:57
160	I could not look at him very nicely...	5:10

161	Therefore it came to pass, that we saw fit...	4:02
162	Chapter 41: Cold Comfort	5:13
163	Darling Lorna wept again...	3:44
164	After all was over, I strode across the moors...	4:22
165	It struck me, as I lay in bed...	4:24
166	Chapter 42: The Great Winter	4:39
167	Further in, and close under the bank...	5:09
168	This terrible weather kept Tom Faggus...	4:45
169	She looked a little disappointed...	5:55
170	All this our mother was to us...	3:51
171	Chapter 43: Not Too Soon	5:10
172	Taking nothing by this movement...	5:02
173	Some creatures require a deal of food...	5:09
174	'Come to this frozen window, John...'	5:47
175	Chapter 44: Brought Home at Last	5:00
176	'Oh, John, here is the most wonderful thing!'	5:43
177	It was no time to linger now...	4:50
178	Dear mother's hands were quick...	5:15
179	Chapter 45: A Change Long Needed	5:09
180	But to come back to Lorna again...	5:16

181	And soon the dappled softening sky...	4:20
182	Then the horses in the stables...	5:09
183	Chapter 46: Squire Faggus Makes Some Lucky Hits	3:12
184	It was now high time to work very hard...	5:06
185	Being such a hand as he was...	5:12
186	Against this I had not a word to say...	5:53
187	'Come, come,' said Master Faggus...	5:48
188	Chapter 47: Jeremy in Danger	5:27
189	'Do you think it is worth five pounds now?'	5:06
190	We said no more about the necklace...	4:10
191	It appears that as he was riding...	4:42
192	The three villains came after him...	4:28
193	Chapter 48: Every Man Must Defend Himself	5:05
194	Knowing how fiercely the floods...	5:07
195	While she leaned there...	4:39
196	'There you are again, John,' mother would reply...	4:22
197	We sent all the women to bed quite early...	5:22
198	Chapter 49: Maiden Sentinels Are Best	5:26
199	The robbers rode into our yard...	5:09
200	We gained six very good horses...	5:40

201	Master Stickles's view of the matter...	3:22
202	Chapter 50: A Merry Meeting and a Sad One	4:31
203	As for Parson Bowden...	4:51
204	Now one of the little ways in which Ruth...	5:28
205	Now Ruth as yet had never heard a word...	5:05
206	Uncle Reuben did not come home...	5:24
207	'Do you remember how we danced that night?'	5:24
208	Chapter 51: A Visit from the Counsellor	5:03
209	'Now though I have quoted the poets...'	4:49
210	'What fact do you mean, sir? Is it one that I ought to know?'	5:45
211	This long speech was too much for her...	5:54
212	Chapter 52: The Way to Make the Cream Rise	4:12
213	'Hurt it!' cried the Counsellor...	5:37
214	'John,' cried my mother, 'you are mad!'	5:01
215	Jeremy Stickles laughed heartily...	4:16
216	Chapter 53: Jeremy Finds Out Something	4:29
217	'Watchett town was not to be seen...'	5:17
218	'With many grimaces she assured me...'	4:57
219	'My lady dwelled for six months more...'	5:05
220	'What followed Benita knew not...'	5:18

221	Chapter 54: Mutual Discomfure	5:19
222	This he said in a way so dry...	5:01
223	However, he had better hopes...	4:32
224	The culverins were laid on bark...	4:47
225	At last we heard the loud bang-bang...	4:37
226	'Got the worst of it!' cried the boy...	4:32
227	Chapter 55: Getting Into Chancery	3:56
228	And perhaps he was punished justly...	4:36
229	These two very worthy fellows...	4:29
230	Lorna was in her favourite place...	3:55
231	'Mistress Lorna,' I replied...	3:16
232	Chapter 56: John Becomes Too Popular	4:31
233	She drew herself up with an air of pride...	5:20
234	Lizzie sat on a log of wood, and listened...	6:10
235	And then, as her beauty grew richer and brighter...	4:59
236	Now I only set down that to show...	5:08
237	This, however, proved otherwise...	5:20
238	Chapter 57: Lorna Knows Her Nurse	5:34
239	As for their outlawry, great robberies...	5:59
240	In this way the Squire got over us...	5:11

241	Uncle Reuben was not at home...	4:44
242	At last he moved his eyes from mine...	5:15
243	Master Huckaback showed no especial signs...	3:38
244	'But if there be, as there is in my case—'	3:44
245	Chapter 58: Master Huckaback's Secret	4:10
246	They say that, in the ancient times...	4:50
247	The wizard thought, but could quote no one...	5:26
248	'You were altogether wrong,' I answered.	4:42
249	'You are wrong,' I replied...	3:13
250	Then I took two more of the weightiest hammers...	3:40
251	Chapter 59: Lorna Gone Away	4:59
252	'It must be our Gwenny's father,' she cried...	4:57
253	'The scoundrel must have lied to you,' I answered...	4:54
254	However, after three days of this...	5:01
255	Now this story is too well known...	4:23
256	'Darling Lizzie, how good you are!'	4:43
257	Chapter 60: Annie Luckier Than John	4:51
258	Yet why should this wench dare to judge...	4:39
259	'Would I sit in a chair that was not my own?'	3:52
260	Being sped of my grumbling thus...	4:35

261	Chapter 61: Therefore he Seeks Comfort	4:24
262	She pulled up her sleeve in the simplest manner...	4:10
263	I could not stay very long...	4:30
264	Now, through the whole of that long walk...	4:03
265	Chapter 62: The King Must Not be Prayed For	5:29
266	Now when the service was over...	4:17
267	Now riding sadly homewards, in the sunset...	5:04
268	Nevertheless, in our part, things went on as usual...	4:23
269	For the next fortnight we were daily troubled...	3:51
270	In the courtyard I saw a little cart...	2:45
271	Chapter 63: John is Worsted by the Women	4:18
272	'Now, John, you must start the first thing in the morning,' she said...	5:03
273	Considering that Lorna was gone...	5:33
274	However, there would arise more chance...	5:20
275	Chapter 64: Slaughter in the Marshes	5:26
276	Now there is nothing like vanity...	5:04
277	At last, when I almost despaired of escaping...	5:05
278	I arose in haste, and there stood Winnie...	5:24
279	Chapter 65: Falling Among Lambs	5:04
280	'Well,' thought I, as I looked at Kickums...	5:06

281	Thanking God for my deliverance...	3:48
282	While this fight was going on....	4:15
283	At the sound and sight of that bitter stroke...	3:46
284	Chapter 66: Suitable Devotion	4:41
285	Now this good Lord Churchill...	4:56
286	Therefore I left her also...	5:38
287	'Tell me nothing of the kind,' I replied...	4:53
288	She entered modestly and shyly...	6:06
289	Chapter 67: Lorna Still Is Lorna	4:57
290	Although she spoke in this lightsome manner...	4:29
291	'Go and get your letters, John,' said Lorna...	5:33
292	This I said so humbly, and not with any bitterness...	5:26
293	Chapter 68: John is John no Longer	4:27
294	Lorna was greatly pleased with the goose...	5:45
295	The other way in which I managed to help...	5:03
296	Not to be too long over it...	4:16
297	In the morning, these two men...	3:49
298	'I have seen thee before, young man' he said...	4:15
299	Chapter 69: Not to be Put Up With	4:41
300	Beginning to be short of money...	5:38

301	Lorna cried when I came away...	5:05
302	Mistress Margery Badcock...	2:52
303	By evil luck, this child began to squeal...	3:19
304	Chapter 70: Compelled to Volunteer	4:53
305	It may have been three of the afternoon...	4:55
306	As he turned away in sorrow...	4:52
307	We arranged that all our men should come...	4:11
308	Now whether it were Uncle Ben...	3:56
309	Chapter 71: A Long Account Settled	4:59
310	'The signal, my lads,' I cried...	4:56
311	Seeing how few there were of them...	5:33
312	Chapter 72: The Counsellor and the Carver	1:46
313	Now this was not as it ought to be...	4:56
314	However, although I loved the poor child...	5:03
315	'Oh, for God's sake, John...'	4:26
316	Now Simon, having met these flowers...	4:50
317	Chapter 73: How to Get Out of Chancery	5:09
318	In the morning Lorna was ready to tell her story...	4:48
319	Thereupon, our Lorna managed so to hold...	5:03
320	Chapter 74: Blood Upon the Alter	4:57

321	Dear mother arranged all the ins and outs...	4:36
322	With my vicious horse at a furious speed...	5:03
323	'Ensie, dear,' I said quite gently...	4:31
324	Chapter 75: Give Away the Grandeur	4:54
325	Tenfold, ay and a thousandfold...	4:13
326	All this was a lesson to me.	5:26
327	I was surprised to see Ruth excited...	3:32
328	Little more have I to tell.	6:22

Total time: 25:52:55

R.D. Blackmore

(1825–1900)

LORNA DOONE

Lorna Doone is the only work of its author, R.D. Blackmore, that has any kind of popularity; everything else he wrote is almost completely forgotten. That in itself is not so unusual, perhaps. Nor is the fact that the author did not care for the book as much as his readers did – that is a fate that almost every artist suffers at some time (Tchaikovsky hated *The Nutcracker Suite*). Many authors feel his or her greater skills in another medium have been unfairly neglected; there are plenty of storytellers whose first love was their poetry, for example. None of these alone would necessarily make Blackmore's most famous work unusual; all of them together might not be so rare, even for a book of such enduring popularity. But when you add to all these the fact that this one book gave Blackmore the same stature as the likes of Stevenson, Hardy and Kipling, the

latter two of whom were on the committee that erected a memorial to him in Exeter Cathedral, *Lorna Doone* starts to stand out. Blackmore was seen not solely as a popular writer of historical romances, but someone whose ability to link place and time in a fast-paced narrative made him the West Country equivalent of Walter Scott – and all because of *Lorna Doone*.

Blackmore felt as keenly as his supporters that he was of the place he described so hauntingly, saying that 'In everything, except the accident of my birth I am a Devonian; my ancestry were all Devonians; my sympathies and feelings are all Devonian'. This was true, if slightly disingenuous, since he lived most of his life in Teddington, southwest London; but the emotional connection he felt for the place where he spent much of his childhood is unquestionably true. He was born Richard

Doddridge Blackmore to a rector in what is now Oxfordshire, and after living with his aunt following his mother's death, he returned to live with his remarried father in Devon. Here he went to school, where the environment, in Blundell's School in particular, was fairly harsh. It was where his father had been educated, and it dealt in the type of Victorian education that gives punishment beatings a bad name. It may well have been typical of its time, and Blackmore does not seem to have complained of its severity, but others have suggested that the corporal punishment it meted out contributed to his later epilepsy. This is speculative, of course; but the harshness also reflected an element of the landscape where he felt so much at home. The Devon of his childhood was, if not actually lawless, certainly a favoured haunt of those who preferred that the law should leave them alone. Rugged, wild (Blackmore's school was between Exmoor and Dartmoor) and an area legitimately famous for its smugglers, it was also full of legend and myth, as well as the hazy historicity that seems just as fanciful to the imaginative mind of a very lonely boy.

As well as his imaginative streak, Blackmore also had academic talent. He was extremely successful at school, becoming head boy for two years, and went on to study classics at Oxford. He decided on a career in the law, a step away from what was almost a family tradition of serving in the clergy; and in another step away from what was expected of him, married, without telling his father, a Catholic called Lucy Maguire. The potential shock of her Catholicism to a family made up of Anglican vicars was mitigated somewhat by her later conversion, but there were no children. This is ascribed to a delicacy in Lucy's constitution, but an element of Blackmore's own may be just as significant. He had found it impossible to practise law because of his epilepsy, a condition thought at the time to be hereditary, and this could have affected their determination to raise a family. But this too is mere speculation. The couple liked children, though, and eventually adopted one of Lucy's nieces.

Before that, however, Blackmore had to make a living. He began teaching, but never greatly liked it and gained much greater freedom when a substantial

inheritance allowed him to buy 16 acres in Teddington, then a rural area well outside the bounds of London, in 1860. Here he built Gomer House (named apparently after a favourite pet) and was able to continue the writing that he had started some years earlier, and also establish a market garden – horticulture was one of his abiding delights – despite long and angry arguments with the railway company that was planning to build a station just opposite him. None of these was that successful: the railway company built its station, his garden never made money, and the writing was largely a failure, too.

His classical interests had led him to poetry and translations of Horace and Virgil under the pseudonym Melanter (Greek for ‘more black’); from there he moved to works in English and on contemporary themes. But it was his decision to write prose that – eventually – sparked the public interest. His first two novels failed to fire the public’s imagination, and even *Lorna Doone* was submitted to several publishers before one accepted it, and even then the first run (of just 500 in a three-volume set) failed to sell much over half. But it was later

reprinted in a cheap, single volume; and this coincided with a huge society wedding involving the Queen’s daughter and the Marquis of Lorne. Blackmore was thought to have derived the name Lorna from the Marquis’s area of Scotland and as a result people wrongly associated the book’s title with the soon-to-be-married Marquis. In fact, the name had existed before then; but suddenly Blackmore was a huge success.

He never managed it again. He continued to write novels, but none of them even approached *Lorna Doone* for appeal. He had hit his perfect note just the once, combining his skill with and love of words with a story set in a landscape he knew and adored, and tinged with a sense of darkness that came from his lonely childhood. His own end was rather lonely too. Lucy died in 1888, and though he was looked after by two of Lucy’s nieces, the depredations of age took their long and dispiriting toll on Blackmore, and he died 12 years later after a long series of illnesses.

Notes by Roy McMillan



Jonathan Keeble combines a busy career in theatre with his audio work. He has featured in over 350 radio plays for the BBC on Shakespeare, Sherlock and Doctor Who. He also played the evil Gareth Taylor in *The Archers*. For Naxos AudioBooks, he has read *Black Beauty*, *The History of English Literature*, *Stories from Shakespeare: The Plantagenets*, *Twelfth Night* and *Macbeth*.

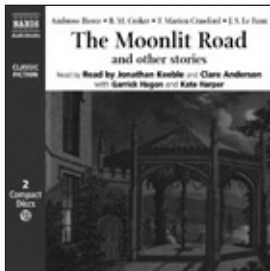
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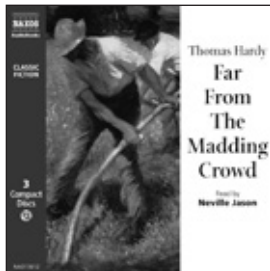
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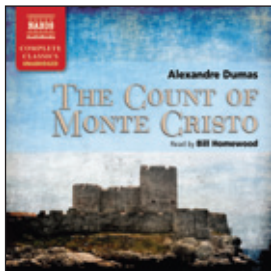
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R.D. Blackmore

LORNA DOONE

Read by **Jonathan Keeble**

The Doones are a clan of murdering thieves, and among their victims is John Ridd's father. The strong, noble Ridd determines to avenge his father's death; but his plans are complicated when he falls in love with one of the hated family – the beautiful Lorna. Lorna is promised against her will to another; and that other will not let her go lightly.

Set amid the political turmoils of the late 17th century, *Lorna Doone* brings West Country history and legends alive with wonderfully imaginative fiction. Brimming with vivid descriptions and cliff-hanging action, it is a true classic of romantic adventure.

Jonathan Keeble combines a busy career in theatre with his audio work. For Naxos AudioBooks, he has read *Black Beauty*, *The History of English Literature*, *Stories from Shakespeare: The Plantagenets*, *Twelfth Night* and *Macbeth*.

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