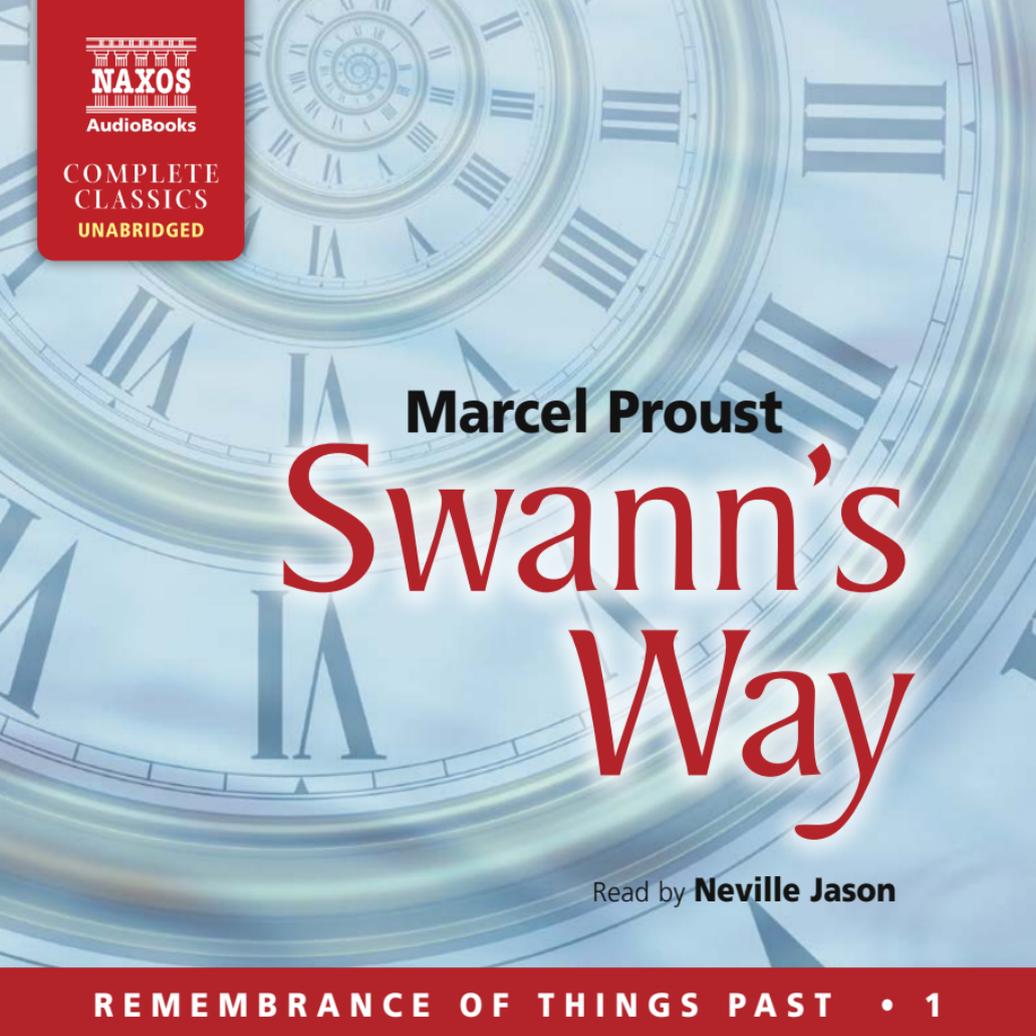




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Marcel Proust
**Swann's
Way**

Read by **Neville Jason**

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST • 1

1	Swann's Way – Remembrance Of Things Past	10:39
2	The stiffened side underneath my body would...	9:37
3	Riding at a jerky trot...	10:13
4	My sole consolation...	8:47
5	Our utter ignorance...	9:44
6	In the end...	9:49
7	But we sat silent.	10:14
8	I do not agree with you...	9:58
9	In this particular instance...	10:42
10	Noiselessly I opened the window...	10:06
11	I was not, however.	11:30
12	'My dear,' she had said to Mamma...	10:53
13	And so it was that...	7:25
14	And I begin again to ask myself...	7:31
15	COMBRAY	11:13
16	That rosy candlelight...	9:56
17	'Oh dear, dear; the poor little creature!'	9:34
18	While my aunt gossiped on in this way...	10:54
19	The church!	6:33
20	It was the steeple...	7:54

21	On our way home from mass...	9:39
22	And since, besides this...	9:24
23	Every morning I would hasten...	7:39
24	On the table was the same plate...	7:50
25	I had not the least idea...	9:51
26	But in later years...	10:12
27	The novelist's happy discovery...	9:22
28	Sometimes I would be torn from my book...	9:34
29	Before seeing them...	9:48
30	I was by no means Bergotte's sole admirer...	9:23
31	I dared not accept such an offer...	10:06
32	While I was reading in the garden...	9:56
33	'Look at Roussainville,'...	9:29
34	Françoise was avaricious...	8:29
35	When I say that...	10:24
36	His one and only passion...	9:18
37	She was genuinely fond of us...	8:37
38	One Sunday, when my aunt...	9:29
39	I crept out of the kitchen...	10:36
40	Just as we reached the house...	10:36

41	Of course he would never have admitted...	11:39
42	That land which knows not truth...	2:43
43	We used always to return...	7:03
44	When we had decided to go...	9:25
45	But it was in vain...	10:48
46	'Gilberte, come along; what are you doing?'	10:16
47	That year my family...	9:00
48	Anyone who, like ourselves...	8:50
49	Often, too, we would hurry...	9:16
50	During that autumn my parents...	11:24
51	That girl whom I never saw...	7:24
52	She was in deep mourning...	8:23
53	I remembered the words...	9:28
54	If the 'Méséglise way' was so easy...	10:30
55	Presently the course of the Vivonne...	10:10
56	And I knew that they bore not only the titles...	10:01
57	'It is, it must be Mme de Guermantes, and no one else!'	9:59
58	How often, after that day...	9:25
59	Alone, rising from the level...	2:49
60	I never thought again of this page...	7:37

61	The 'Méséglise way' with its lilacs...	8:17
62	Swann in Love	10:53
63	Just as it is not by other men...	10:51
64	But while each of these attachments...	9:15
65	He had sought an excuse...	10:00
66	When Mme Verdurin had announced...	11:01
67	From this lofty perch...	11:25
68	But the notes themselves...	9:49
69	The young pianist bent over her...	9:27
70	Greatly to Mme Verdurin's surprise...	9:30
71	But little did that matter to him...	10:03
72	And these affectations were in sharp contrast...	10:29
73	And when he was tempted...	10:36
74	Verdurin's...	9:33
75	Swann made Remi drive him...	9:59
76	However disillusioned we may be about women...	9:56
77	And the pleasure which the music gave him...	10:04
78	But, once in a while...	10:51
79	Swann made no attempt...	9:49
80	This charm of drawing him closer to her...	8:31

81	He might have reminded himself...	9:58
82	'Who is that gentleman?'	9:52
83	'It's not a Japanese salad, is it?'	10:10
84	She could scarcely have expected...	10:10
85	M. Verdurin had been wiser...	10:01
86	There are certain original...	10:24
87	If he were dining out...	10:44
88	And yet he was not sorry...	9:41
89	But then, at once, his jealousy...	10:08
90	Swann had, in fact...	9:14
91	In spite of all these manoeuvres...	7:38
92	At last the carriages were ordered.	7:01
93	He could see the pianist...	6:37
94	And so that drawing-room...	10:08
95	But when she had set off for Dreux...	10:14
96	But the thought of his absent mistress...	10:08
97	Ah! Had fate but allowed him...	10:15
98	Now that, after this swing...	8:50
99	But at other times...	7:17
100	Certainly, of the extent of this love...	8:21

101	But most of all...	10:18
102	There she was, often tired...	9:57
103	And yet he would have wished...	10:01
104	One day she announced...	8:55
105	A few feet away...	9:52
106	The Marquis de Forestelle's monocle...	9:14
107	At this moment...	10:02
108	She seemed not so much to be issuing an invitation...	9:51
109	'Oh, but Cambremer is quite a good name; old, too,'...	9:52
110	Swann, who was accustomed...	9:51
111	Meanwhile the concert had begun again...	9:36
112	As though the musicians...	9:41
113	So Swann was not mistaken in believing...	10:02
114	One night he dreamed that he was going away for a year...	9:47
115	The Prince des Laumes...	9:58
116	One day, after the longest period...	9:52
117	Instinctively Swann thought of the remark...	10:31
118	But he could not confine himself...	09:52
119	Besides, her very admissions...	10:57
120	The painter having been ill...	8:33

121	And Mme Cottard withdrew...	8:07
122	The painter remarked to Swann...	8:10
123	Place-Names: The Name	11:22
124	But soon it happened that...	10:30
125	Even from the simplest...	11:17
126	One day, as I was weary of our usual place...	10:04
127	Only, near the grass...	9:55
128	But when she had set off for Dreux...	9:07
129	But at that actual moment...	8:10
130	Everything that concerned them...	8:23
131	While I waited I read over again...	9:11
132	I had always, within reach...	6:57
133	'One isn't obliged to ask everyone to one's house...'	6:06
134	But most often of all...	5:09
135	But instead of simplicity...	7:35
136	That sense of the complexity...	10:23
137	Alas! There was nothing now but motor-cars...	9:11

Total time: 21:34:11

Marcel Proust

(1871–1922)

Swann's Way

The critic André Maurois described Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* as 'one of the greatest works of the imagination of all time'. The literal translation of the work's French title, 'In Search of Lost Time', contains within it a clue to the creation of this monumental work of biographical fiction. Having wasted time living a dilettante existence in the fashionable world, Proust, in middle age, decided to re-dedicate his life to art, and to attempt at last to achieve the great work of which he knew himself capable.

Remembrance of Things Past was his chance to justify his life, and to cheat death through an act of artistic creation. It was the means he would use to conquer time through recreating his lost years. Memory was the material with which he would weave the magic cord to be launched into infinity; that cord which now binds us to

him, and stretches forward into the future, linking his genius to unborn generations.

The Author

Marcel Proust was born on 10 July 1871. His father, a distinguished professor of medicine, was from a Catholic family, while his mother was Jewish. Although convinced from an early age of his calling as a writer, Proust was riddled with self-doubt and wrote relatively little at the beginning of his career.

During his twenties, he co-founded a short-lived review, *Le Banquet*; contributed to another literary publication, *La Revue Blanche*; and in 1896 had his first book published, a collection of essays entitled *Les Plaisirs et Les Jours*.

He became an enthusiastic admirer

of John Ruskin and translated his *Bible of Amiens* and *Sesame and Lilies* into French. A novel, *Jean Santeuil*, which was the precursor of *Remembrance of Things Past*, was abandoned, and eventually published long after Proust's death, in 1954.

For much of his youth, Proust led the life of a man-about-town, frequenting fashionable Paris drawing rooms and literary salons, which were to form the background of a number of his early stories and sketches, and subsequently of *Remembrance of Things Past*.

The death of his adored mother in 1905 resulted in a nervous collapse and aggravated his chronic asthma and insomnia. But, despite his grief and the sense of loss, from which he never recovered, his mother's death freed him with regard to his homosexual way of life, and allowed him to address same-sex love in his writing, albeit in a form which treated such experiences as happening to others rather than to himself.

In 1907 he moved into an apartment in the Boulevard Haussmann where, in the bedroom which he had had lined with

cork to keep out noise, he embarked upon his great work *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (*Remembrance of Things Past*). In it, the minuteness of his observation, the depth of his psychological understanding and the vividness of his descriptive powers combined to create one of the most poetic and magical works in all literature.

Publication of *Remembrance of Things Past*

This long autobiographical cycle was originally published in eight sections: *Du Côté de Chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*) in 1913; *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* (*Within a Budding Grove*) in 1918; *Le Côté de Guermantes I* (*The Guermantes Way I*) in 1920; *Le Côté de Guermantes II* and *Sodom et Gomorrhe I* (*Cities of the Plain I*) in 1921; *Sodom et Gomorrhe II* in 1922; *La Prisonnière* (*The Captive*) in 1923; *Albertine Disparue* (*The Sweet Cheat Gone/The Fugitive*) in 1925 and *Le Temps Retrouvé* (*Time Regained*) in 1927.

Proust was obliged to publish *Swann's Way* at his own expense, and even after

it had appeared, had trouble finding a publisher for the next part, *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs*. However, when it appeared in 1918 it received considerable acclaim, and was awarded the Prix Goncourt the following year.

By the time Proust died, on 18 November 1922, the first four parts of the cycle had been published, leaving the others to appear posthumously.

Swann's Way

In *Swann's Way*, the narrator, in the person of the author, introduces us to his family: to the highly sensitive and imaginative child he was; to the mother he loved so passionately; and from whom to be parted was such agony; and to his father who, although loving him in his own way, was incapable of understanding the emotional behaviour of his nervous and delicate child.

The narrator (who, on the rare occasions he is named in the text, is given the author's own name, Marcel) and his parents travel to the country from Paris to spend their holidays at his great-aunt's house, in the

little village of Combray. Here we meet his relatives in a succession of richly-drawn portraits: his grandmother, whose passion for nature and fresh air drives her to run up and down the garden paths in the pouring rain; his somewhat 'common' great aunt who takes every opportunity of putting down her more refined sister-in-law; his two spinster aunts, grown deaf through lack of interest in the dinner table conversations; and Aunt Leonie, who has retired permanently to her bed, from whence she learns, by observing the comings and goings in the street below her window, every detail of the lives of the village's inhabitants. We meet Charles Swann, proprietor of the neighbouring estate, whose evening visit is the cause of Marcel being sent early to bed, thus depriving him of his mother's precious goodnight kiss, which is necessary to enable him to sleep peacefully through the night.

Other neighbours also attract the interest of the precocious Marcel, whose highly developed powers of observation pierce through their urbane exteriors to the pretensions and hypocrisy beneath:

M. Legrandin, declared arch-enemy of

snobbery, who cuts Marcel and his family when he is in the company of grander folk; the composer M. Vinteuil, who condemns Swann's 'unfortunate' marriage, whilst turning a blind eye to his daughter's lesbian love affair with an older woman; and Swann himself, who disparages the emptiness of high society, but devotes his life to parties, balls and sexual adventures.

Proust presents these characters with a depth of understanding of the human psyche which links him to another great figure of his time: Sigmund Freud. Proust, like Freud, understood the power of the past in influencing the present. The author's search for his former self is part of the process of understanding the person he has become.

The two 'Ways' (*Swann's Way* and *The Guermites Way*) are different directions taken by the narrator's family for their regular country walks, but are more than mere geographical designations. Through the thoughts, sensations and memories they invoke, each comes to represent a different aspect of life, another 'way' of being.

But no less memorable than the

philosophical and social observations in *Remembrance of Things Past* are the rhapsodic and minutely observed descriptions of nature, in particular the hawthorn and lilac trees which filled the writer's youthful soul with such passionate love.

Swann in Love brings into focus the figure of Charles Swann, whom we have already met in the previous book. In *Swann's Way* we found Swann somewhat estranged from Marcel's family due to his unfortunate marriage to Odette de Crécy, a *demi-mondaine*, whose dubious past prevents her from being received by 'respectable' people such as Marcel's family.

Swann in Love tells the story of Swann's love affair with Odette (which, chronologically, took place before the narrator's birth). We are introduced to the raffish Bohemian circle of M. and Mme Verdurin, of which Odette is a member. This is an unlikely social milieu in which to find Swann, a man of fashion whose elegant presence normally graces the most aristocratic and select drawing rooms. But

now he is drawn by the powerful sexual appetite which rules his life.

To begin with, it is Odette who sets out to conquer Swann's heart. At first he is unresponsive to her style of beauty, and it is not until his aesthetic sensibilities are satisfied by the discovery of her likeness to a painting by Botticelli that his interest awakens. Once he has succumbed to her charms he finds himself at the mercy of a passion for a woman neither of his social class nor his intellectual equal. When he meets the Baron de Forcheville who appears to be replacing Swann in her affections, Swann falls prey to a consuming jealousy which, together with his discoveries relating to Odette's past, plunges him into despair.

In *Place Names: The Name*, once again the child Marcel is central to the narrative. Cheated by illness of his longed-for visit to the wild Breton coast, the golden streets of Florence, or the magical canals of Venice, he is obliged to substitute for these delights daily visits to the gardens of the Champs-Élysées in the company of the family's servant, Françoise. The tedium of these visits is suddenly and miraculously

lifted when he once again meets Gilberte, the daughter of Swann and Odette, whom he first saw through the hawthorn hedge at Combray and with whom he instantly fell in love.

Having rediscovered Gilberte in Paris, Marcel now becomes obsessed with her, and his childish passion parallels Swann's love for Odette, in that Marcel, too, is obliged to suffer the indifference towards him of the one he loves. Like Swann (and perhaps like all lovers), Marcel is in love not with a real person, but with the creation of his fantasy.

Proust constantly reminds us that, as Shakespeare put it, 'nothing is, but thinking makes it so', a theme which runs right through *Remembrance of Things Past*. It suggests the author's awareness of the dawning era of psychology, for Proust, like Freud, understood that each person's perception is dictated by his or her personal experience. Thus the Swann Marcel knows in Combray is quite different from the Swann he sees as Gilberte's father; and his grandparents' view of their modest neighbour Swann is not the same

as that of the occupants of fashionable Paris drawing rooms, who know him to be an intimate friend of the Comte de Paris, pretender to the French throne.

When Swann first hears the *Andante* from Vinteuil's *Sonata*, he is stirred to the depths of his soul, because through it he senses the possibility of reclaiming his 'lost' life, of renouncing his superficial existence and finding once again the faith and idealism of his youth. This sense of renewal, of being offered a second chance, is identified in Swann's mind with his love for Odette, and for this reason the musical theme becomes for him the 'national anthem' of their love. Just as Marcel, the narrator, is a fictional version of Proust himself, so too Swann embodies many of the author's characteristics, and both Proust and Swann were conscious of the time which had been lost and of the brevity of life in the face of their failing health.

The book ends with the elderly Marcel, many years later, wandering through the autumnal Bois de Boulogne seeking the shade of Odette. His imagination peoples the empty alleys with the elegant

through which appeared there in the past. He recalls the proud horses and stylish carriages and, in particular, the enchanting figure of Odette, strolling through the park surrounded by a crowd of admiring men. But as the bright vision disappears, blown away by the cold wind of reality, he meditates on the inevitability of time passing and the painful impossibility of recapturing the past.

The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

To avoid any confusion, it may be helpful to point out that Proust's great work, *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, was originally translated into English by Charles K. Scott-Moncrieff and published in 1922 under the title *Remembrance of Things Past*. It was subsequently re-translated by Terence Kilmartin and appeared in 1981 as *In Search of Lost Time*. In 2002, a new edition appeared under the same title, with each volume assigned to a different translator. The Naxos AudioBooks recordings use the Scott-Moncrieff text and, in references to the work, I use Scott-Moncrieff's title.

My own contact with Proust began when, as a 17-year-old schoolboy, I first read *Swann's Way*. I could not have guessed then that, many years into the future, Proust would take over my life to such an extent. Over a six-year period during the 1990s, I abridged and recorded *Remembrance of Things Past* for Naxos Audiobooks, for whom I have now recorded this entire, uncut text.

When I was asked to write *The Life and Work of Marcel Proust* (see www.naxosaudiobooks.com), it occurred to me that, although the people on whom Proust based his characters were no longer living, the places he wrote about were still there, and so I travelled to France to see them.

I was delighted to discover that Illiers, where Marcel Proust spent his holidays as a child, and which figures in the book as Combray, is now marked on maps and road signs as Illiers-Combray, in official recognition of the reason for this sleepy village's wider fame.

In a narrow street just off the market square in Illiers-Combray is the house in which Proust's father, Adrien Proust, was

born, and further along is the house of his aunt Élisabeth, now a Proust museum, where Élisabeth's fictional counterpart, the bedridden Aunt Léonie, watched the world go by from her bedroom window. Around the corner from the house is a little boulangerie with a sign in the window announcing proudly: 'This is where Aunt Léonie bought her madeleines'. It only occurs to me as I buy a packet of the scallop-shaped cakes, that Aunt Léonie is a creature of fiction. Never mind, Aunt Élisabeth might well have patronised the establishment, or one very like it. Up the hill there is a real house called Tansonville, the name of the house occupied by Charles Swann, and later by his daughter Gilberte and her husband Robert de Saint-Loup, and further on there is a real village called Méréglise, a name almost identical to the fictional Méséglise.

Water lilies are still reflected in the glassy surface of the river Loir, which in the book bears the more poetic name the Vivonne, and beyond the stream lies the Pré Catalan, the enchanting park created by Proust's horticulturally minded Uncle

Jules. From Illiers I travelled on to Cabourg, a seaside resort on the Normandy coast, the original of the fictional Balbec. Here I found the Grand Hotel in all its Edwardian splendour. It was rebuilt after Proust spent holidays there as a child, but he returned as an adult, and sections of *Remembrance of Things Past* were written beneath its roof. As in *Within a Budding Grove*, the great glass windows of the restaurant look out over the promenade to the beach below, and with a little imagination, that group of budding young girls in bikinis is transformed into the little band of 'jeunes filles en fleurs' outlined against the sea.

I travelled on to Paris, visiting 102 Boulevard Haussmann, Proust's home for many years, where he wrote so much of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The building is still owned by the same bank that purchased it from Proust's aunt, when her inconsiderate decision to sell it forced him to move. His bedroom is still there, but unfurnished, and to see the room as it was, one is obliged to visit the Musée Carnavalet, where Proust's bed, chaise-longue and other effects are displayed in

a reconstruction of the famous cork-lined room.

A walk to the gardens of the Champs Élysées brought me to an area with a sign announcing that I am in the Allée Marcel Proust. Children chase each other – perhaps playing the modern equivalent of 'prisoners base', the game played by Gilberte and her friends. This is where the real Marcel played as a child with the real Marie de Benardaky, with whom he fell in love, just as the fictional Marcel falls in love with the fictional Gilberte Swann.

In the real world, the same spaces are occupied now by different people. Time has moved on, but places remain, and we have the privilege of being present in not only the imaginary world Proust created, but that portion of the real world which had a part in its creation. His presence has left behind a trace of magic, and we see places differently, because we see them through his eyes. One day those places will have crumbled into dust, as will we ourselves, and the space we now consider ours will be occupied by others. But as long as civilisation remains, those who come after

us will be able to share Proust's vision and enter his world. Proust was aware that art is the only true reality, and that through his creations the artist continues to live after his death, beyond space and beyond time.

Notes by Neville Jason

A Proust Chronology

1871, July 10	Marcel Proust born
1873, May 24	Robert Proust born
1878–1886	holiday visits to Illiers (now Illiers-Combray)
1880, spring	Marcel's first attack of asthma
1882–1888	attends the Lycée Condorcet
1888	contributed to <i>La Revue Lilas</i> and <i>La Revue Verte</i>
1889–1890	military service at Orléans
1890, January 3	death of maternal grandmother, Adèle Weil
1890, August	holiday at Cabourg
1890, November	enrols as a student in the Faculty of Law and at the <i>Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques</i>
1890, November – 1891, September	contributes to <i>Le Mensuel</i>
1892, March	first edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, March	last edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, April 13	meets Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac

1893	contributes to <i>La Revue Blanche</i> ; degree in law
1894, May 22	meets Reynaldo Hahn
1894, December	trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus
1895, March	degree in philosophy
1895, summer	holiday in Brittany with Reynaldo Hahn
1896	publication of <i>Les Plaisirs et Les Jours</i> ; writing Jean Santeuil
1897, February 6	duel with Jean Lorrain
1898, January 13	Emile Zola's article <i>J'Accuse</i> published
1899	begins translation of Ruskin's <i>Our Fathers Have Told Us</i> (<i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>)
1899, summer	holiday at Evian-les-Bains, visits the Brancovan family at Amphion
1900, June and October	visits Venice
1902	abandons work on <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1903, November 26	death of Adrien Proust
1904	publication of <i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>

1905, September 26	death of Jeanne Proust
1906, June	publication of <i>Sesame and Lilies</i> (<i>Sésame et les Lys</i>)
1906, July	Dreyfus declared innocent
1906, December	moves to 102 Boulevard Haussmann
1907, summer	holiday at Cabourg, where he will spend the next seven summers. Meets Alfred Agostinelli
1908–09	begins writing <i>À la Recherche du Temps Perdu</i>
1913	Agostinelli re-enters Proust's life. Employs Celeste Albaret
1913, November	<i>Du Côté de Chez Swann</i> (<i>Swann's Way</i>) published
1914, May 30	Alfred Agostinelli dies in an aircraft accident
1918, June	publication of <i>A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs</i> (<i>Within a Budding Grove</i>), <i>Pastiches et Mélanges</i> and new edition of <i>Swann's Way</i>
1919, June	moves to 8, rue Laurent-Pichat
1919, December	<i>Within a Budding Grove</i> awarded the Prix Goncourt
1920, October	moves to 44, rue Hamelin

1920, October	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes I</i> (The Guermantes Way I) published
1920, April	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes II</i> and <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe I</i> (Cities of the Plain I) published
1921, December 11	death of Montesquiou
1922, April	<i>Sodom et Gomorrhe II</i> published
1922, October	awarded the Légion d'Honneur
1922, November 18	death of Marcel Proust
1923	<i>La Prisonnière</i> (<i>The Captive</i>) published
1925	<i>Albertine Disparue</i> (<i>The Fugitive/The Sweet Cheat Gone</i>) published
1952	<i>Jean Santeuil</i> published
1954	<i>Contre Sainte-Beuve</i> (<i>Against Sainte-Beuve</i>) published



Marcel Proust (right) and his younger brother Robert, c. 1877

Credits

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Neville Jason trained at RADA, where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. His first appearance in the theatre was in Peter Brook's production of *Titus Andronicus*, starring Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. He is a former member of the Old Vic Company, the English Stage Company, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Birmingham Repertory Company. Roles include John Worthing in *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Robert Browning in *Robert and Elizabeth*.

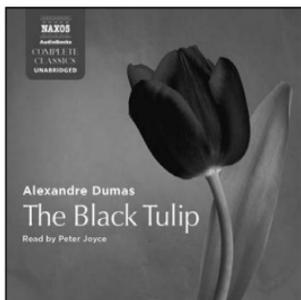
He is a trained singer and has appeared in numerous musicals including *The Great Waltz*, *1776*, *Ambassador*, *Lock Up Your Daughters*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Irma La Douce*, *Robert and Elizabeth* and *Mutiny*.

Television appearances include *Maigret*, *Dr Who* ('The Androids of Tara'), *Hamlet* (Horatio), *Crime and Punishment* (Zamyatov), *Emergency Ward Ten*, *Dixon of Dock Green*, *When the Boat Comes In*, *Angels*, *Minder*, *Dempsey and Makepeace*, *The Richest Woman in the World*, *The Dancing Years*, *The Magic Barrel* and *Windmill Near a Frontier*. Films include *From Russia with Love*, *The Message*, *The Passage*, *That Riviera Touch*, *Drop Dead Darling*, *Kaleidoscope* and *Moll Flanders*.

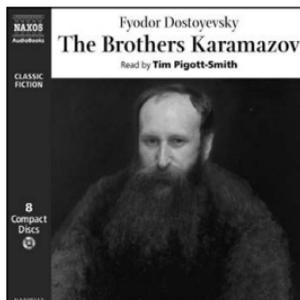
He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and is heard regularly in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud*, *War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd* and *The Castle of Otranto*. He plays Antonio in *The Tempest*, and has directed productions of *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as well as solo readings of fiction and poetry.

As a director he won Talkies awards for *Great Expectations* and *Poets of the Great War*, and as a reader, AudioFile Earphone awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace* (Best Audiobooks of the Year 2007 and 2009).

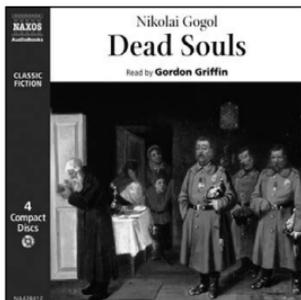
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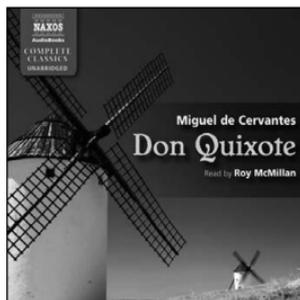
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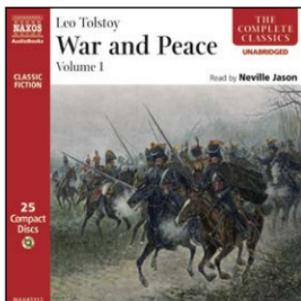
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Marcel Proust

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Marcel Proust

Within a Budding Grove

Read by **Neville Jason**

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST • 2

1	Within a Budding Grove	10:11
2	But who, the reader has been asking...	9:50
3	Incidentally she could naturally...	10:47
4	Finally, if I went to hear Berma...	9:21
5	But suddenly everything was altered.	10:12
6	And I gazed appealingly...	9:52
7	As I entered, the Ambassador rose...	9:44
8	You would have supposed, to hear him...	9:08
9	My interest in Berma's acting...	8:50
10	'Your friend M. de Vaugoubert...'	9:48
11	'One thing, however,' M. de Norpois concluded...	10:12
12	Poor Swann, who is as unsophisticated...	10:25
13	Perhaps, on the other hand...	10:36
14	I am aware that this is a blasphemy...	10:01
15	While he was uttering these words...	10:20
16	After M. de Norpois had gone...	8:41
17	Meanwhile my father...	10:01
18	Our visits ended...	9:37
19	Meanwhile Gilberte never came...	10:15
20	This 'marquise' warned me...	10:03

21	I was often obliged, so that my grandmother...	10:06
22	One day, after the postman had called...	10:09
23	Thus at length I found my way...	9:42
24	And she would make us go into the dining-room...	9:23
25	At such moments I should...	9:38
26	The Swanns shared this eccentricity...	10:33
27	Mme Swann had, however...	10:04
28	To return to the reasons...	8:36
29	For these the Bontemps and Cottards...	9:09
30	It was not only in those tea-parties...	10:41
31	As a rule, however...	10:32
32	If I did not understand the sonata...	10:08
33	I expressed an intense desire...	10:00
34	However it may be...	10:33
35	We were standing a little way off...	8:36
36	A favour still more precious...	10:39
37	Meanwhile we had taken our places...	10:22
38	These unintelligible words...	10:15
39	Doubtless again...	10:04
40	An intimate friend would furnish proofs...	7:12

41	I let myself go in telling him...	9:57
42	In Gilberte's eyes...	9:57
43	And yet I ought perhaps...	9:57
44	'I'll tell you who does need a good doctor...'	9:59
45	My mother had not, indeed...	9:58
46	A whole lot more of my aunt...	10:00
47	One was to appear, alas, from a quarter...	9:55
48	Grief that is caused one by a person...	8:28
49	But this resumption of friendly relations...	9:46
50	I was not unhappy...	9:57
51	This kind of existence...	10:14
52	'Aren't we to see anything of your delicious child?'	9:32
53	Swann would accompany his wife to their annual evening...	9:58
54	She relied upon Mme Cottard...	9:19
55	'When the Doctor gets a book in his hands, you know!'	10:07
56	In consequence of the violence...	9:50
57	Unfortunately certain persons...	9:50
58	She used often to say...	10:31
59	One felt that she did not dress simply...	9:44
60	What helped me to remain patient...	10:05

61	Meanwhile there was in me another force...	10:36
62	Pending these posthumous fulfilments...	10:12
63	The reason I now gave in my letters...	9:03
64	But it was still more than I could endure...	7:49
65	On her arrival...	10:50
66	Place-Names: The Place	9:25
67	Unhappily those marvellous places...	9:39
68	For the first time...	10:12
69	My grandmother, however...	9:51
70	Presently there gathered behind...	10:32
71	Certain names of towns...	8:59
72	In the little train of the local railway...	9:46
73	My sense of loneliness...	10:32
74	She was wearing a loose cambric gown...	9:51
75	For my judgment was aware...	10:09
76	Imagining that I was...	10:17
77	On the other hand...	10:18
78	And at night they did not dine in the hotel...	9:34
79	And then mere chance put into our hands...	9:10
80	'But you were quite wrong, I assure you,' replied the barrister...	7:59

81	But I was obliged to take my eyes...	11:09
82	In the end we too formed...	10:35
83	Were she to encounter Françoise...	10:14
84	But on that previous morning...	10:07
85	After this I would spend the mornings...	10:21
86	Before getting into the carriage...	9:56
87	Sometimes as the carriage laboured...	7:44
88	It is possible, for I have never in real life met any girls...	8:25
89	And this inner self of the charming...	9:59
90	I watched the trees gradually withdraw...	10:07
91	She found fault with Balzac...	10:13
92	Even in Mme de La Rochefoucauld's...	9:56
93	He was coming from the beach...	9:55
94	Indeed in Saint-Loup...	10:09
95	If I had spent two or three hours...	10:19
96	At his use of the word...	8:42
97	Each of our friends has his defects...	10:11
98	The same day, he contrived to see me alone...	10:04
99	The uncle for whom we were waiting...	10:01
100	He gave me the impression...	10:26

101	I now recognised in the hard look...	9:31
102	I had supposed that in thus inviting...	9:54
103	'On the contrary,' he retorted...	9:12
104	Meanwhile my grandmother...	10:04
105	There was, then, embedded in my friend Bloch...	11:02
106	M. Bloch told Saint-Loup and me that Bergotte knew so well...	10:34
107	As a rule, after bringing out from his store...	10:22
108	She had presently, with respect to Saint-Loup...	10:29
109	It is true that he had succeeded in getting out of her...	13:45
110	Seascape with Frieze of Girls	10:45
111	Just as if, in the heart of their band...	12:31
112	And yet the supposition that I might some day be the friend...	6:20
113	I could say to myself with conviction...	9:18
114	I asked myself whether the girls I had just seen...	10:13
115	But as often as not they were, indeed, only pictures...	10:03
116	Unfortunately, having on that condition only obtained...	9:08
117	The harmony of these astral tables did not prevent...	9:28
118	Often, since even after dinner there was still a little light...	9:50
119	He had, in fact, before he made the acquaintance of...	9:54
120	Last night I had been nothing more than an empty vessel...	4:58

121	Suddenly I thought of the fair girl with the sad expression...	5:18
122	Since those days, so different from the day...	10:54
123	And no doubt at first he had thought...	9:57
124	How many observations, patient but not at all serene...	9:48
125	Most of those that covered the walls...	8:58
126	Although we are justified in saying that there can be...	11:23
127	This vast celestial vision of which he spoke to me...	11:00
128	I asked Elstir whether these girls lived at Balbec...	12:00
129	At the foot of the picture was inscribed...	6:09
130	One feels unmistakably, when one sees side by side...	10:28
131	Night was falling...	10:26
132	What did I know of Albertine?	8:30
133	But apart from this, had the portrait been not anterior...	8:47
134	He chose therefore, rather than say anything...	10:15
135	I was afraid that this tone, this way of inviting a person...	10:41
136	When I arrived at Elstir's a few minutes later...	13:39
137	Moreover, if there had disappeared, provisionally at any rate...	6:58
138	We formed that morning one of those couples...	9:48
139	Having sacrificed this first moment to a custom...	9:39
140	'Oh, so you know the little d'Ambresacs, do you?'	9:00
141	At once kindled by her flame...	9:29

142	Within the next few days...	9:37
143	When the time came for her to go off to a luncheon party...	10:09
144	In the old days I should have preferred...	13:58
145	So that if before these visits to Elstir...	5:14
146	Some days we took our refreshment...	9:52
147	For the sense of boredom which it is impossible not to feel...	10:10
148	All this I realised, and yet we talked so little.	9:53
149	But in the days that followed...	10:36
150	When there is added to this the agitation aroused...	9:24
151	I was looking at Albertine, so pretty...	9:43
152	Shewing herself always tenderly indulgent...	7:02
153	Nor was it any longer the room...	7:32
154	I tried to induce Elstir...	6:07
155	'She's not written only to your father either...'	11:36
156	I had supposed that the love which I felt for Albertine...	9:31
157	If this sort of select popularity...	9:00
158	Taking first of all the supposition that she was...	8:32
159	The misunderstanding, due to an initial mistake...	9:00
160	So it was with Albertine as with her friends.	8:28
161	No matter which it might be of my friends...	8:04
162	Sometimes, however, the driving rain...	8:57

Total time: 26:19:22

Marcel Proust

(1871–1922)

Within a Budding Grove

The critic André Maurois described Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* as 'one of the greatest works of the imagination of all time'.

The literal translation of the work's French title, 'In Search of Lost Time', contains within it a clue to the creation of this monumental work of biographical fiction. Having wasted time living a dilettante existence in the fashionable world, Proust, in middle age, decided to re-dedicate his life to art, and to attempt at last to achieve the great work of which he knew himself capable.

Remembrance of Things Past was his chance to justify his life, and to cheat death through an act of artistic creation. It was the means he would use to conquer time through recreating his lost years. Memory was the material with which he would weave the magic cord

to be launched into infinity; that cord which now binds us to him, and stretches forward into the future, linking his genius to unborn generations.

The Author

Marcel Proust was born on 10 July 1871. His father, a distinguished professor of medicine, was from a Catholic family, while his mother was Jewish. Although convinced from an early age of his calling as a writer, Proust was riddled with self-doubt and wrote relatively little at the beginning of his career.

During his twenties, he co-founded a short-lived review, *Le Banquet*; contributed to another literary publication, *La Revue Blanche*; and in 1896 had his first book published, a collection of essays entitled *Les Plaisirs et Les Jours*.

He became an enthusiastic admirer of John Ruskin and translated his *Bible of Amiens* and *Sesame and Lilies* into French. A novel, *Jean Santeuil*, which was the precursor of *Remembrance of Things Past*, was abandoned, and eventually published long after Proust's death, in 1954.

For much of his youth Proust led the life of a man-about-town, frequenting fashionable Paris drawing rooms and literary salons, which were to form the background of a number of his early stories and sketches, and subsequently of *Remembrance of Things Past*.

The death of his adored mother in 1905 resulted in a nervous collapse and aggravated his chronic asthma and insomnia. But, despite his grief and the sense of loss, from which he never recovered, his mother's death freed him with regard to his homosexual way of life, and allowed him to address same-sex love in his writing, albeit in a form which treated such experiences as happening to others rather than to himself.

In 1907 he moved into an apartment in the Boulevard Haussmann where, in the bedroom which he had had lined with

cork to keep out noise, he embarked upon his great work *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (*Remembrance of Things Past*). In it the minuteness of his observation, the depth of his psychological understanding and the vividness of his descriptive powers combined to create one of the most poetic and magical works in all literature.

Publication of *Remembrance of Things Past*

This long autobiographical cycle was originally published in eight sections: *Du Côté de Chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*) in 1913; *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* (*Within a Budding Grove*) in 1918; *Le Côté de Guermantes I* (*The Guermantes Way I*) in 1920; *Le Côté de Guermantes II* and *Sodom et Gomorrhe I* (*Cities of the Plain I*) in 1921; *Sodom et Gomorrhe II* in 1922; *La Prisonnière* (*The Captive*) in 1923; *Albertine Disparue* (*The Sweet Cheat Gone/The Fugitive*) in 1925 and *Le Temps Retrouvé* (*Time Regained*) in 1927.

Proust was obliged to publish *Swann's Way* at his own expense, and even after it had appeared, had trouble finding a

publisher for the next part, *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs*. However, when it appeared in 1918 it received considerable acclaim, and was awarded the Prix Goncourt the following year.

By the time Proust died, on November 18, 1922, the first four parts of the cycle had been published, leaving the others to appear posthumously.

Within a Budding Grove – Part I

The opening of *Within a Budding Grove* finds Swann married to Odette, and greatly changed. Swann, the sophisticated man of the world, who once studiously avoided any mention of his connections with people of the highest social standing, now boasts loudly of every invitation he and his socially unacceptable wife receive. Another person greatly altered is Cottard, the foolish and insecure country doctor of the Verdurin's 'little circle'. Now a successful member of the medical profession, Cottard has become a notable and self-possessed figure in society.

Marcel's father invites a colleague home for dinner – M. de Norpois, a

distinguished former member of the diplomatic service. De Norpois shows an interest in Marcel's aspirations to be a writer, and asks to see an example of his work. Marcel shows him a piece he has written, and is dashed by the old ambassador's dismissive response. However, Marcel's father is persuaded to believe in the possibility of writing as a career, and de Norpois is instrumental in Marcel being allowed to attend a performance by the famous actress, Berma.

Odette and Swann, having until now rejected Marcel as a suitable playmate for their daughter Gilberte, are persuaded of his good influence on her, and welcome him to their house. Through Swann, Marcel becomes acquainted with his idol, the author Bergotte.

At last Marcel finds himself in the position he had dreamed of occupying – an intimate not only of his beloved Gilberte, but also of her parents, who have always seemed to him god-like beings.

Now that there seems to be no obstruction to Marcel's love for Gilberte,

the persuasion of her parents, which Marcel always counted on to influence her in his favour, begins to have the opposite effect. Marcel senses her irritation at feeling pressured by them to spend time with him, and vows never to see her again.

Marcel's friend Bloch takes him to a second rate brothel, where the Madam attempts to introduce him to an intelligent Jewish girl, Rachel. Marcel has inherited his aunt's furniture, but having no space for it, has given it to the brothel. However, now he cannot bear to see it in such surroundings.

In *Place Names: The Place*, Marcel and his grandmother depart for Balbec. Marcel is disappointed at finding, instead of the wild, storm-swept coast he expected, a sunny, comfortable seaside resort. His grandmother meets an old friend, Madame de Villeparisis, and through her they are introduced to the Princesse de Luxembourg. Marcel observes the mutual suspicion of the two separate worlds: the bourgeois and the aristocratic.

There is no subtler observer than Proust of his social surroundings, which

he describes with inimitable humour (a characteristic of his writing seldom remarked upon, but notably present). His descriptions are distinguished not only by the depth of his psychological understanding, but by his keen observation of the manners and attitudes of different social circles. Indeed, the tension between the *haute bourgeoisie* and the aristocracy is one of the many themes woven into the rich texture of the work, and is the note on which Part I of *Within a Budding Grove* ends.

It feels, perhaps, a less than satisfactory ending, due possibly to Proust's habit of adding new material to what was already written, but this is not really an ending at all; merely a breaking-off point before the story continues in Part II.

Part II

Place Names: The Place (cont.)

In Part II of *Within a Budding Grove*, we follow the course of Marcel's search for love. His childish passion for Gilberte has faded, leaving an amorous vacuum,

and Marcel sees in every pretty young girl a potential lover. Having earlier been forced by illness to abandon his proposed trip to Venice, he has accompanied his grandmother to Balbec and is disappointed to find not the savage, storm-swept coast of his imagination, but a tranquil seaside resort of suburban villas, inhabited by members of local bourgeois society and a sprinkling of Parisian aristocrats.

Instead of the wild, untrammelled forces of nature, it is the luxurious Grand Hotel which becomes the setting for Marcel's lessons in life. Here he comes into contact with high society in the form of Madame de Villeparisis and her friend the Princesse de Luxembourg, vulgarity in the form of Bloch and his family, predatory homosexuality in the person of the arrogant Baron de Charlus, friendship in the sympathetic attentions of Robert de Saint-Loup, and love in the person of the enchanting Albertine.

Among other key figures to whom we are introduced is the painter Elstir, whom we have met earlier as a member of Madame Verdurin's circle. Once again,

as in the case of Dr Cottard, we find that a character who has been seen earlier as a figure of fun is actually a formidable talent, highly respected in his field.

The French title of the book, *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* may be literally translated *In the Shadow of Blossoming Young Girls*, and the enchantment of developing sexuality is central to the book. Marcel meets a little band of young girls, and initially his head is turned by the beauty of the entire group, but gradually his affections settle on Albertine. However, Albertine is not yet ready to receive his clumsy advances.

Despite the youth and energy of these young girls, the author senses the implacable progress of time. André Maurois has written:

*The Jeunes Filles en Fleurs are more than an image. They define a season in the brief life of the human plant. Even while [Proust] is gazing in wonder at their freshness, he is already noting the tiny signs which announce the successive stages of fruiting, maturity, seeding and dessication. **

The Narrator remarks:

As in the case of a tree whose flowers blossom at different periods, I saw in the old ladies who thronged the beach at Balbec the hard, tough seeds, the soft tubers, which those girls would sooner or later become...

* André Maurois, *The Quest for Proust*, London, Jonathan Cape 1950

The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

To avoid any confusion, it may be helpful to point out that Proust's great work, *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, was originally translated into English by Charles K. Scott-Moncrieff and published in 1922 under the title, *Remembrance of Things Past*. It was subsequently re-translated by Terence Kilmartin and appeared in 1981 as *In Search of Lost Time*. In 2002 a new edition appeared under the same title, with each volume assigned to a different translator. The Naxos AudioBooks recordings use the Scott-Moncrieff text

and, in references to the work, I use Scott-Moncrieff's title.

My own contact with Proust began when, as a 17-year-old schoolboy, I first read *Swann's Way*. I could not have guessed then that, many years into the future, Proust would take over my life to such an extent. Over a six year period during the 1990s, I abridged and recorded *Remembrance of Things Past* for Naxos Audiobooks, for whom I have now recorded this entire, uncut text.

When I was asked to write *The Life and Work of Marcel Proust* (see www.naxosaudiobooks.com), it occurred to me that, although the people on whom Proust based his characters were no longer living, the places he wrote about were still there, and so I travelled to France to see them.

I was delighted to discover that Illiers, where Marcel Proust spent his holidays as a child, and which figures in the book as Combray, is now marked on maps and road signs as Illiers-Combray, in official recognition of the reason for this sleepy village's wider fame.

In a narrow street just off the market square in Illiers-Combray is the house in which Proust's father, Adrien Proust, was born, and further along is the house of his aunt Élisabeth, now a Proust museum, where Élisabeth's fictional counterpart, the bedridden Aunt Léonie, watched the world go by from her bedroom window. Around the corner from the house is a little boulangerie with a sign in the window announcing proudly: 'This is where Aunt Léonie bought her madeleines'. It only occurs to me as I buy a packet of the scallop-shaped cakes, that Aunt Léonie is a creature of fiction. Never mind, Aunt Élisabeth might well have patronised the establishment, or one very like it. Up the hill there is a real house called Tansonville, the name of the house occupied by Charles Swann, and later by his daughter Gilberte and her husband Robert de Saint-Loup, and further on there is a real village called Méréglise, a name almost identical to the fictional Méséglise.

Water lilies are still reflected in the glassy surface of the river Loir, which in the book bears the more poetic name

the Vivonne, and beyond the stream lies the Pré Catalan, the enchanting park created by Proust's horticulturally minded Uncle Jules. From Illiers I travelled on to Cabourg, a seaside resort on the Normandy coast, the original of the fictional Balbec. Here I found the Grand Hotel in all its Edwardian splendour. It was rebuilt after Proust spent holidays there as a child, but he returned as an adult, and sections of *Remembrance of Things Past* were written beneath its roof. As in *Within a Budding Grove*, the great glass windows of the restaurant look out over the promenade to the beach below, and with a little imagination, that group of budding young girls in bikinis is transformed into the little band of 'jeunes filles en fleurs' outlined against the sea.

I travelled on to Paris, visiting 102 Boulevard Haussmann, Proust's home for many years, where he wrote so much of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The building is still owned by the same bank that purchased it from Proust's aunt, when her inconsiderate decision to sell it forced him to move. His bedroom is still there, but unfurnished, and to see the

room as it was, one is obliged to visit the Musée Carnavalet, where his bed, chaise-longue and other effects are displayed in a reconstruction of the famous cork-lined room.

A walk to the gardens of the Champs Élysées brought me to an area with a sign announcing that I am in the Allée Marcel Proust. Children chase each other – perhaps playing the modern equivalent of ‘prisoners base’, the game played by Gilberte and her friends. This is where the real Marcel played as a child with the real Marie de Benardaky, with whom he fell in love, just as the fictional Marcel falls in love with the fictional Gilberte Swann.

In the real world the same spaces are occupied now by different people. Time has moved on, but places remain, and we have the privilege of being present in not only the imaginary world Proust created, but that portion of the real world which had a part in its creation. His presence has left behind a trace of magic, and we see places differently, because we see them through his eyes. One day those places will have crumbled into dust, as will we ourselves, and the space we now

consider ours will be occupied by others. But as long as civilisation remains, those who come after us will be able to share Proust’s vision and enter his world. Proust was aware that art is the only true reality, and that through his creations the artist continues to live after his death, beyond space and beyond time.

Notes by Neville Jason

A Proust Chronology

1871, July 10	Marcel Proust born
1873, May 24	Robert Proust born
1878–1886	holiday visits to Illiers (now Illiers-Combray)
1880, spring	Marcel's first attack of asthma
1882–1888	attends the Lycée Condorcet
1888	contributed to <i>La Revue Lilas</i> and <i>La Revue Verte</i>
1889–1890	military service at Orléans
1890, January 3	death of maternal grandmother, Adèle Weil
1890, August	holiday at Cabourg
1890, November	enrols as a student in the Faculty of Law and at the <i>Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques</i>
1890, November – 1891, September	contributes to <i>Le Mensuel</i>
1892, March	first edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, March	last edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, April 13	meets Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac

1893	contributes to <i>La Revue Blanche</i> ; degree in law
1894, May 22	meets Reynaldo Hahn
1894, December	trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus
1895, March	degree in philosophy
1895, summer	holiday in Brittany with Reynaldo Hahn
1896	publication of <i>Les Plaisirs et Les Jours</i> ; writing Jean Santeuil
1897, February 6	duel with Jean Lorrain
1898, January 13	Emile Zola's article <i>J'Accuse</i> published
1899	begins translation of Ruskin's <i>Our Fathers Have Told Us</i> (<i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>)
1899, summer	holiday at Evian-les-Bains, visits the Brancovan family at Amphion
1900, June and October	visits Venice
1902	abandons work on <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1903, November 26	death of Adrien Proust
1904	publication of <i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>

1905, September 26	death of Jeanne Proust
1906, June	publication of <i>Sesame and Lilies</i> (<i>Sésame et les Lys</i>)
1906, July	Dreyfus declared innocent
1906, December	moves to 102 Boulevard Haussmann
1907, summer	holiday at Cabourg, where he will spend the next seven summers. Meets Alfred Agostinelli
1908–09	begins writing <i>À la Recherche du Temps Perdu</i>
1913	Agostinelli re-enters Proust's life. Employs Celeste Albaret
1913, November	<i>Du Côté de Chez Swann</i> (<i>Swann's Way</i>) published
1914, May 30	Alfred Agostinelli dies in an aircraft accident
1918, June	publication of <i>A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs</i> (<i>Within a Budding Grove</i>), <i>Pastiches et Mélanges</i> and new edition of <i>Swann's Way</i>
1919, June	moves to 8, rue Laurent-Pichat
1919, December	<i>Within a Budding Grove</i> awarded the Prix Goncourt
1920, October	moves to 44, rue Hamelin

1920, October	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes I</i> (The Guermantes Way I) published
1920, April	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes II</i> and <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe I</i> (Cities of the Plain I) published
1921, December 11	death of Montesquiou
1922, April	<i>Sodom et Gomorrhe II</i> published
1922, October	awarded the Légion d'Honneur
1922, November 18	death of Marcel Proust
1923	<i>La Prisonnière</i> (<i>The Captive</i>) published
1925	<i>Albertine Disparue</i> (<i>The Fugitive/The Sweet Cheat Gone</i>) published
1952	<i>Jean Santeuil</i> published
1954	<i>Contre Sainte-Beuve</i> (<i>Against Sainte-Beuve</i>) published



Marcel Proust (right) and his younger brother Robert, c. 1877



Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. His first appearance in the theatre was in Peter Brook's production of *Titus Andronicus* starring Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. He is a former member of the Old Vic Company, the English Stage Company, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Birmingham Repertory Company. Roles include John Worthing in *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Robert Browning in *Robert and Elizabeth*.

He is a trained singer and has appeared in numerous musicals including *The Great Waltz*, *1776*, *Ambassador*, *Lock Up Your Daughters*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Irma La Douce*, *Robert and Elizabeth* and *Mutiny*.

Television appearances include *Maigret*, *Dr Who* (The Androids of Tara), *Hamlet* (Horatio), *Crime and Punishment* (Zamyatov), *Emergency Ward Ten*, *Dixon of Dock Green*, *When the Boat Comes In*, *Angels*, *Minder*, *Dempsey and Makepeace*, *The Richest Woman in the World*, *The Dancing Years*, *The Magic Barrel* and *Windmill Near a Frontier*. Films include *From Russia with Love* and *The Message*. He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and may be heard in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud*, *War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *The Once and Future King*, *War and Peace* and *The Castle of Otranto*; he plays Antonio in *The Tempest*, and has directed productions of *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

As a director he was awarded Talkies awards for *Great Expectations* and *Poets of the Great War*. As a reader he won AudioFile Earphone awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace* (Best Audiobooks of the Year 2007 and 2009).

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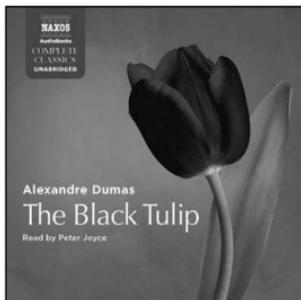
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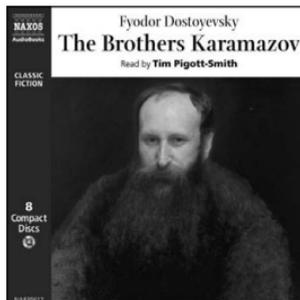
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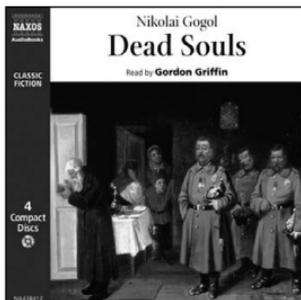
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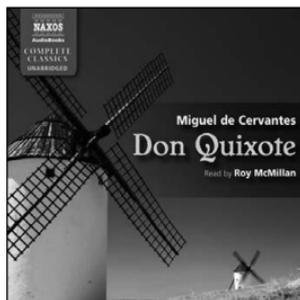
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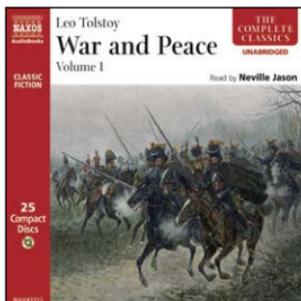
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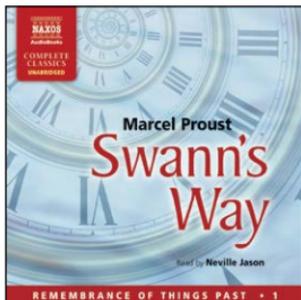
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Marcel Proust

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Neville Jason trained at RADA, where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and may be heard in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud*, *War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Favourite Essays*, *The Once and Future King*, *Evgenii Onegin*, *Wessex Tales* and *Remembrance of Things Past*, both unabridged and abridged. He won AudioFile awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace*.

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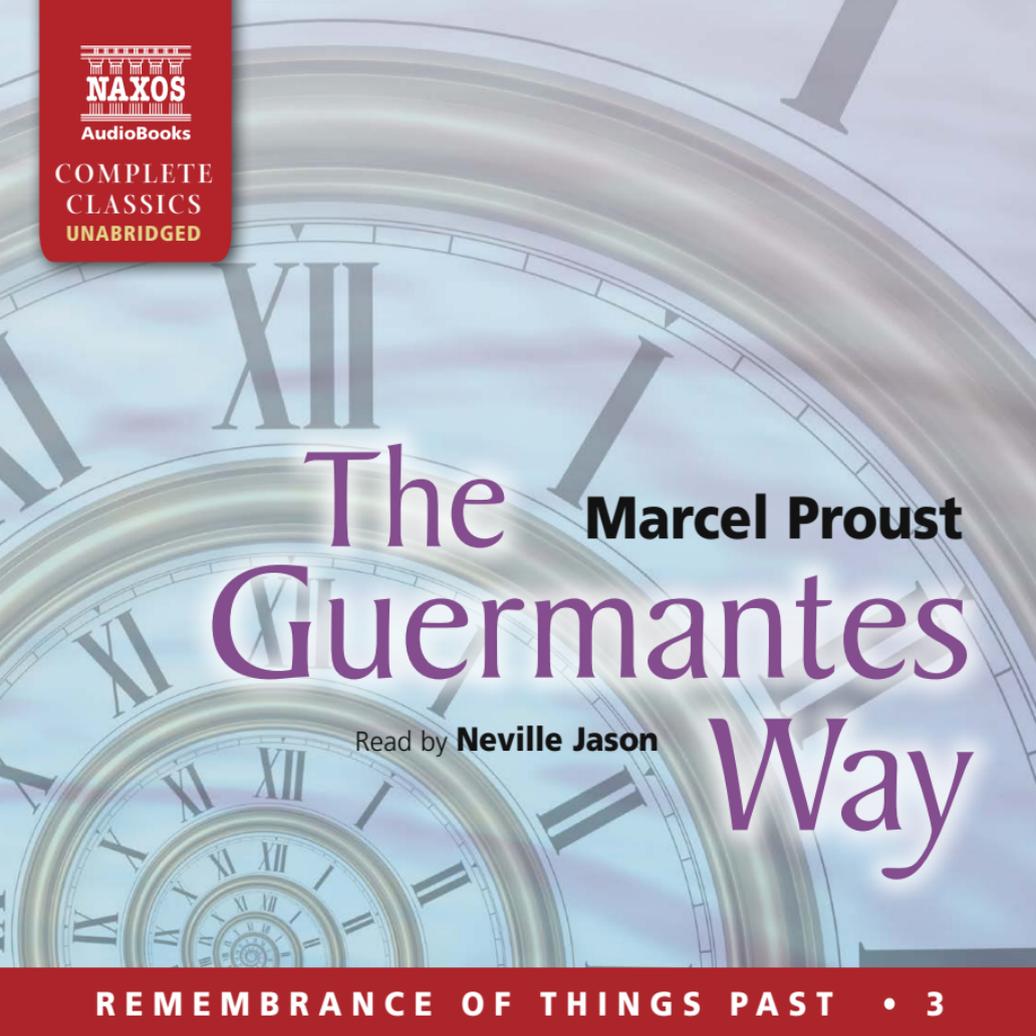
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The **Marcel Proust**
Guermantes
Read by **Neville Jason**
Way

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST • 3

1	The twittering of the birds at daybreak...	6:30
2	And yet the fairy must perish if we come in contact...	4:36
3	What form was assumed in my mind by this name...	8:12
4	In the parties which she gave...	7:23
5	'Ah! Combray, Combray!' she cried.	6:32
6	This new friend of Françoise was very little at home...	5:53
7	As soon as she had shut the window again...	6:57
8	'I can well believe that it is something...'	7:41
9	What annoyed her more than anything...	5:20
10	And it became all the more essential...	9:15
11	But if the Hotel de Guermantes began for me...	6:31
12	As one of Mme de Guermantes's footmen was in the habit...	4:11
13	That villa, that opera-box, into which Mme de Guermantes...	4:46
14	That evening as, armed with the ticket...	5:56
15	Next to me were some common people...	5:55
16	Like a mighty goddess who presides from far aloft...	6:51
17	'That fat fellow is the Marquis de Ganancay,'...	8:19
18	I no longer felt the same indulgence...	9:18
19	My own impression, to tell the truth...	4:44
20	I thought so at first.	6:34

21	Just as the curtain was rising on this second play...	6:58
22	The explanation of Mme de Cambremer's presence...	6:42
23	Mme de Cambremer was trying to make out...	7:15
24	On coming home from the Opéra-Comique...	5:58
25	Why did I one morning...	4:45
26	I should not myself have felt that Mme de Guermantes...	6:07
27	To return to Françoise...	7:03
28	I was genuinely in love with Mme de Guermantes.	5:55
29	The friendship, the admiration that Saint-Loup felt for me...	7:54
30	At that moment a sergeant who was exercising a horse...	9:39
31	To return to the problem of sounds...	6:08
32	The silence, though only relative, which reigned...	7:03
33	Robert, without being aware of its cause...	7:37
34	If I wished to go out or to come in...	9:07
35	What one has meant to do during the day...	8:02
36	When I had finished sleeping...	6:09
37	But soon I was constantly going to see the regiment...	6:39
38	One of them said that the Captain had bought a new horse.	5:07
39	On leaving the barracks I would take a stroll...	9:04
40	The wind grew stronger.	5:32

41	'Robert, this is hardly the time or the place...'	6:01
42	Which was exactly what he had just been doing...	5:31
43	On the third evening, one of his friends...	6:40
44	At this point I was interrupted by Saint-Loup...	7:59
45	Partly out of courtesy to his friends...	10:28
46	The enunciation of these theories by Saint-Loup made me happy.	10:11
47	'Saint-Loup is quite right...'	6:30
48	When the conversation became general...	7:22
49	I breathed a sigh of relief when I realised...	8:49
50	All the same I could see that, during the hour that followed...	6:46
51	'Listen, if you don't mind. Just one last word...'	5:13
52	For I continued my eager demands...	5:01
53	If the Prince de Borodino was not prepared...	4:32
54	Son, doubtless, or grandson of an Emperor...	7:46
55	And, the moment our call has sounded...	9:19
56	When I came among Robert and his friends...	5:35
57	'You haven't seen Sergeant Saint-Loup, have you...'	4:20
58	Alas, this phantom was just what I did see...	7:29
59	Meanwhile the winter was drawing to an end.	5:02
60	She was now wearing lighter, or at any rate brighter, clothes...	7:53

61	Saint-Loup came to Paris for a few hours only.	6:30
62	My father had informed us that he now knew...	7:41
63	My father had also another encounter about this time...	6:31
64	I left the house early, with Françoise complaining bitterly...	7:32
65	Never had Robert spoken to me so tenderly of his friend...	5:59
66	Suddenly Saint-Loup appeared...	8:23
67	It was not 'Rachel when from the Lord'...	10:59
68	It was, by the way, quite true that she was 'literary'.	8:07
69	She seemed anxious to pacify Robert...	4:42
70	If we were not yet in the theatre...	5:57
71	Presently came a message that Robert was waiting...	7:17
72	One number in the programme I found extremely trying.	8:49
73	When, the curtain having fallen, we moved on to the stage...	6:08
74	A group of men – journalists – noticing the look of fury...	7:06
75	At that moment I saw Saint-Loup raise his arm...	7:53
76	These incidents, particularly the one that was weighing...	8:43
77	Moreover, talent is not a separate appendage...	7:39
78	On the occasion of this first call...	8:44
79	'Oh, Ministers, my dear sir,' Mme de Villeparisis was saying...	5:48
80	Earlier in the day Mme de Villeparisis might have been...	5:09

81	Presently there came into the room...	9:13
82	'I understand, sir, that you thinkin' of writin' somethin'...'	7:01
83	Meanwhile I had been talking to Bloch...	8:15
84	Presently Mme de Villeparisis sat down again at her desk...	8:10
85	That admirable writer G – entered the room...	8:36
86	If, in the drawing-room of Mme de Villeparisis...	7:10
87	The presence of Bergotte by my side...	5:49
88	Everyone had gathered round Mme de Villeparisis...	5:50
89	Mme de Villeparisis rang the bell...	5:28
90	'I have better news,' she murmured in my ear...	7:07
91	She rang the bell...	6:00
92	'You must speak loud,' she warned Bloch...	7:06
93	Before M de Norpois, under constraint from his hostess...	7:19
94	'You know who we're talking about, Basin?' the Duchess asked...	6:41
95	'Seven Princesses! Dear, dear, what a snob she must be!'	5:15
96	'Tell me, my dear aunt,' M. de Guermantes inquired...	6:32
97	Bloch was flattered by this picture of himself...	5:53
98	M. de Guermantes uttered the words...	7:23
99	'I think you're all equally tiresome...'	8:48
100	Possibly the explanation of M. de Norpois speaking in this way...	7:31

101	'You aren't going to Mme de Sagan's ball this evening?'	6:29
102	M. de Norpois put these questions to Bloch...	4:28
103	Bloch coloured; M. d'Argencourt smiled...	6:00
104	Full of curiosity and anxious to have more light thrown...	8:58
105	In the country, Mme de Marsantes was adored...	6:02
106	A faint smile made Mme de Guermantes's eyelashes quiver...	6:21
107	The Prince's name preserved in the boldness...	6:04
108	But Prince von Faffenheim was no simpleton.	8:45
109	The following winter the Prince was seriously ill...	9:04
110	The arrival of Mme Swann had a special interest for me...	6:05
111	For the rest, Charles Morel seemed to have...	5:34
112	Mme de Villeparisis meanwhile...	5:40
113	I studied M. de Charlus.	5:39
114	I have recorded a long way back...	4:55
115	I was anxious nevertheless for information...	6:25
116	Robert called me away to the far end of the room...	7:42
117	I should have liked to reply...	8:04
118	I was fully aware that my company...	7:06
119	Anxiously Mme de Marsantes bade me good-bye.	4:14
120	As I went downstairs I heard behind me a voice...	4:46

121	'You have enough intelligence, I suppose...'	6:11
122	I warned him that, anyhow, Mme Bloch no longer existed...	4:57
123	'Let us return to yourself,' he said...	5:51
124	'I am sorry about that,' said M. de Charlus.	9:19
125	As for myself, no sooner had I turned in at our gate...	6:54
126	Cottard had told us to take her temperature.	7:07
127	In spite of this more special competence...	7:09
128	Inasmuch as a great part of what doctors know...	7:51
129	'But do you want me to take a cure like that, Sir?'	8:44
130	I was startled to see her so flushed...	6:39
131	Finally my grandmother emerged...	5:37
132	Just as I was signalling to a cabman...	6:23
133	And if Legrandin had looked back at us...	7:01
134	The sun was sinking, it burnished an interminable wall...	7:07
135	My mother and I (whose falsehood was exposed...)	8:11
136	'Oh! My dear, it's dreadful to have to stay in bed...'	5:27
137	My grandmother's illness gave occasion to various people...	6:46
138	People of taste and refinement tell us nowadays...	8:45
139	On the sixth day...	6:07
140	There came a time when her uraemic trouble...	6:38

141	According to our doctor, this was a symptom...	5:52
142	We went into the sickroom.	9:33
143	A half-brother of my grandmother, who was in religion...	5:45
144	For several nights now my father...	7:42
145	To return now to those last hours...	5:37
146	Chapter 2	5:00
147	There was no one else in the house but Françoise.	6:51
148	To revert to where we were...	6:48
149	I must say it at this point...	8:15
150	As for this pleasure which by accomplishing my desire...	4:54
151	No doubt it does happen that women of moderate culture...	5:49
152	As she uttered these words the door opened...	8:08
153	I did not respond at once to this invitation...	6:16
154	In addition, Albertine preserved, inseparably attached to her...	5:24
155	Apart from the most recent applications...	5:34
155	The exact opposite happened.	5:50
156	Apart from this, Albertine's social ideas were fatuous...	6:46
157	Albertine had made me so late...	5:48
158	However that might be...	5:15
160	At that moment Mme de Villeparisis entered the room.	6:25

161	People who are merely fashionable...	8:56
162	I was struck by the application of this last epithet...	8:56
163	The days that preceded my dinner with Mme de Stermaria...	7:08
164	And then, the last carriage having rolled by...	6:39
165	At the same time, my Balbec desires...	7:26
166	The next day was cold and fine; winter was in the air...	8:28
167	What added to my distress at not seeing Mme de Stermaria...	7:27
168	The thought of course never entered my mind...	5:11
169	If as I came downstairs I lived over again...	5:57
170	I was astounded.	6:21
171	As ill luck would have it...	6:42
172	As I have mentioned the Prince de Foix...	8:37
173	In politics the proprietor of this particular café...	8:55
174	After leaving us for a moment...	6:34
175	'By the way, while I think of it, my uncle Charlus...'	9:28
176	How much familiar intercourse with a Guermantes...	6:17
177	This imagined remoteness of the past...	6:18
178	The people who detested these 'horrors' were astonished...	7:03
179	While I was examining Elstir's paintings...	5:07
180	At the very outset I found myself completely bewildered.	6:00

181	If M. de Guermantes had been in such a haste to present me...	6:43
182	But already the Duke, who seemed in a hurry...	5:46
183	It seemed on the whole more plausible to regard me...	9:39
184	I should add that one of the guests was still missing...	10:00
185	The other reason for the friendliness shown me...	6:59
186	The Guermantes were just as idiomatic...	6:11
187	To the most trivial statements made by intelligent people...	4:56
188	A single point at which Guermantes and Courvoisiers converged...	7:59
189	To return to the antipathy which animated...	5:51
190	It is in a similar fashion...	6:03
191	Well, to return to Mme des Laumes...	5:39
192	Many of the friends of the Princesse de Parme...	8:21
193	When the room became too crowded...	7:08
194	With certain people (though these, it must be admitted...)	5:52
195	It must be recognised also that the refinement of social life...	6:18
196	The Duke and Duchess gave a very civil greeting...	8:05
197	And so, thanks on one occasion to 'Teaser Augustus'...	7:55
198	The Courvoisiers were incapable of rising to the level...	5:53
199	When a woman who was intelligent, educated, witty...	7:37
200	As for social activities...	6:58

201	M. de Guermantes at this period in his life...	5:56
202	Very well, at this point in the social year...	6:07
203	As a rule these handsome 'supers' had been his mistresses...	7:46
204	No doubt the love which M. de Guermantes had had...	6:07
205	'Oriane,' began the Princesse de Parme...	6:03
206	'Which leads to some quite amusing scenes...'	7:57
207	I let it be understood that I had no admiration...	4:45
208	Far from condemning Mme d'Arpajon as absurd...	5:49
209	I was beginning to know them...	5:32
210	Moved by this last quotation, Mme d'Arpajon exclaimed...	6:22
211	It was Mme de Chaussegros herself who had said...	5:56
212	'Good Lord, yes,' he replied...	6:07
213	'That portrait ought to appeal to Mme de Gallardon...'	6:31
214	'Babal always knows everything...'	6:04
215	'But you take the same view of my aunt...'	5:29
216	'As we're discussing your family, Oriane...'	6:05
217	'I really must go and see the Queen of Naples...'	5:39
218	In the period that followed...	5:51
219	Now, on this occasion, among the visitors...	6:47
220	'Babal, you're divine, you know everything...'	5:54

221	Mme de Guermantes was now nourishing a similar project...	5:19
222	'A good-looking boy, I believe?' she asked.	5:40
223	'And is the Grand Duchess well?'	4:37
224	M. de Guermantes, rejoicing that she should be speaking to me...	7:01
225	Everyone smiled.	6:04
226	'You are quite mistaken,' replied the Duchess...	7:31
227	There was at Combray a Rue de Saintrailles...	5:28
228	In middle-class families one sometimes sees...	8:50
229	Better informed than his wife...	6:18
230	I was privately convinced that all these stories...	5:03
231	I did not even reply to the Ambassadors...	6:37
232	However, my historical curiosity was faint...	8:13
233	Just as I was about to leave...	6:19
234	An exaltation that sank only into melancholy...	8:30
235	From this point of view...	3:41
236	When all was said, very different in this respect...	6:11
237	After a moment's silence I asked him...	7:35
238	So far, I had never dreamed that M. de Charlus's rage...	6:21
239	'Sir, I swear to you that I have said nothing...'	6:31
240	'Sir,' I replied, moving away from him...	7:07

241	'You will excuse my not accompanying you home...'	8:38
242	'The Duchesse de Guermantes...'	6:22
243	We are attracted by every form of life...	6:27
244	The fact remains, nevertheless...	6:49
245	On the day on which the party was to be given...	6:46
246	'You shall see Oriane in a minute,' the Duke told me...	6:21
247	The Duke appeared touched that I should have come...	5:49
248	The Duke called back the footman...	6:16
249	'To be sure, it is,' said the Duke...	9:08
250	M. de Guermantes returned...	5:37
251	'Oriane, you might at least tell the story properly...'	7:57
252	Another footman came into the room.	5:40
253	The footman returned with the Comtesse Mole's card...	7:05
254	'Listen, Basin, I ask for nothing better...'	6:20
255	'What's that you say?' cried the Duchess...	6:46

Total time: 28:50:02

Marcel Proust

(1871–1922)

The Guermentes Way

The critic André Maurois described Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* as 'one of the greatest works of the imagination of all time'.

The literal translation of the work's French title, 'In Search of Lost Time', contains within it a clue to the creation of this monumental work of biographical fiction. Having wasted time living a dilettante existence in the fashionable world, Proust, in middle age, decided to re-dedicate his life to art, and to attempt at last to achieve the great work of which he knew himself capable.

Remembrance of Things Past was his chance to justify his life, and to cheat death through an act of artistic creation. It was the means he would use to conquer time through recreating his lost years. Memory was the material with which he would weave the magic cord to be launched into infinity; that cord

which now binds us to him, and stretches forward into the future, linking his genius to unborn generations.

The Author

Marcel Proust was born on 10 July, 1871. His father, a distinguished professor of medicine, was from a Catholic family, while his mother was Jewish. Although convinced from an early age of his calling as a writer, Proust was riddled with self-doubt and wrote relatively little at the beginning of his career.

During his twenties, he co-founded a short-lived review, *Le Banquet*; contributed to another literary publication, *La Revue Blanche*; and in 1896 had his first book published, a collection of essays entitled *Les Plaisirs et Les Jours*.

He became an enthusiastic admirer of Ruskin and translated his *Bible of Amiens*

and *Sesame and Lilies* into French. A novel, *Jean Santeuil*, which was the precursor of *Remembrance of Things Past*, was abandoned, and eventually published long after Proust's death, in 1954.

For much of his youth Proust led the life of a man-about-town, frequenting fashionable Paris drawing rooms and literary salons, which were to form the background of a number of his early stories and sketches, and subsequently of *Remembrance of Things Past*.

The death of his adored mother in 1905 resulted in a nervous collapse and aggravated his chronic asthma and insomnia. But, despite his grief and the sense of loss, from which he never recovered, his mother's death freed him with regard to his homosexual way of life, and allowed him to address same-sex love in his writing, albeit in a form which treated such experiences as happening to others rather than to himself.

In 1907 he moved into an apartment in the Boulevard Haussmann where, in the bedroom which he had had lined with cork to keep out noise, he embarked upon his great work *À la Recherche du Temps*

Perdu (Remembrance of Things Past). In it the minuteness of his observation, the depth of his psychological understanding and the vividness of his descriptive powers combined to create one of the most poetic and magical works in all literature.

Publication of *Remembrance of Things Past*

This long autobiographical cycle was originally published in eight sections: *Du Côté de Chez Swann* (Swann's Way) in 1913; *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* (Within a Budding Grove) in 1918; *Le Côté de Guermantes I* (The Guermantes Way I) in 1920; *Le Côté de Guermantes II* and *Sodom et Gomorrhe I* (Cities of the Plain I) in 1921; *Sodom et Gomorrhe II* in 1922; *La Prisonnière* (The Captive) in 1923; *Albertine Disparue* (The Sweet Cheat Gone/The Fugitive) in 1925 and *Le Temps Retrouvé* (Time Regained) in 1927.

Proust was obliged to publish *Swann's Way* at his own expense, and even after it had appeared, had trouble finding a publisher for the next part, *A L'Ombre des*

Jeunes Filles en Fleurs. However, when it appeared in 1918 it received considerable acclaim, and was awarded the Prix Goncourt the following year.

By the time Proust died, on 18 November, 1922, the first four parts of the cycle had been published, leaving the others to appear posthumously.

The Guermantes Way – Part I

In *The Guermantes Way*, Marcel penetrates the inner sanctum of Paris high society, the circle of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, which he has hitherto viewed as both unattainable and quasi-magical; a place inhabited by beings who lead lives completely unlike his own and those of other ordinary mortals.

Marcel's unexpected social advancement is brought about by a combination of circumstances. His family has moved to an apartment which forms part of the Hotel de Guermantes, the Paris residence of the Duc and Duchesse de Guermantes, whose country estates are at Combray, where Marcel's family used to spend their summers when he was a child.

More recently, while Marcel was on holiday at the seaside resort of Balbec with his grandmother, the old lady renewed the acquaintance of a friend of her youth, the Marquise de Villeparisis, aunt of the Duchesse de Guermantes. The Marquise has introduced Marcel to her nephew, Robert de Saint-Loup, a stylish young officer cadet who delights in the intellectual and artistic stimulation he finds in Marcel's conversation.

Marcel's new neighbour in Paris, the Duchesse de Guermantes, is sufficiently young, attractive and unobtainable to become the safe object of his youthful adoration, and although he is unable to avoid noticing that she is a real woman with a disagreeable expression and a faulty complexion, fantasy outweighs reality. Marcel has long been obsessed by the grandeur of the Guermantes family, and in his imagination the Duchess becomes a magical being. Marcel's obsession drives him to take his morning walk at the same time as the Duchess takes hers, in order to meet her as though by accident. However, the Duchess appears, if anything, rather

more annoyed than pleased by his attentions.

Having been invited by the officer cadet Robert de Saint-Loup to visit him in the garrison town where he is stationed, Marcel finds fascination in army life, with its physical rigour and rough camaraderie. He is reminded that Oriane, Duchesse de Guermites, is Robert's cousin, and although reluctant to admit to Robert the extent of his love for her, he obtains from him the promise of an introduction on their return to Paris.

Robert's mistress is an aspiring young actress, and he is impatient for Marcel to meet her. When they are introduced Marcel is shocked to realise that he has seen her before. This woman so adored and admired by Robert, on whom he lavishes priceless jewels and for whom he defies his family's displeasure, turns out to be 'Rachel when from the Lord', the intelligent Jewish prostitute he first met in a brothel. Despite his view of Rachel as unworthy of Robert's love, Marcel can see that the emotions she engenders in him are both genuine and devastating.

When they pay a visit to the theatre to

see Rachel perform, Marcel observes with fascination the magical transformation made by distance and art, and begins to understand Robert's passion for her. Robert's relationship with Rachel is a stormy one, due to his jealous nature and her seeming need to provoke it, and Marcel is made an unwilling witness of their complicated emotional life.

The scene of Marcel's introduction to high society is the salon of the Marquise de Villeparisis. Not only is the Marquise Robert's aunt and his grandmother's old friend, but Marcel discovers another link between them, in that the Marquise's lover of many years' standing is the Baron de Norpois, his father's old friend and colleague.

The Marquise's salon represents the 'Guermites Way' of the title – the way of the aristocracy. At Combray, Marcel and his parents were in the habit of taking two country walks; one, Swann's Way, which led past the property of Swann, his wife Odette and their daughter Gilberte, and the other, the Méséglise Way, which skirted the Guermites family's extensive estates. These two different routes came

to symbolise two ways of life for Marcel: the bourgeois life of love and family, and the life of power and influence which comes with noble birth.

In *The Guermantes Way*, Proust shows us the struggles for political and social supremacy; the ebb and flow of power and influence being played out in the Marquise's drawing room beneath a veneer of elegant manners, almost Oriental in their subtlety.

Characters from former books are reintroduced, and among them we meet once again the arch snob and flatterer Legrandin who, having warned Marcel about the dangers of going into society, is found to have been tirelessly attempting to obtain entry himself; Marcel's old friend, the scholarly and brilliant but socially inept Bloch; and the predatory Baron de Charlus, whose homosexual interest in the innocent Marcel excites his hostess's concern.

Amongst the subjects currently under discussion in the Marquise's salon is the Dreyfus case. Bloch, who is attending the trial of Emile Zola, eminent champion of Dreyfus, is anxious to sound out the

company's opinions. The case has divided France into two opposing camps – with the aristocrats of the Faubourg Saint-Germain solidly arrayed on the anti-Dreyfus side. The opinion expressed by one nobleman present is that Dreyfus can be neither patriot nor traitor, because as a Jew he is not a Frenchman. This argument must have been particularly offensive to the half-Jewish Proust.

Part One of *The Guermantes Way* ends with the illness of Marcel's grandmother, whose selfless love has been as important to him as that of his mother, and his dawning realisation that the time is approaching when he must lose her.

The Guermantes Way – Part II

Marcel's grandmother is in failing health. Having been advised by an important consultant that, despite her inclinations to the contrary, she is well enough to take some fresh air, she sets out for a walk in the Champs Élysées with Marcel, during the course of which she is taken ill.

Marcel, who guesses his grandmother

has suffered a stroke, seeks assistance from an eminent doctor, Professor E., an acquaintance of his parents whom he meets by chance in the street.

Proust's somewhat cynical attitude to doctors is exemplified by his description of the character of the Professor, as it is in his treatment of other members of the medical profession elsewhere in the novel. Vain, fussy and opinionated, the Professor may be professionally competent but he lacks real human sympathy and understanding. His power to cure, too, is extremely limited. However, as Proust remarks of humanity's eternal optimism: 'we continue to light candles and to consult doctors.'

Proust's father was a distinguished physician and public health official, and the medical members of his father's circle, together with the numerous doctors Proust himself was obliged to consult as a result of his poor health, would have provided the author with ample opportunity to study the profession at first hand. His detailed account of sickroom procedure and of the physical decline of Marcel's grandmother indicates his

familiarity with the treatment of a chronic invalid.

Marcel's beloved grandmother dies. After a period of mourning, youth and nature combine to assist Marcel in his recovery, and a change of season brings a change of mood. Physical desire prompts thoughts of encounters with the female sex, and he plans a romantic dinner with Mme de Stermaria, an attractive young divorcée whose acquaintance he made at Balbec, and whose sexual availability has been hinted at by Robert de Saint-Loup. But his plans misfire and, surprisingly, it is with Albertine that the sexual encounter takes place. Although Marcel is no longer in love with her, as he was at Balbec, Albertine appears to have matured physically and in other ways, which leads Marcel to believe (as it turns out correctly) that she would not, as before, repel his advances.

Robert de Saint-Loup, just returned from Morocco on leave, takes Marcel off to dine. The café to which they go numbers among its clients a group of young intellectuals, of whom Marcel's old friend Bloch is a member, and a sprinkling

of young aristocrats, of whose arrogance and anti-Semitism Marcel is made aware but against which his friendship with Saint-Loup provides protection.

During his grandmother's illness, Marcel's mother has taken him to task for making a fool of himself chasing after the Duchesse de Guermantes, and Marcel's infatuation with the unattainable older woman fades. But once the spell is broken and Marcel's assumed indifference becomes genuine, the Duchess begins to take an interest in him and invites him to dine with her and her husband the Duke.

This gives Marcel the opportunity of which he has always dreamt: witnessing the charmed life of the members of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, that almost hermetically sealed circle of France's noblest aristocracy. But this experience proves very different from the one he has anticipated, and Marcel is forced to observe the chasm between the resounding titles which symbolise France's historic greatness, and the fallible personalities who inhabit them.

Marcel is invited to a late night rendez-vous with the Baron de Charlus,

which turns out to be a very unpleasant meeting. In his innocence, Marcel has unwittingly rejected the advances of the Baron, which puts the Baron in a rage. In a hilarious episode, Marcel reacts to the Baron's unjust attack with a furious display of temper, and trashes the Baron's new hat. The Baron, taken aback, softens his manner, and an uneasy truce is reached.

De Charlus was based by Proust on two real-life models, but nonetheless remains a wonderfully imaginative creation. Proust's description of the tension caused in the personality of Charlus by the repression of his publicly unacknowledged homosexuality; his need to emphasise his masculinity through acts of physical virility; his attempt to counteract feelings of shame through asserting his social and intellectual superiority over others and his vicious attacks on the weakness he observes in others but so strenuously denies in himself, shows the author to be not only a great writer, but a remarkable psychologist.

The final section of Part Two of *The*

Guermantes Way reintroduces the figure of Swann, now much altered by a life-threatening disease. Swann pays a visit to the Duchesse de Guermantes, with whom he shares the wit and intelligence that has made them allies in the past. In the face of Swann's revelation regarding the state of his health, the Duchess is torn between her social obligation to be on time for a dinner party and the necessity of considering Swann's news with appropriate seriousness. She opts for the former, despite eventually being obliged to delay her exit for a much more mundane reason: the necessity of changing her shoes. In making her decision to ignore Swann's illness in favour of a dinner engagement, she is following not only her husband's wishes, but the dictates of a social order which override her personal inclination, a fact recognised by Swann, who has led his life according to the same rules. The Duke and Duchess's outer forms of courtesy and consideration hide a deep selfishness, the result of their self-indulgent manner of living and an ingrained conviction that they are different from, and superior to,

other people – especially those who do not inhabit their world.

We are left with the feeling that Proust may not approve of the people who inhabit the upper reaches of society, but that, like Swann, he understands them. Marcel may have discovered that they are not the magic figures he imagined them to be, but he sees them nonetheless as part of a historical continuum, and finds the same fascination in their world as in 'a herbarium, filled with plants of another day'.

The author is well aware that snobbery, arrogance, pride, selfishness and cruelty are not unique to the aristocracy. We may not share the wealth and privilege of the gently-born, but as human beings we share their failings, and Proust appears to invite those among us without sin to cast the first stone.

The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

To avoid any confusion, it may be helpful to point out that Proust's great work, *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, was originally translated into English by Charles K. Scott-

Moncrieff and published in 1922 under the title, *Remembrance of Things Past*. It was subsequently re-translated by Terence Kilmartin and appeared in 1981 as *In Search of Lost Time*. In 2002 a new edition appeared under the same title, with each volume assigned to a different translator. The Naxos AudioBooks recordings use the Scott-Moncrieff text and, in references to the work, I use Scott-Moncrieff's title.

My own contact with Proust began when, as a 17-year-old schoolboy, I first read *Swann's Way*. I could not have guessed then that, many years into the future, Proust would take over my life to such an extent. Over a six year period during the 1990s, I abridged and recorded *Remembrance of Things Past* for Naxos Audiobooks, for whom I have now recorded this entire, uncut text.

When I was asked to write *The Life and Work of Marcel Proust* (see www.naxosaudiobooks.com), it occurred to me that, although the people on whom Proust based his characters were no longer living, the places he wrote about were still there, and so I travelled to France to see them.

I was delighted to discover that Illiers, where Marcel Proust spent his holidays as a child, and which figures in the book as Combray, is now marked on maps and road signs as Illiers-Combray, in official recognition of the reason for this sleepy village's wider fame.

In a narrow street just off the market square in Illiers-Combray is the house in which Proust's father, Adrien Proust, was born, and further along is the house of his aunt Élisabeth, now a Proust museum, where Élisabeth's fictional counterpart, the bedridden Aunt Léonie, watched the world go by from her bedroom window. Around the corner from the house is a little boulangerie with a sign in the window announcing proudly: 'This is where Aunt Léonie bought her madeleines'. It only occurs to me as I buy a packet of the scallop-shaped cakes, that Aunt Léonie is a creature of fiction. Never mind, Aunt Élisabeth might well have patronised the establishment, or one very like it. Up the hill there is a real house called Tansonville, the name of the house occupied by Charles Swann, and later by his daughter Gilberte and her husband

Robert de Saint-Loup, and further on there is a real village called Méréglise, a name almost identical to the fictional Méséglise.

Water lilies are still reflected in the glassy surface of the river Loir, which in the book bears the more poetic name the Vivonne, and beyond the stream lies the Pré Catalan, the enchanting park created by Proust's horticulturally minded Uncle Jules. From Illiers I travelled on to Cabourg, a seaside resort on the Normandy coast, the original of the fictional Balbec. Here I found the Grand Hotel in all its Edwardian splendour. It was rebuilt after Proust spent holidays there as a child, but he returned as an adult, and sections of *Remembrance of Things Past* were written beneath its roof. As in *Within a Budding Grove*, the great glass windows of the restaurant look out over the promenade to the beach below, and with a little imagination, that group of budding young girls in bikinis is transformed into the little band of 'jeunes filles en fleurs' outlined against the sea.

I travelled on to Paris, visiting 102 Boulevard Haussmann, Proust's home for

many years, where he wrote so much of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The building is still owned by the same bank that purchased it from Proust's aunt, when her inconsiderate decision to sell it forced him to move. His bedroom is still there, but unfurnished, and to see the room as it was, one is obliged to visit the Musée Carnavalet, where his bed, chaise-longue and other effects are displayed in a reconstruction of the famous cork-lined room.

A walk to the gardens of the Champs Élysées brought me to an area with a sign announcing that I am in the Allée Marcel Proust. Children chase each other – perhaps playing the modern equivalent of 'prisoners base', the game played by Gilberte and her friends. This is where the real Marcel played as a child with the real Marie de Benardaky, with whom he fell in love, just as the fictional Marcel falls in love with the fictional Gilberte Swann.

In the real world the same spaces are occupied now by different people. Time has moved on, but places remain, and we have the privilege of being present in not only the imaginary world Proust created,

but that portion of the real world which had a part in its creation. His presence has left behind a trace of magic, and we see places differently, because we see them through his eyes. One day those places will have crumbled into dust, as will we ourselves, and the space we now consider ours will be occupied by others. But as long as civilisation remains, those who come after us will be able to share Proust's vision and enter his world. Proust was aware that art is the only true reality, and that through his creations the artist continues to live after his death, beyond space and beyond time.

Notes by Neville Jason



Marcel Proust (right) and his younger brother Robert, c. 1877

A Proust Chronology

1871, July 10	Marcel Proust born
1873, May 24	Robert Proust born
1878–1886	holiday visits to Illiers (now Illiers-Combray)
1880, spring	Marcel's first attack of asthma
1882–1888	attends the Lycée Condorcet
1888	contributed to <i>La Revue Lilas</i> and <i>La Revue Verte</i>
1889–1890	military service at Orléans
1890, January 3	death of maternal grandmother, Adèle Weil
1890, August	holiday at Cabourg
1890, November	enrols as a student in the Faculty of Law and at the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques
1890, November – 1891, September	contributes to <i>Le Mensuel</i>
1892, March	first edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, March	last edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, April 13	meets Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac
1893	contributes to <i>La Revue Blanche</i> ; degree in law

1894, May 22	meets Reynaldo Hahn
1894, December	trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus
1895, March	degree in philosophy
1895, summer	holiday in Brittany with Reynaldo Hahn
1896	publication of <i>Les Plaisirs et Les Jours</i> ; writing <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1897, February 6	duel with Jean Lorrain
1898, January 13	Emile Zola's article <i>J'Accuse</i> published
1899	begins translation of Ruskin's <i>Our Fathers Have Told Us (La Bible d'Amiens)</i>
1899, summer	holiday at Evian-les-Bains, visits the Brancovan family at Amphion
1900, June and October	visits Venice
1902	abandons work on <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1903, November 26	death of Adrien Proust
1904	publication of <i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>

1905, September 26	death of Jeanne Proust
1906, June	publication of <i>Sesame and Lilies</i> (<i>Sésame et les Lys</i>)
1906, July	Dreyfus declared innocent
1906, December	moves to 102 Boulevard Haussmann
1907, summer	holiday at Cabourg, where he will spend the next seven summers. Meets Alfred Agostinelli
1908–09	begins writing <i>À la Recherche du Temps Perdu</i>
1913	Agostinelli re-enters Proust's life. Employs Celeste Albaret
1913, November	<i>Du Côté de Chez Swann</i> (<i>Swann's Way</i>) published
1914, May 30	Alfred Agostinelli dies in an aircraft accident
1918, June	publication of <i>A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs</i> (<i>Within a Budding Grove</i>), <i>Pastiches et Melanges</i> and new edition of <i>Swann's Way</i>
1919, June	moves to 8, rue Laurent-Pichat
1919, December	<i>Within a Budding Grove</i> awarded the Prix Goncourt

1920, October	moves to 44, rue Hamelin
1920, October	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes I</i> (The Guermantes Way I) published
1920, April	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes II</i> and <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe I</i> (Cities of the Plain I) published
1921, December 11	death of Montesquiou
1922, April	<i>Sodom et Gomorrhe II</i> published
1922, October	awarded the Légion d'Honneur
1922, November 18	death of Marcel Proust
1923	<i>La Prisonnière</i> (<i>The Captive</i>) published
1925	<i>Albertine Disparue</i> (<i>The Fugitive/The Sweet Cheat Gone</i>) published
1952	<i>Jean Santeuil</i> published
1954	<i>Contre Sainte-Beuve</i> (<i>Against Sainte-Beuve</i>) published



Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. His first appearance in the theatre was in Peter Brook's production of *Titus Andronicus* starring Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. He is a former member of the Old Vic Company, the English Stage Company, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Birmingham Repertory Company. Roles include John Worthing in *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Robert Browning in *Robert and Elizabeth*.

He is a trained singer and has appeared in numerous musicals including *The Great Waltz*, *1776*, *Ambassador*, *Lock Up Your Daughters*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Irma La Douce*, *Robert and Elizabeth* and *Mutiny*.

Television appearances include *Maigret*, *Dr Who* (The Androids of Tara), *Hamlet* (Horatio), *Crime and Punishment* (Zamyatov), *Emergency Ward Ten*, *Dixon of Dock Green*, *When the Boat Comes In*, *Angels*, *Minder*, *Dempsey and Makepeace*, *The Richest Woman in the World*, *The Dancing Years*, *The Magic Barrel* and *Windmill Near a Frontier*. Films include *From Russia with Love* and *The Message*. He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and may be heard in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud*, *War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *The Once and Future King*, *War and Peace* and *The Castle of Otranto*; he plays Antonio in *The Tempest*, and has directed productions of *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

As a director he was awarded Talkies awards for *Great Expectations* and *Poets of the Great War*. As a reader he won AudioFile Earphone awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace* (Best Audiobooks of the Year 2007 and 2009).

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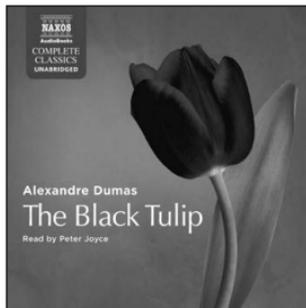
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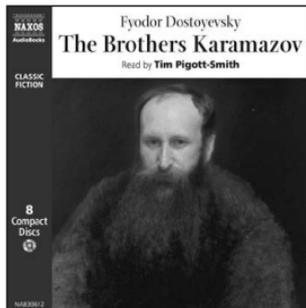
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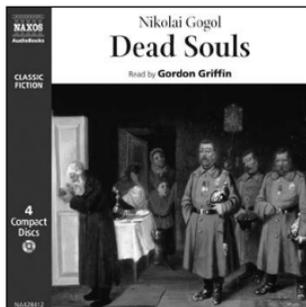
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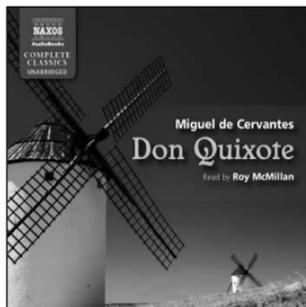
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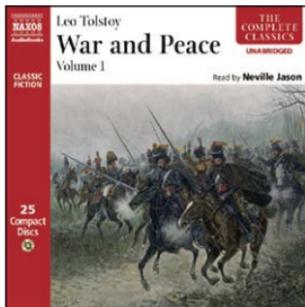
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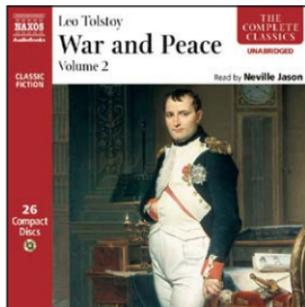
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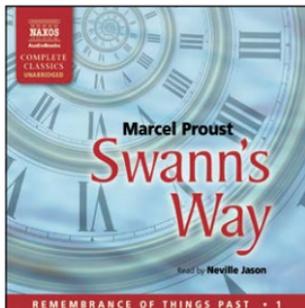
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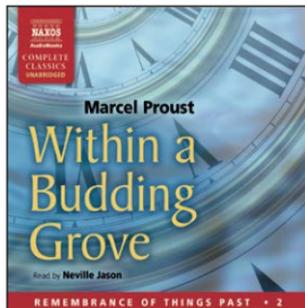
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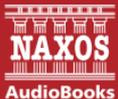
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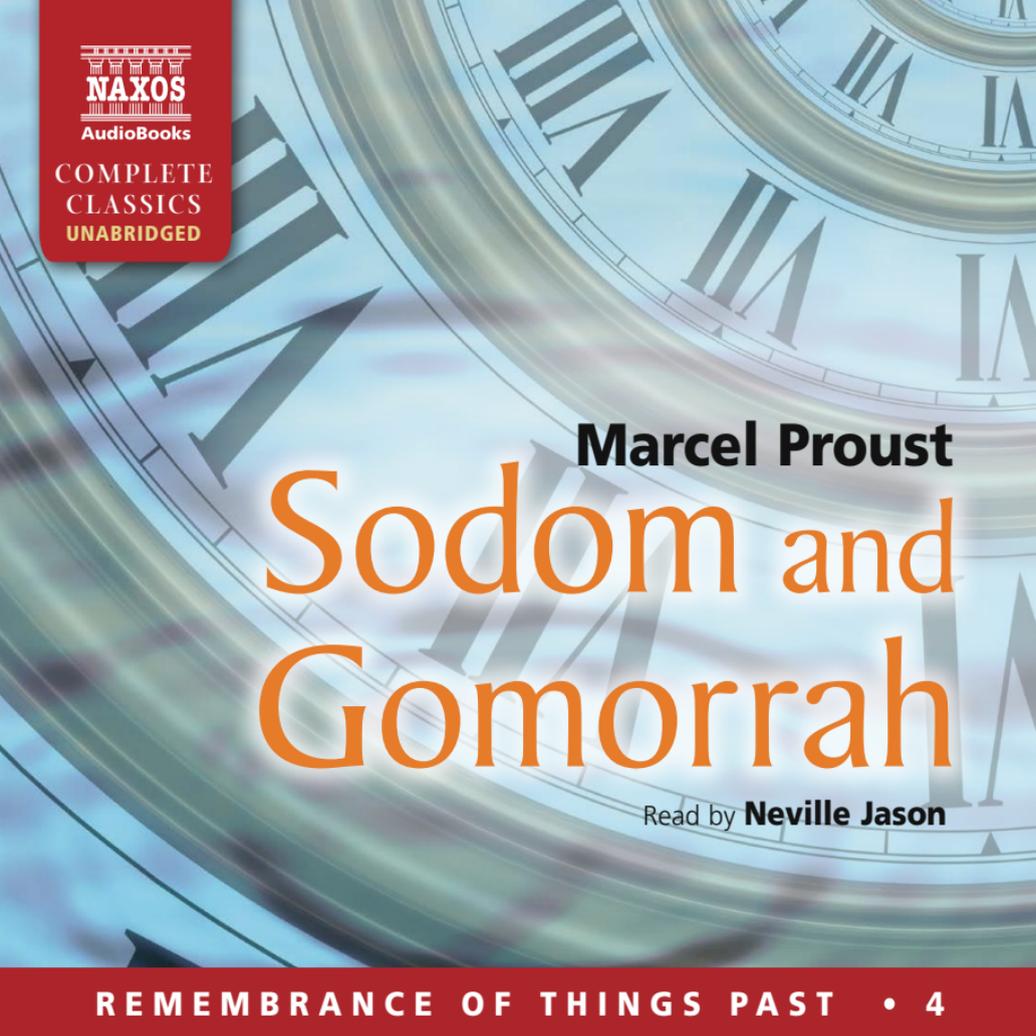
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The background of the cover is a close-up, slightly blurred image of a clock face. The clock is circular and features Roman numerals for the hours. The colors are muted, with shades of blue, green, and grey, giving it a vintage and artistic feel.

Marcel Proust
**Sodom and
Gomorrah**

Read by **Neville Jason**

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST • 4

1	Sodom and Gomorrah: Part 1	9:35
2	I was about to change my position again...	9:49
3	All that I have just said...	10:07
4	'So as not to lose the trail,' he went on...	9:55
5	Those of my readers who do not care to refer...	6:30
6	Their honour precarious...	11:28
7	It is with these professional organisations...	10:41
8	We need not pause here to consider...	10:08
9	Then the solitary languishes alone.	10:11
10	It is true that inverts...	9:30
11	Sodom and Gomorrah: Part 2 – Chapter 1	9:01
12	The person immediately in front of me...	10:34
13	I was buttonholed at that moment...	10:43
14	But in default of the pleasures sacrificed...	10:35
15	The distance between me and the garden door...	10:19
16	In any case, if there are transitions...	7:00
17	It was not so difficult...	10:49
18	One of these little accidents...	9:26
19	It was not so very long since...	9:34
20	While, before she had even left the entrance hall...	10:27

21	In any event, the names of Ibsen and D'Annunzio...	10:50
22	Assuredly, if it had been only Oriane...	9:50
23	M. de Charlus would, no doubt, readily have compromised...	9:59
24	'Talking of Dreyfusards,' I said...	6:59
25	I was longing to know...	9:43
26	'Well, the fact is, I shall not be in Paris,' the Duchess answered...	9:07
27	Just as I reached this room...	11:03
28	There are certain Israelites...	10:53
29	At this moment, Mme de Surgis entered the room...	9:59
30	Swann having caught sight of me came over...	10:22
31	For my part, I was furious...	7:52
32	'Suppose we took a turn in the garden, Sir,' I said to Swann...	9:11
33	As for the great nobles, her kinsmen...	9:59
34	To give an example of quite secondary importance...	10:44
35	And so, seeking now only to give myself...	10:18
36	'You must make up your mind to let me fix up...'	9:24
37	While we were going downstairs...	9:50
38	'Well!' said the Duchess to me...	10:45
39	Such was, in addition to great honesty...	9:56
40	I was tortured by the incessant recurrence...	7:46

41	Lives entrenched behind five or six lines of defence...	10:00
42	When I discovered afterwards...	11:17
43	I ceased for some time to see Albertine...	9:21
44	It is true that the Verdurins...	9:34
45	Gilberte, too, helped to strengthen her mother's position...	11:03
46	The Heart's Intermissions	8:59
47	But I had long since given up trying...	9:47
48	Now, inasmuch as the self...	9:23
49	But as soon as I had succeeded in falling asleep...	10:30
50	And yet the day before, on my arrival...	10:55
51	On the card that was brought me...	11:06
52	She had the misfortune...	10:58
53	I went straight up to my room...	9:42
54	To be sure, I suffered agonies all that day...	10:05
55	Chapter 2	8:03
56	I, who in my childhood...	6:26
57	It would be untrue...	9:57
58	This pride did not prevent him from accepting...	11:10
59	It was not this evening...	9:52
60	From, however, not one o'clock in the morning...	10:13

61	'Very well, that's settled, I'm off,' she said...	9:27
62	One day, outside the Grand Hotel...	10:07
63	The dowager Marquise could not find words...	8:31
64	But I might have been far more familiar still...	9:54
65	'I should be delighted to play to you,' Mme de Cambremer said...	10:11
66	'Good heavens,' Mme de Cambremer-Legrandin remarked to me...	9:54
67	As at that time I had no definite opinion...	9:46
68	'Shan't we see you again this evening?'	9:55
69	As soon as we were alone...	10:03
70	Making an abstraction of my love...	10:15
71	I ought to have left the place that evening...	8:55
72	There were still but a few people at Balbec...	9:42
73	I would have liked to be sure...	8:28
74	The post of wine waiter...	8:24
75	Here it was not only Marie that protested...	9:48
75	Another incident turned my thoughts...	9:35
77	We were waiting, Albertine and I, at the Balbec station...	10:06
78	We hastened in search of an empty carriage...	9:41
79	While I stood talking to him...	11:14
80	A change in our perspective...	12:05

81	They were dazzled by the accounts...	10:07
82	Sometimes, giving him credit for the comic...	11:00
83	An intelligent man of the world...	10:48
84	Cottard said far more often...	9:00
85	At Saint-Pierre-des-Iles...	10:00
86	For their part, the Cambremers...	9:47
87	These names made me think of the day...	9:21
88	'The Princess must be on the train...'	8:04
89	Forgetting her attachment...	9:24
90	After the toll-house...	9:49
91	'What, are you still talking about Dechambre,' said M. Verdurin...	9:35
92	Mme Verdurin who, to welcome us...	10:14
93	One would have thought...	10:48
94	I had just given Mme Verdurin the message...	10:04
95	As I listened to him and promised the silence...	10:17
96	Mme Verdurin was annoyed that M. de Cambremer should pretend...	9:15
97	'Do you shoot much, Sir?' said M. Verdurin...	10:50
98	'I must tell you, all the same...'	9:30
99	Hardly ever do we hear anything...	10:37
100	'You said that Cholet was derived from chou,' I remarked...	9:55

101	'It is true,' he replied to M. Verdurin...	10:30
102	'I should think,' said I...	9:43
103	M. de Charlus, who gave a widely different meaning...	10:09
104	And, so as not to criticise merely...	8:12
105	'As a man, he is vile...'	10:12
106	We may judge by these temporary discomfitures...	10:05
107	When the piece came to an end...	9:53
108	Saniette, summoned to make a fourth...	9:40
109	'It is easy to see,' Cottard went on...	10:20
110	'This young man is astonishing,' M. de Charlus interrupted...	10:11
111	'By the way, Charlus,' said Mme Verdurin...	10:28
112	And, as I expressed a contrary opinion...	8:20
113	One could barely make out the sea...	7:06
114	But, from the air which Cottard assumed...	7:47
115	Chapter 3	10:33
116	Two times, I have said...	9:53
117	I should greatly have astonished my mother...	10:47
118	I was all the more astonished...	11:06
119	Every day I went out with Albertine...	10:13
120	Coming to the foot of the cliff road...	11:34

121	No doubt this was because the rustic setting was different...	10:07
122	I knew that Beaumont was something very special...	10:08
123	'Listen,' said Morel, anxious to excite...	10:54
124	When Albertine thought it better...	10:03
125	On leaving Marcouville...	10:19
126	Unfortunately this life so closely involved with Albertine's...	9:59
127	In the past, when I thought with longing...	9:56
128	On the days following those...	7:30
129	There was a 'Combray spirit'...	9:49
130	During our walk, dropping his voice...	10:06
131	But it is perhaps crediting Morel's brain...	10:18
132	The faithful were all the more convinced...	9:04
133	But presently, without any need to be guided...	9:43
134	For M. de Charlus had for the moment...	9:07
135	A great musician, a member of the Institute...	9:25
136	When M. de Charlus was not speaking...	11:15
137	Ski having shewn some determination...	10:19
138	Some of these affectionate allusions...	9:20
139	Morel, feeling that I bore him...	10:40
140	In the meantime, and as though he had been dealing...	8:50

141	If M. de Charlus, in dashing this letter down...	10:12
142	'I hope at least that my two adversaries...'	11:27
143	Presently the party broke up...	9:08
144	The incident that concerns Morel...	8:48
145	However great his alarm...	9:53
146	At Grattevast, where his sister lived...	10:44
147	At Hermenonville...	9:49
148	'There are a certain number of outstanding families,'...	10:05
149	In the eyes of those who so defined them...	9:56
150	The latter indeed obliged...	10:36
151	'What I should like to have is an explanation of Thorpehomme,'...	9:08
152	Friendships more precious than Bloch's is not...	9:07
153	'Where does your friend live, in Paris?'	10:39
154	'But I cannot believe that it is good for you...'	8:30
155	Chapter 4	10:19
156	The train had stopped at Parville...	10:11
157	The mysterious passion...	9:59
158	Did Albertine realise later on...	10:59
159	Two or three times it occurred to me...	9:51
160	But beyond the beach of Balbec...	5:04

Total time: 26:13:28

Marcel Proust

(1871–1922)

Sodom and Gomorrah

The critic André Maurois described Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* as 'one of the greatest works of the imagination of all time'.

The literal translation of the work's French title, 'In Search of Lost Time', contains within it a clue to the creation of this monumental work of biographical fiction. Having wasted time living a dilettante existence in the fashionable world, Proust, in middle age, decided to re-dedicate his life to art, and to attempt at last to achieve the great work of which he knew himself capable.

Remembrance of Things Past was his chance to justify his life, and to cheat death through an act of artistic creation. It was the means he would use to conquer time through recreating his lost years. Memory was the material with which he would weave the magic cord to be launched into infinity; that cord which now binds us to

him, and stretches forward into the future, linking his genius to unborn generations.

The Author

Marcel Proust was born on 10 July, 1871. His father, a distinguished professor of medicine, was from a Catholic family, while his mother was Jewish. Although convinced from an early age of his calling as a writer, Proust was riddled with self-doubt and wrote relatively little at the beginning of his career.

During his twenties, he co-founded a short-lived review, *Le Banquet*; contributed to another literary publication, *La Revue Blanche*; and in 1896 had his first book published, a collection of essays entitled *Les Plaisirs et Les Jours*.

He became an enthusiastic admirer of Ruskin and translated his *Bible of Amiens* and *Sesame and Lilies* into French.

A novel, *Jean Santeuil*, which was the precursor of *Remembrance of Things Past*, was abandoned, and eventually published long after Proust's death, in 1954.

For much of his youth Proust led the life of a man-about-town, frequenting fashionable Paris drawing rooms and literary salons, which were to form the background of a number of his early stories and sketches, and subsequently of *Remembrance of Things Past*.

The death of his adored mother in 1905 resulted in a nervous collapse and aggravated his chronic asthma and insomnia. But, despite his grief and the sense of loss, from which he never recovered, his mother's death freed him with regard to his homosexual way of life, and allowed him to address same-sex love in his writing, albeit in a form which treated such experiences as happening to others rather than to himself.

In 1907 he moved into an apartment in the Boulevard Haussmann where, in the bedroom which he had had lined with cork to keep out noise, he embarked upon his great work *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (*Remembrance of Things Past*). In

it the minuteness of his observation, the depth of his psychological understanding and the vividness of his descriptive powers combined to create one of the most poetic and magical works in all literature.

Publication of *Remembrance of Things Past*

This long autobiographical cycle was originally published in eight sections: *Du Côté de Chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*) in 1913; *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* (*Within a Budding Grove*) in 1918; *Le Côté de Guermantes I* (*The Guermantes Way I*) in 1920; *Le Côté de Guermantes II* and *Sodom et Gomorrhe I* (*Cities of the Plain I*) in 1921; *Sodom et Gomorrhe II* in 1922; *La Prisonnière* (*The Captive*) in 1923; *Albertine Disparue* (*The Sweet Cheat Gone/The Fugitive*) in 1925 and *Le Temps Retrouvé* (*Time Regained*) in 1927.

Proust was obliged to publish *Swann's Way* at his own expense, and even after it had appeared, had trouble finding a publisher for the next part, *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs*. However, when it

appeared in 1918 it received considerable acclaim, and was awarded the Prix Goncourt the following year.

By the time Proust died, on 18 November, 1922, the first four parts of the cycle had been published, leaving the others to appear posthumously.

Sodom and Gomorrah – Part I

Sodom and Gomorrah (Cities of the Plain) Part I opens with the Narrator, Marcel, awaiting the return of the Duke and Duchess of Guermantes in the Hotel de Guermantes, their mansion in Paris, in which Marcel's family occupies an apartment. The ducal premises also provide accommodation for Madame de Villeparisis, aunt of the Duke and Duchess, while on a lower level, both architecturally and socially, the tailor Jupien runs his business with the help of his niece.

The Duke's brother, the Baron de Charlus, arrives to visit Madame de Villeparisis, and finding her out or indisposed, is about to leave when he finds himself confronted by Jupien.

Their meeting provides the occasion

for Marcel to witness a homosexual encounter which opens his eyes to the Baron's sexual proclivities, and enlightens him regarding de Charlus's hitherto inexplicable behaviour towards himself. It also affords the author the opportunity of drawing a skilful and witty parallel between a horticultural and a human conjunction, as Marcel's absorption in the scene between Charlus and Jupien leads to his missing the possible fertilisation of the Duchess's orchid, which has been left out in the courtyard in the hope of attracting the attentions of a passing bee.

In this way, Proust introduces us to the theme of homosexuality, male and female, announced in the title. It is a subject on which Proust speaks with an understanding and sympathy born of his own homosexual way of life, which he felt obliged to keep secret, and which he carefully disguises in his autobiographical novel, where the Narrator, who is undoubtedly based on Proust himself, falls in love only with women.

Proust scholars and researchers have identified female characters in the book

as disguised versions of men with whom Proust had had love affairs, although it is also suggested that his relationships with certain women are unlikely to have been entirely platonic. However, these speculations are of interest principally in explaining the depth of understanding Proust shows in his exposition of the theme of same-sex love, and his sympathy for the pain and frustration it causes those whose sexual nature is condemned by society and who are obliged to live lives of secrecy and duplicity.

There is particular poignancy in Proust's reference to 'sons without a mother, to whom they are obliged to lie all her life long and even in the hour when they close her dying eyes', in view of his own need to hide his private life from his adored mother, and to his description of 'the poet who one day was feasted at every table, applauded in every theatre in London, and on the next was driven from every lodging, unable to find a pillow upon which to lay his head', a clear reference to Oscar Wilde, who had been a friend of the young Proust, and was then living out the remains of his life as an exile in Paris.

And perhaps it is as well for those who would condemn Proust for his lack of openness regarding his sexuality, to be reminded of the distance society has travelled since his lifetime, and of the legal punishment and social ostracism which then awaited those who were known to transgress the accepted norms of sexual behaviour.

If the activities of the Baron de Charlus serve as an introduction to the world of Sodom, it is the Narrator's love for Albertine which takes us into the realm of Gomorrah, or female homosexuality.

The subject of unrequited love is no novelty in literature, and yet in Proust's hands it is fashioned anew. It would be a remarkable psychologist who was able to analyse Proust more perceptively than he analyses himself.

He unerringly connects the painful sense of exclusion Marcel feels when he fears Albertine does not love him, with the childhood experience of his mother's refusal at Combray to give him the benediction of her goodnight kiss. Here is the classic Oedipal situation in which his wish to have his mother entirely to himself

is thwarted by the existence of his father.

Adding to the pain which is felt by every rejected lover is the knowledge that he has no chance of possessing Albertine if his suspicions about her 'Sapphism' are confirmed. He would, in that case, be constitutionally unable ever to satisfy her desires.

If it is true, as has been suggested, that the character of Albertine is a disguised version of Proust's real life male lover, the author's own situation will be seen as equally impossible – that of a man in love with a man who preferred women. And it is Proust's personal experience of an anguished yearning for love he can never obtain which invests his fictional study with such compelling authenticity.

But not only Oedipal frustration and gender preference stand between the Narrator/Proust and the unconditional love he craves, there is also that last and greatest obstacle of them all – death. On the occasion of his second visit to Balbec, memories of the first visit undertaken in the company of his grandmother suddenly overwhelm Marcel, and he is faced for the first time with the irreversible reality of the

death of the person who, after his mother, he loved most in the world.

Here again Proust displays the depth of his psychological insight as he charts Marcel's slow progress from despair to resignation in observing the workings of his unconscious mind through the medium of his dreams.

Once more the reader is privileged to witness the miracle performed by the author of turning the events of his transient life into an enduring work of art.

Sodom and Gomorrah – Part II

Part II continues the story of the Narrator Marcel's second visit to the coastal visit of Balbec, where he makes further discoveries relating to the homosexual behaviour of his acquaintances.

The ageing Baron de Charlus, in love with the gifted but unscrupulous violinist Charles Morel, continues to search for casual sexual encounters elsewhere and dines openly at the hotel with a Duchess's footman. Morel, apparently bisexual, either gives or withholds his favours from male admirers, according to how it

will benefit him. Bloch's uncle M. Nissim Bernard, infatuated with a young waiter, mistakes the young man's identical twin, who does not share his brother's sexual taste, for the object of his passion, with disastrous results. The Prince de Guermantes, whom we have previously met at a brilliant ball given by him and his wife in their mansion, the magnificent Hotel de Guermantes, engages the services of Morel in the somewhat less salubrious surroundings of a seaside brothel, once again with unforeseen and hilarious consequences.

These episodes are at once both comic and tragic. In other hands they might be the stuff of a Feydeau-style farce. But Proust is no *farceur*. Whilst he has a keen appreciation of the humour implicit in these situations, he is too sensitive and complex an artist not to be aware of their dark side. He knows too well the pain of being forced to hide his sexual nature, even from those dearest to him, and the loneliness of feeling different from other men. Humour is there, but tempered with compassion for the powerlessness of men swept away by a passion which, in

a society which permits them no outlet, becomes so urgent it breaches the barriers of their lives and precipitates them into ludicrous and embarrassing situations.

Female homosexuality, for the Narrator, has no such comic side. In the face of his love for Albertine it exists as a terrible threat against which he is powerless. As long as he feels Albertine is faithful to him he is able to consider parting with her, but once she is revealed as a lover of women, he is tormented with the passionate need to make her his own.

For Marcel the Narrator, as in the case of Marcel his creator, is one of those doomed to yearn after phantoms. The incident in his childhood, recounted in *Swann's Way*, where he refuses to go to sleep until his mother comes to kiss him goodnight, and then is granted more than his wish when his father allows her to spend the night in his room, creates a terrible tension between the desire to have his mother to himself, and the guilt and fear caused by having his wish to exclude his father granted. This powerful Oedipal struggle has set up a subconscious need to repeat the painful experience endlessly

in a vain effort to try to come to terms with it.

In real life, Proust's passionate attachment to his mother appears to have led to psychosomatic illness, homosexual desire, and the inability to form lasting and satisfactory relationships. When his fictional alter ego falls in love with Albertine, he unconsciously chooses a woman with homosexual desires, and therefore one incapable of giving herself completely to him. As he imagines her caressing other women, or hears her over the telephone enjoying herself with her friends in a café, he suffers the same painful sense of exclusion – of the woman he loves enjoying herself with others rather than with him – that he felt as a child lying in bed on a summer's night with the window open, listening to the sounds of chatting and laughter wafting up to him, whilst his mother entertained guests in the garden below.

Whilst homosexuality is the principal theme of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, it is by no means the only one, and Proust's fascination with human behaviour finds much to interest him in other sections

of society, particularly in the bohemian circle of M. and Mme Verdurin, which has moved down to the seaside for the summer. Proust paints a vividly observant picture of the little clique of 'the faithful', held together by its overbearing 'Mistress' who lives in terror of being abandoned by its members. He shows us the cruelty of M. Verdurin as he tortures the awkward and diffident Saniette, the social pretensions of Mme Verdurin for whom 'bores' become 'amusing' once they begin to attend her Wednesdays, the arrogance of the local aristocracy who consider they do her a favour in accepting her invitations, the affectation of the 'faithful' who pride themselves on being artistically 'advanced', and their pretence that they have rejected other salons, which in reality they would have no chance of entering, in favour of this one.

All this is presented by the Narrator with a lack of condemnation. He not only observes the faults and pretensions of others, but is not afraid to acknowledge them in himself. Proust holds up a mirror to us in which we cannot help but see our own image. In his flawed characters

we recognise ourselves, and are obliged to accept that, in our own way, we all possess our share of human failings.

The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

To avoid any confusion, it may be helpful to point out that Proust's great work, *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, was originally translated into English by Charles K. Scott-Moncrieff and published in 1922 under the title *Remembrance of Things Past*. It was subsequently re-translated by Terence Kilmartin and appeared in 1981 as *In Search of Lost Time*. In 2002 a new edition appeared under the same title, with each volume assigned to a different translator. The Naxos AudioBooks recordings use the Scott-Moncrieff text and, in references to the work, I use Scott-Moncrieff's title.

My own contact with Proust began when, as a 17-year-old schoolboy, I first read *Swann's Way*. I could not have guessed then that, many years into the future, Proust would take over my life to such an extent. Over a six year period during the 1990s, I abridged and recorded *Remembrance of Things Past* for Naxos

AudioBooks, for whom I have now recorded this entire, uncut text.

When I was asked to write *The Life and Work of Marcel Proust* (see www.naxosaudiobooks.com), it occurred to me that, although the people on whom Proust based his characters were no longer living, the places he wrote about were still there, and so I travelled to France to see them.

I was delighted to discover that Illiers, where Marcel Proust spent his holidays as a child, and which figures in the book as Combray, is now marked on maps and road signs as Illiers-Combray, in official recognition of the reason for this sleepy village's wider fame.

In a narrow street just off the market square in Illiers-Combray is the house in which Proust's father, Adrien Proust, was born, and further along is the house of his aunt Élisabeth, now a Proust museum, where Élisabeth's fictional counterpart, the bedridden Aunt Léonie, watched the world go by from her bedroom window. Around the corner from the house is a little boulangerie with a sign in the window announcing proudly: 'This is where Aunt Léonie bought her madeleines'. It only

occurs to me as I buy a packet of the scallop-shaped cakes, that Aunt Léonie is a creature of fiction. Never mind, Aunt Élisabeth might well have patronised the establishment, or one very like it. Up the hill there is a real house called Tansonville, the name of the house occupied by Charles Swann, and later by his daughter Gilberte and her husband Robert de Saint-Loup, and further on there is a real village called Méréglise, a name almost identical to the fictional Méséglise.

Water lilies are still reflected in the glassy surface of the river Loir, which in the book bears the more poetic name the Vivonne, and beyond the stream lies the Pré Catalan, the enchanting park created by Proust's horticulturally minded Uncle Jules. From Illiers I travelled on to Cabourg, a seaside resort on the Normandy coast, the original of the fictional Balbec. Here I found the Grand Hotel in all its Edwardian splendour. It was rebuilt after Proust spent holidays there as a child, but he returned as an adult, and sections of *Remembrance of Things Past* were written beneath its roof. As in *Within a Budding Grove*, the great glass windows of the restaurant

look out over the promenade to the beach below, and with a little imagination, that group of budding young girls in bikinis is transformed into the little band of 'jeunes filles en fleurs' outlined against the sea.

I travelled on to Paris, visiting 102 Boulevard Haussmann, Proust's home for many years, where he wrote so much of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The building is still owned by the same bank that purchased it from Proust's aunt, when her inconsiderate decision to sell it forced him to move. His bedroom is still there, but unfurnished, and to see the room as it was, one is obliged to visit the Musée Carnavalet, where his bed, chaise-longue and other effects are displayed in a reconstruction of the famous cork-lined room.

A walk to the gardens of the Champs Élysées brought me to an area with a sign announcing that I am in the Allée Marcel Proust. Children chase each other – perhaps playing the modern equivalent of 'prisoners base', the game played by Gilberte and her friends. This is where the real Marcel played as a child with the real Marie de Benardaky, with whom he fell

in love, just as the fictional Marcel falls in love with the fictional Gilberte Swann.

In the real world the same spaces are occupied now by different people. Time has moved on, but places remain, and we have the privilege of being present in not only the imaginary world Proust created, but that portion of the real world which had a part in its creation. His presence has left behind a trace of magic, and we see places differently, because we see them through his eyes. One day those places will have crumbled into dust, as will we ourselves, and the space we now consider ours will be occupied by others. But as long as civilisation remains, those who come after us will be able to share Proust's vision and enter his world. Proust was aware that art is the only true reality, and that through his creations the artist continues to live after his death, beyond space and beyond time.

Notes by Neville Jason



Marcel Proust (right) and his younger brother Robert, c. 1877

A Proust Chronology

1871, July 10	Marcel Proust born
1873, May 24	Robert Proust born
1878–1886	holiday visits to Illiers (now Illiers-Combray)
1880, spring	Marcel's first attack of asthma
1882–1888	attends the Lycée Condorcet
1888	contributed to <i>La Revue Lilas</i> and <i>La Revue Verte</i>
1889–1890	military service at Orléans
1890, January 3	death of maternal grandmother, Adèle Weil
1890, August	holiday at Cabourg
1890, November	enrols as a student in the Faculty of Law and at the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques
1890, November – 1891, September	contributes to <i>Le Mensuel</i>
1892, March	first edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, March	last edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, April 13	meets Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac
1893	contributes to <i>La Revue Blanche</i> ; degree in law

1894, May 22	meets Reynaldo Hahn
1894, December	trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus
1895, March	degree in philosophy
1895, summer	holiday in Brittany with Reynaldo Hahn
1896	publication of <i>Les Plaisirs et Les Jours</i> ; writing <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1897, February 6	duel with Jean Lorrain
1898, January 13	Emile Zola's article <i>J'Accuse</i> published
1899	begins translation of Ruskin's <i>Our Fathers Have Told Us (La Bible d'Amiens)</i>
1899, summer	holiday at Evian-les-Bains, visits the Brancovan family at Amphion
1900, June and October	visits Venice
1902	abandons work on <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1903, November 26	death of Adrien Proust
1904	publication of <i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>

1905, September 26	death of Jeanne Proust
1906, June	publication of <i>Sesame and Lilies</i> (<i>Sésame et les Lys</i>)
1906, July	Dreyfus declared innocent
1906, December	moves to 102 Boulevard Haussmann
1907, summer	holiday at Cabourg, where he will spend the next seven summers. Meets Alfred Agostinelli
1908–09	begins writing <i>À la Recherche du Temps Perdu</i>
1913	Agostinelli re-enters Proust's life. Employs Celeste Albaret
1913, November	<i>Du Côté de Chez Swann</i> (<i>Swann's Way</i>) published
1914, May 30	Alfred Agostinelli dies in an aircraft accident
1918, June	publication of <i>A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs</i> (<i>Within a Budding Grove</i>), <i>Pastiches et Melanges</i> and new edition of <i>Swann's Way</i>
1919, June	moves to 8, rue Laurent-Pichat
1919, December	<i>Within a Budding Grove</i> awarded the Prix Goncourt

1920, October	moves to 44, rue Hamelin
1920, October	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes I</i> (The Guermantes Way I) published
1920, April	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes II</i> and <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe I</i> (Cities of the Plain I) published
1921, December 11	death of Montesquiou
1922, April	<i>Sodom et Gomorrhe II</i> published
1922, October	awarded the Légion d'Honneur
1922, November 18	death of Marcel Proust
1923	<i>La Prisonnière</i> (<i>The Captive</i>) published
1925	<i>Albertine Disparue</i> (<i>The Fugitive/The Sweet Cheat Gone</i>) published
1952	<i>Jean Santeuil</i> published
1954	<i>Contre Sainte-Beuve</i> (<i>Against Sainte-Beuve</i>) published



Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. His first appearance in the theatre was in Peter Brook's production of *Titus Andronicus* starring Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. He is a former member of the Old Vic Company, the English Stage Company, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Birmingham Repertory Company. Roles include John Worthing in *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Robert Browning in *Robert and Elizabeth*.

He is a trained singer and has appeared in numerous musicals including *The Great Waltz*, *1776*, *Ambassador*, *Lock Up Your Daughters*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Irma La Douce*, *Robert and Elizabeth* and *Mutiny*.

Television appearances include *Maigret*, *Dr Who* (The Androids of Tara), *Hamlet* (Horatio), *Crime and Punishment* (Zamyatov), *Emergency Ward Ten*, *Dixon of Dock Green*, *When the Boat Comes In*, *Angels*, *Minder*, *Dempsey and Makepeace*, *The Richest Woman in the World*, *The Dancing Years*, *The Magic Barrel* and *Windmill Near a Frontier*. Films include *From Russia with Love* and *The Message*. He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and may be heard in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud*, *War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *The Once and Future King*, *War and Peace* and *The Castle of Otranto*; he plays Antonio in *The Tempest*, and has directed productions of *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

As a director he was awarded Talkies awards for *Great Expectations* and *Poets of the Great War*. As a reader he won AudioFile Earphone awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace* (Best Audiobooks of the Year 2007 and 2009).

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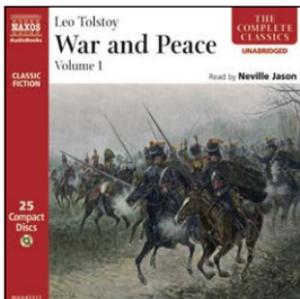
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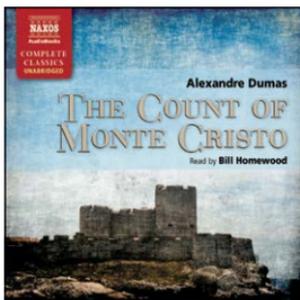
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Marcel Proust

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Neville Jason trained at RADA, where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and may be heard in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud, War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Favourite Essays*, *The Once and Future King*, *Evgenii Onegin*, *Wessex Tales* and *Remembrance of Things Past*, both unabridged and abridged. He won AudioFile awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace*.

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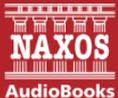
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Marcel Proust

The Captive

Read by **Neville Jason**

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST • 5

1	Chapter 1: Life with Albertine	10:13
2	I rang for Françoise. I opened the Figaro.	11:17
3	Among the reasons which led Mamma to write me a daily letter...	10:55
4	It was certainly not, as I was well aware...	9:39
5	It did not occur to me that the apathy that was indicated...	7:50
6	Françoise came in to light the fire...	12:05
7	The decline of day plunging me back by an act of memory...	8:24
8	Of all the outdoor and indoor gowns that Mme de Guermantes...	6:39
9	If there was no affectation, no desire to fabricate...	10:05
10	Mme de Guermantes assured me that...	7:11
11	'Good grate-ious, my dear Oriane,' replied Bréauté...	6:52
12	As I endeavoured as far as possible to leave the Duchess...	10:39
13	We may be certain that Morel, relying on the influence...	10:44
14	The reader may remember that Morel had once told the Baron...	10:20
15	I shall set apart from the other days on which I lingered...	9:19
16	As I listened to Albertine's footsteps...	7:03
17	At once my suspicion revived...	7:11
18	Albertine took a far keener interest...	7:57
19	Distressing as the change may have been to us...	8:52
20	Between the two Balbec scenes...	11:11

21	It is I suppose comprehensible that the letters...	10:12
22	Sometimes I put out the light before she came in.	9:45
23	Before Albertine obeyed and allowed me to take off her shoes...	10:30
24	Life has in fact suddenly acquired, in his eyes...	9:32
25	How many persons, cities, roads does not jealousy make us...	10:36
26	Often, in the case of these furtive or sidelong glances...	9:50
27	Generally speaking, love has not as its object a human body...	9:40
28	When, of her own accord, she swears to us...	9:50
29	Albertine went to take off her things...	10:16
30	What is remarkable is that, a few days before this dispute...	9:30
31	I was now at liberty to go out with Albertine...	11:17
32	I really believe that I came near that day...	11:34
33	But there were certain evenings also...	8:30
34	On the morrow of that evening when Albertine had told me...	9:40
35	Françoise brought in the Figaro.	10:13
36	And often an extra hour of sleep is a paralytic stroke...	8:57
37	In these various forms of sleep, as likewise in music...	9:36
38	Perhaps the future was not destined to be the same...	7:22
39	In any event, I was very glad that Andrée was to accompany...	10:01
40	As I do not believe that jealousy can revive a dead love...	12:44

41	Of a laundry girl, on a Sunday...	10:24
42	Between the shopgirl, the laundress busy with her iron...	11:06
43	Of course, I was still at the first stage of enlightenment...	10:26
44	Certainly at such moments she was not at all the same...	11:51
45	I urged Françoise, when she had got Albertine out of the hall...	9:43
46	The frocks that I had bought for her...	9:08
47	But notwithstanding the richness of these works...	6:56
48	For some reason or other the course of my musings...	7:09
49	Gradually my agitation subsided.	10:54
50	As one does on the eve of a premature death...	7:39
51	The disappointment that I had felt with the women...	11:39
52	At our feet, our parallel shadows, where they approached...	10:30
54	I did not question Gisele.	9:41
53	Every person whom we love, indeed to a certain extent...	10:30
55	He consulted doctors who, flattered at being called...	7:14
56	He repeated to himself...	8:20
57	The evidence of the senses is also an operation...	7:55
58	Chapter 2	10:28
59	Notwithstanding the change in Morel's point of view...	10:54
60	From this point of view, if one is not 'somebody'...	9:41

61	But if the drawing-room seemed to him superior...	11:03
62	Making a pretence of not seeing the seedy individual...	11:28
63	'Have you seen him lately?' I asked M. de Charlus...	8:15
64	M. de Charlus had never in his life been anything but...	8:55
65	As for young men in general, M. de Charlus found...	8:48
66	M. de Charlus, who had long been acquainted with Bergotte...	11:08
67	Just as we were about to ring the bell...	10:00
68	Meanwhile Mme Verdurin was busily engaged with Cottard...	10:34
69	These exclusions were not always founded upon...	9:57
70	Nobody will accuse the Dreyfus case...	10:05
71	If Mme Verdurin had not been genuinely unaffected...	11:02
72	M. de Charlus took Morel aside...	6:12
73	What ruined M. de Charlus that evening was the ill-breeding...	9:36
74	Mme Verdurin sat in a place apart...	9:22
75	But very soon, the triumphant motive of the bells...	8:28
76	Vinteuil had been dead for many years...	8:00
77	The lost country composers do not actually remember...	10:11
78	This question seemed to me all the more important...	8:57
79	Anyhow, the apparent contrast, that profound union...	10:22
80	Nor indeed was M. de Charlus content with leaving...	7:06

81	She intended, on the morning after the party...	7:27
82	The remainder of M. de Charlus's guests...	10:16
83	In calling her 'the Mole' (as for that matter...)	10:02
84	'I intended to send you a note to-morrow by a messenger...'	10:51
85	This said, he did not hesitate to commit it...	9:28
86	'Come with us all the same,' said the Baron...	7:30
87	I expressed to M. de Charlus my regret...	11:01
88	'Forgive me if I return to the subject,' I said quickly...	7:14
89	'You wish to meet Mlle Vinteuil,' said Brichot...	7:53
90	So it is that we see men of the world...	10:11
91	All of a sudden Brichot, who was still suffering...	9:56
92	I could see that M. de Charlus was about to tell us...	10:30
93	As cowardly still as I had been long ago...	8:40
94	But we have looked too far ahead...	9:53
95	Mme Verdurin was overwhelmed with the joy of an old mistress...	12:21
96	While M. de Charlus, rendered speechless by Morel's words...	7:43
97	Extremes, however, meet, since the noble man...	7:30
98	To turn back to the Verdurin's party...	8:52
99	Chapter 3	9:39
100	We had now reached my door.	9:44

101	But I was preoccupied with the thought of Mlle Vinteuil...	9:27
102	I did not know what to say, not wishing to appear astonished...	8:52
103	Once again I had to be careful not to keep...	10:25
104	'My little Albertine,' I said to her in a gentle voice...	8:18
105	But the situation was entirely different for several reasons...	7:16
106	If I analyse my feelings by this hypothesis...	7:19
107	My serfdom, of which I had already been conscious...	9:34
108	Tonight I thought that, among the other reasons...	8:09
109	I had tears in my eyes...	9:02
110	I should have been wrong in being delighted...	5:11
111	It was so late that, in the morning, I warned Françoise...	11:18
112	Albertine no more said to me after this midnight scene...	9:42
113	If Albertine's object was to restore my peace of mind...	9:22
114	'We shall have to begin to think soon...'	6:19
115	I was so far convinced that it was absurd...	9:51
116	Vinteuil's phrases made me think of the 'little phrase'...	9:39
117	But I can at least assume that Baudelaire is not sincere.	6:25
118	It was not, however, his music alone that Albertine played me...	9:46
119	She spoke to me also of the excursions that she had made...	8:37
120	Meanwhile winter was at an end...	9:32

121	The first, the consoling feature was that habit...	12:39
122	In the course of the day, Françoise had let fall in my hearing...	10:30
123	This presentiment which she seemed to be expressing...	11:02
124	That day and the next we went out together...	9:17
125	We stopped at a big pastrycook's...	8:23
126	We returned home very late one evening...	6:30
127	But all of a sudden the scene changed...	8:28

Total time: 19:54:39

Marcel Proust

(1871–1922)

The Captive

The critic André Maurois described Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* as 'one of the greatest works of the imagination of all time'.

The literal translation of the work's French title, 'In Search of Lost Time', contains within it a clue to the creation of this monumental work of biographical fiction. Having wasted time living a dilettante existence in the fashionable world, Proust, in middle age, decided to re-dedicate his life to art, and to attempt at last to achieve the great work of which he knew himself capable.

Remembrance of Things Past was his chance to justify his life, and to cheat death through an act of artistic creation. It was the means he would use to conquer time through recreating his lost years. Memory was the material with which he would weave the magic cord to be launched into infinity; that cord which now binds us to

him, and stretches forward into the future, linking his genius to unborn generations.

The Author

Marcel Proust was born on 10 July, 1871. His father, a distinguished professor of medicine, was from a Catholic family, while his mother was Jewish. Although convinced from an early age of his calling as a writer, Proust was riddled with self-doubt and wrote relatively little at the beginning of his career.

During his twenties, he co-founded a short-lived review, *Le Banquet*; contributed to another literary publication, *La Revue Blanche*; and in 1896 had his first book published, a collection of essays entitled *Les Plaisirs et Les Jours*.

He became an enthusiastic admirer of Ruskin and translated his *Bible of Amiens* and *Sesame and Lilies* into French. A novel,

Jean Santeuil, which was the precursor of *Remembrance of Things Past*, was abandoned, and eventually published long after Proust's death, in 1954. For much of his youth Proust led the life of a man-about-town, frequenting fashionable Paris drawing rooms and literary salons, which were to form the background of a number of his early stories and sketches, and subsequently of *Remembrance of Things Past*.

The death of his adored mother in 1905 resulted in a nervous collapse and aggravated his chronic asthma and insomnia. But, despite his grief and the sense of loss, from which he never recovered, his mother's death freed him with regard to his homosexual way of life, and allowed him to address same-sex love in his writing, albeit in a form which treated such experiences as happening to others rather than to himself.

In 1907 he moved into an apartment in the Boulevard Haussmann where, in the bedroom which he had had lined with cork to keep out noise, he embarked upon his great work *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (*Remembrance of Things Past*). In

it the minuteness of his observation, the depth of his psychological understanding and the vividness of his descriptive powers combined to create one of the most poetic and magical works in all literature.

Publication of *Remembrance of Things Past*

This long autobiographical cycle was originally published in eight sections: *Du Côté de Chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*) in 1913; *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* (*Within a Budding Grove*) in 1918; *Le Côté de Guermantes I* (*The Guermantes Way I*) in 1920; *Le Côté de Guermantes II* and *Sodom et Gomorrhe I* (*Cities of the Plain I*) in 1921; *Sodom et Gomorrhe II* in 1922; *La Prisonnière* (*The Captive*) in 1923; *Albertine Disparue* (*The Sweet Cheat Gone/The Fugitive*) in 1925 and *Le Temps Retrouvé* (*Time Regained*) in 1927.

Proust was obliged to publish *Swann's Way* at his own expense, and even after it had appeared, had trouble finding a publisher for the next part, *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs*. However, when it appeared in 1918 it received considerable

acclaim, and was awarded the Prix Goncourt the following year.

By the time Proust died, on 18 November, 1922, the first four parts of the cycle had been published, leaving the others to appear posthumously.

The Captive – Part I

The Captive continues the story of the Narrator's obsession with Albertine. Having re-established his friendship with her during his second visit to Balbec, he is tortured by fears regarding her sexual orientation. These fears have their origin in two incidents. The first is when Marcel, accompanied by Dr Cottard, watches Albertine and her friend Andrée dancing together in the Casino and the doctor remarks on the intimate way the two girls are holding each other with their breasts touching. Marcel is alerted to the possibility that Albertine might be attracted to members of her own sex. However, he is ready to believe that the idea is due to his overheated imagination until Albertine innocently mentions that her greatest friends were two older women, the

daughter of the composer Vinteuil and her lesbian friend, whose private love-making Marcel has accidentally witnessed some years earlier at Combray.

From this moment he is determined to keep Albertine from satisfying her desire for women by whatever means necessary, even if it entails marrying her. On the spur of the moment he decides to take her back to Paris with him where, in the absence of his parents, he installs her in his family's apartment and lavishes on her expensive gifts of jewellery and dresses. Albertine revels in such unaccustomed luxury and in return tries to please him by granting him certain sexual favours. But Marcel's jealous suspicions gradually turn her into a prisoner. He allows her to go nowhere without his permission, and gives the chauffeur he has engaged to drive her around Paris orders to keep constant watch on her. Although Albertine does not complain, Marcel is aware that by curtailing her freedom in this way he is making her more and more unhappy.

Marcel's is a love which can never be satisfied; as long as he feels secure in his possession of Albertine he is bored; it is

only when he fears she is escaping that he feels an overwhelming yearning for her. The moment he suspects her of deceiving him his passion instantly revives. Although her docile obedience has the effect of calming his fears, Albertine is given to lying to him, and each time he catches her out, his anguish returns. He realises that even stronger than his wish to enjoy her himself, is his determination to prevent her from being enjoyed by another.

Proust's analysis of the pain caused by erotic love is unique. Not only does he display the observation of a scientist and the language of a poet, but his insight is that of a psychologist. In linking the Narrator's desire for Albertine's nightly caresses with his need for the benediction of his mother's goodnight kiss, Proust's understanding of the psychological phenomenon of a continuing Oedipal struggle is clearly demonstrated. Marcel's wish-fantasy of gaining complete possession of his mother's love by interposing himself between her and his father is replayed again and again as he attempts to secure the undivided affection of Albertine in separating her from

possible rivals.

In *Remembrance of Things Past*, the line between fact and fiction is fine indeed. Although Proust publicly denied that he and the Narrator were the same person, in *The Captive*, for the first time anywhere in the work, he teasingly lets slip the Narrator's name, which we are hardly surprised to learn is 'Marcel'. Nowhere in the narrative is it more evident that the author is speaking from the depths of his own experience when he observes in the words of the Narrator:

Jealousy, which wears a bandage over the eyes, is not merely powerless to discover anything in the darkness which enshrouds it, it is also one of those torments where the task must be incessantly repeated, like that of the Danaïdes or Ixion.

The Captive – Part II

Marcel, accompanied by the pedantic Brichot, attends a musical evening at the Verdurins'. Marcel has decided to keep

his visit a secret from Albertine, because a previously unpublished work by Vinteuil is to be played, and he has heard that the composer's daughter Mlle Vinteuil and her friend are to be present. Marcel knows them to be a lesbian couple, and the revelation by Albertine of her long-standing friendship with them has confirmed his suspicions regarding Albertine's sexual proclivities. He is determined to keep Albertine from having any contact with the two women.

In the event, Mlle Vinteuil and her friend fail to appear. The music is a revelation to Marcel, and he is astonished to learn that it has been patiently pieced together from Vinteuil's notes after his death by the one person capable of doing so: his daughter's friend. Thus the person who caused Vinteuil the greatest anguish during his lifetime has done him the greatest service after his death. Marcel realises that even the sadistic scene he witnessed many years earlier, in which Vinteuil's daughter and her friend desecrated the composer's photograph, was born out of their love and respect for him, which in the end triumphed over their perversity.

The concert at the Verdurins' house has been arranged by the Baron de Charlus, in order to promote the career of his protégé, the violinist Charles Morel. Over time Charlus has ceased to worry about hiding his homosexuality; he openly flirts with the Verdurins' footman, and proudly displays his intimacy with Morel, the star performer of the evening. Due to his position in the aristocratic circle of the Faubourg St Germain, he has managed to attract members of the highest society for the occasion. But Charlus has already offended Mme Verdurin by his high-handed manner in dictating to her whom she may and may not invite, and his offence is further compounded when he fails to introduce her to the grand friends who come up to greet him. Furious, she decides to punish Charlus by destroying his friendship with Morel. She tells the violinist that the nature of his friendship with Charlus is public knowledge and is ruining his career. Morel is taken in by her story, and decides that his best course of action is to repudiate Charlus publicly. When he does so, Marcel is amazed to see Charlus, the scourge of countless others who have

dared to attack him, unable to respond. He is so devastated by the unexpected turn of events that he is rendered quite speechless. But before Mme Verdurin has time to enjoy his discomfiture to the full, the Queen of Naples, who has overheard the scene, intervenes to rescue Charlus. Whatever she thinks of the Baron, he is 'one of her own', and we witness the nobility protecting the aristocracy from an attack by the bourgeoisie.

But despite the perfidy and heartlessness of the Verdurins (we have earlier seen Mme Verdurin boasting that she felt nothing on learning of the death of her friend the Princess Sherbatoff), the author is not satisfied to leave us with such a simplistic picture. He follows this scene with an account of how the Verdurins, on hearing that Saniette, the habitual object of their public displays of cruelty, has ruined himself through gambling, instantly plan a means of rescuing him financially. Time and again in the novel we are taken by surprise as Proust shows us yet another example of the complexity of human nature. It is as if, knowing the impulse for both good and evil which lie

within his own personality, Proust invests his characters with similarly opposing natures, warning us that people are never quite what they seem.

On returning home, Marcel admits to Albertine that he has been to the Verdurins'. She becomes incensed when he attempts to draw her out on the subject of Mlle Vinteuil and her friend. Marcel's pretence of knowing more about Albertine than he actually does leads to her revealing several lies he had never suspected, and admitting to a closer acquaintance with certain women of doubtful reputation than he had hitherto guessed. When he accuses Albertine of having relations with Andrée, she becomes furious, and it is all he can do to calm her. Eventually they are reconciled, but from this time on, in a poignant reminder of his childhood experience with his mother, Albertine refuses to grant him his goodnight kiss.

In an attempt to win back Albertine's affection, Marcel plies her with gifts, ordering magnificent Fortuny dresses, and taking her for trips by automobile. On one outing they witness an aeroplane

flying high in the sky, a metaphor for the freedom for which Albertine yearns. Marcel is torn between boredom with Albertine's presence, and fear of her absence. He longs to travel to Venice or to meet other women, but the thought of leaving her alone to indulge her desire for women terrifies him. One morning he awakes to be informed by Françoise that Albertine has taken her luggage and left; the Captive has flown.

Proust's novel is, of course, autobiographical. Despite his denials, the narrative broadly follows the story of his own life, given that events are altered and transposed and characters are often the amalgam of several different real-life people. But although the events of Proust's life form the basis of the novel's narrative, they are no more than the structure around which he builds his astonishingly imaginative and original edifice; the facts are no more important than the bricks used to build a cathedral, and real life for Proust is merely the raw material of artistic creation.

That said, Proust was an intriguing and extraordinary figure, and has

been the subject of much biographical speculation. Although he was a very private person who spent much of his life alone, he was a prolific letter writer, and we learn a great deal about him from the vast correspondence which has gradually surfaced over the years since his death. Despite being a chronic invalid, Proust was outgoing and gregarious when he felt well, and in his youth could be extremely social. The accounts of his friends paint a picture of an exceptionally witty and amusing companion, capable of great acts of kindness and generosity.

Although he fell in love in his own fashion with certain women, Proust admitted privately that his sexual relationships had been only with men, and it seems clear that in recreating his experiences in fictional form he transformed his homosexual relationships into heterosexual ones, and his male lovers into women.

It is likely that there were several originals of Albertine, although the most important one appears to have been his chauffeur Alfred Agostinelli, who Proust described as 'a young man whom I loved

probably more than all my friends'. There were several 'captives' as well, young men hired as 'secretaries' who lived in Proust's apartment and occupied the room next to his. Certainly the great tragedy of his emotional life – that he was only able to love what he could not have – was implicit in his relationships with young, basically heterosexual men. Marcel's love for Albertine is conditional on her availability. As long as he fears she might escape from him, Marcel cannot part with her. Once he feels he possesses her, he becomes bored and wishes to escape. Proust has described this dilemma with such vivid insight that there can be little doubt that *The Captive* was wrought out of the author's own deep and painful personal experience.

The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

To avoid any confusion, it may be helpful to point out that Proust's great work, *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, was originally translated into English by Charles K. Scott-Moncrieff and published in 1922 under the title, *Remembrance of Things Past*. It was subsequently re-translated by Terence

Kilmartin and appeared in 1981 as *In Search of Lost Time*. In 2002 a new edition appeared under the same title, with each volume assigned to a different translator. The Naxos AudioBooks recordings use the Scott-Moncrieff text and, in references to the work, I use Scott-Moncrieff's title.

My own contact with Proust began when, as a 17-year-old schoolboy, I first read *Swann's Way*. I could not have guessed then that, many years into the future, Proust would take over my life to such an extent. Over a six year period during the 1990s, I abridged and recorded *Remembrance of Things Past* for Naxos Audiobooks, for whom I have now recorded this entire, uncut text.

When I was asked to write *The Life and Work of Marcel Proust* (see www.naxosaudiobooks.com), it occurred to me that, although the people on whom Proust based his characters were no longer living, the places he wrote about were still there, and so I travelled to France to see them. I was delighted to discover that Illiers, where Marcel Proust spent his holidays as a child, and which figures in the book as Combray, is now marked on maps and

road signs as Illiers-Combray, in official recognition of the reason for this sleepy village's wider fame.

In a narrow street just off the market square in Illiers-Combray is the house in which Proust's father, Adrien Proust, was born, and further along is the house of his aunt Élisabeth, now a Proust museum, where Élisabeth's fictional counterpart, the bedridden Aunt Léonie, watched the world go by from her bedroom window. Around the corner from the house is a little boulangerie with a sign in the window announcing proudly: 'This is where Aunt Léonie bought her madeleines'. It only occurs to me as I buy a packet of the scallop-shaped cakes, that Aunt Léonie is a creature of fiction. Never mind, Aunt Élisabeth might well have patronised the establishment, or one very like it. Up the hill there is a real house called Tansonville, the name of the house occupied by Charles Swann, and later by his daughter Gilberte and her husband Robert de Saint-Loup, and further on there is a real village called Méréglise, a name almost identical to the fictional Méséglise.

Water lilies are still reflected in the

glassy surface of the river Loir, which in the book bears the more poetic name the Vivonne, and beyond the stream lies the Pré Catalan, the enchanting park created by Proust's horticulturally minded Uncle Jules. From Illiers I travelled on to Cabourg, a seaside resort on the Normandy coast, the original of the fictional Balbec. Here I found the Grand Hotel in all its Edwardian splendour. It was rebuilt after Proust spent holidays there as a child, but he returned as an adult, and sections of *Remembrance of Things Past* were written beneath its roof. As in *Within a Budding Grove*, the great glass windows of the restaurant look out over the promenade to the beach below, and with a little imagination, that group of budding young girls in bikinis is transformed into the little band of 'jeunes filles en fleurs' outlined against the sea.

I travelled on to Paris, visiting 102 Boulevard Haussmann, Proust's home for many years, where he wrote so much of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The building is still owned by the same bank that purchased it from Proust's aunt, when her inconsiderate decision to sell it forced him to move. His bedroom is still

there, but unfurnished, and to see the room as it was, one is obliged to visit the Musée Carnavalet, where his bed, chaise-longue and other effects are displayed in a reconstruction of the famous cork-lined room.

A walk to the gardens of the Champs Élysées brought me to an area with a sign announcing that I am in the Allée Marcel Proust. Children chase each other – perhaps playing the modern equivalent of ‘prisoners base’, the game played by Gilberte and her friends. This is where the real Marcel played as a child with the real Marie de Benardaky, with whom he fell in love, just as the fictional Marcel falls in love with the fictional Gilberte Swann.

In the real world the same spaces are occupied now by different people. Time has moved on, but places remain, and we have the privilege of being present in not only the imaginary world Proust created, but that portion of the real world which had a part in its creation. His presence has left behind a trace of magic, and we see places differently, because we see them through his eyes. One day those places will have crumbled into dust, as

will we ourselves, and the space we now consider ours will be occupied by others. But as long as civilisation remains, those who come after us will be able to share Proust’s vision and enter his world. Proust was aware that art is the only true reality, and that through his creations the artist continues to live after his death, beyond space and beyond time.

Notes by Neville Jason

A Proust Chronology

1871, July 10	Marcel Proust born
1873, May 24	Robert Proust born
1878–1886	holiday visits to Illiers (now Illiers-Combray)
1880, spring	Marcel's first attack of asthma
1882–1888	attends the Lycée Condorcet
1888	contributed to <i>La Revue Lilas</i> and <i>La Revue Verte</i>
1889–1890	military service at Orléans
1890, January 3	death of maternal grandmother, Adèle Weil
1890, August	holiday at Cabourg
1890, November	enrols as a student in the Faculty of Law and at the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques
1890, November – 1891, September	contributes to <i>Le Mensuel</i>
1892, March	first edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, March	last edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, April 13	meets Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac
1893	contributes to <i>La Revue Blanche</i> ; degree in law

1894, May 22	meets Reynaldo Hahn
1894, December	trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus
1895, March	degree in philosophy
1895, summer	holiday in Brittany with Reynaldo Hahn
1896	publication of <i>Les Plaisirs et Les Jours</i> ; writing <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1897, February 6	duel with Jean Lorrain
1898, January 13	Emile Zola's article <i>J'Accuse</i> published
1899	begins translation of Ruskin's <i>Our Fathers Have Told Us (La Bible d'Amiens)</i>
1899, summer	holiday at Evian-les-Bains, visits the Brancovan family at Amphion
1900, June and October	visits Venice
1902	abandons work on <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1903, November 26	death of Adrien Proust
1904	publication of <i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>

1905, September 26	death of Jeanne Proust
1906, June	publication of <i>Sesame and Lilies</i> (<i>Sésame et les Lys</i>)
1906, July	Dreyfus declared innocent
1906, December	moves to 102 Boulevard Haussmann
1907, summer	holiday at Cabourg, where he will spend the next seven summers. Meets Alfred Agostinelli
1908–09	begins writing <i>À la Recherche du Temps Perdu</i>
1913	Agostinelli re-enters Proust's life. Employs Celeste Albaret
1913, November	<i>Du Côté de Chez Swann</i> (<i>Swann's Way</i>) published
1914, May 30	Alfred Agostinelli dies in an aircraft accident
1918, June	publication of <i>A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs</i> (<i>Within a Budding Grove</i>), <i>Pastiches et Melanges</i> and new edition of <i>Swann's Way</i>
1919, June	moves to 8, rue Laurent-Pichat
1919, December	<i>Within a Budding Grove</i> awarded the Prix Goncourt

1920, October	moves to 44, rue Hamelin
1920, October	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes I</i> (The Guermantes Way I) published
1920, April	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes II</i> and <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe I</i> (Cities of the Plain I) published
1921, December 11	death of Montesquiou
1922, April	<i>Sodom et Gomorrhe II</i> published
1922, October	awarded the Légion d'Honneur
1922, November 18	death of Marcel Proust
1923	<i>La Prisonnière</i> (<i>The Captive</i>) published
1925	<i>Albertine Disparue</i> (<i>The Fugitive/The Sweet Cheat Gone</i>) published
1952	<i>Jean Santeuil</i> published
1954	<i>Contre Sainte-Beuve</i> (<i>Against Sainte-Beuve</i>) published



Marcel Proust (right) and his younger brother Robert, c. 1877



Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. His first appearance in the theatre was in Peter Brook's production of *Titus Andronicus* starring Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. He is a former member of the Old Vic Company, the English Stage Company, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Birmingham Repertory Company. Roles include John Worthing in *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Robert Browning in *Robert and Elizabeth*. He is a trained singer and has

appeared in numerous musicals including *The Great Waltz*, *1776*, *Ambassador*, *Lock Up Your Daughters*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Irma La Douce*, *Robert and Elizabeth* and *Mutiny*.

Television appearances include *Maigret*, *Dr Who* (The Androids of Tara), *Hamlet* (Horatio), *Crime and Punishment* (Zamyatov), *Emergency Ward Ten*, *Dixon of Dock Green*, *When the Boat Comes In*, *Angels*, *Minder*, *Dempsey and Makepeace*, *The Richest Woman in the World*, *The Dancing Years*, *The Magic Barrel* and *Windmill Near a Frontier*. Films include *From Russia with Love* and *The Message*. He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and may be heard in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud*, *War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Favourite Essays*, *The Once and Future King*, *Evgenii Onegin* and *Remembrance of Things Past*, both unabridged and abridged. He plays Antonio in *The Tempest*, and has directed productions of *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. As a director he was awarded Talkies awards for *Great Expectations* and *Poets of the Great War*. As a reader he won AudioFile Earphone awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace* (Best Audiobooks of the Year 2007 and 2009).

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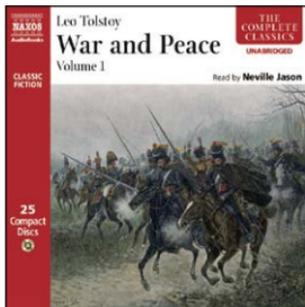
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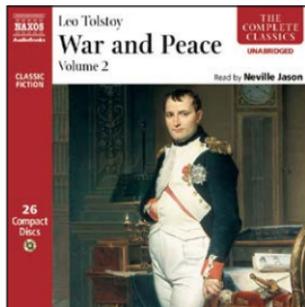
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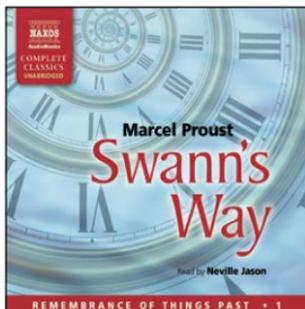
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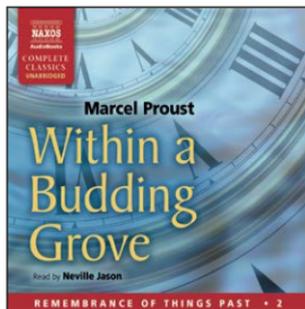
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Marcel Proust

The Captive

Read by **Neville Jason**

Remembrance of Things Past is one of the monuments of 20th-century literature. Neville Jason's unabridged recording of the work runs to 150 hours.

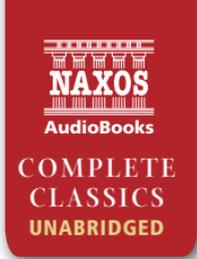


The Captive is the fifth of seven volumes. The Narrator's obsessive love for Albertine makes her a captive in his Paris apartment. He suspects she may be attracted to her own sex.



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Marcel Proust

The Fugitive

Read by **Neville Jason**

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST • 6

1	The Fugitive: Chapter One	14:50
2	No doubt I had not ventured to interpret...	14:44
3	When I vowed to myself that Albertine would...	12:54
4	To carnal pleasure I did not even give a thought...	10:27
5	Knowing that Saint-Loup was in Paris I had sent for him...	13:28
6	By an inverse gymnastic, I who had made a mental effort...	11:33
7	But as soon as they had gone, the head...	11:16
8	I thought of Albertine all the time and never was...	13:11
9	Since Manon returned to Des Grieux...	12:21
10	No doubt, just as I had said in the past to Albertine...	13:47
11	Time passes, and gradually everything that we have said...	14:35
12	I was during these days so incapable of forming any picture...	12:58
13	I remained speechless with astonishment...	13:44
14	The suppression of suffering?	14:03
15	I asked Françoise the time.	11:44
16	No doubt these nights that are so short...	14:57
17	How could she have seemed dead to me when now...	11:35
18	Sometimes I came in collision in the dark lanes...	12:24
19	And I then felt, with an intense pity for her...	9:49

20	How she used to hasten to see me at Balbec...	14:34
21	I had thought that my social relations, my wealth...	15:08
22	At any rate I was glad that, before she died...	14:54
23	Besides, from a single fact, if it is certain...	11:51
24	No doubt it was because in that silent and deliberate arrival...	11:46
25	I tried not to think of anything, to take up a newspaper.	10:23
26	I had indeed suffered at Balbec when Albertine...	13:28
27	At the moment in which the good Albertine had returned...	13:29
28	The person that I had been so short a time ago...	14:24
29	Often this memory that Albertine was dead was combined...	11:39
30	No doubt an incident such as this of the Buttes-Chaumont...	14:46
31	'Apart from the fact that not for anything in the world...'	11:26
32	Associated now with the memory of my love...	15:27
33	Chapter Two	13:27
34	A few days later, however, as I was coming home...	13:01
35	A moment before Françoise brought me the telegram...	10:50
36	I saw thus at that same hour, for so many people...	14:06
37	The politicians had not been wrong in thinking that...	12:00
38	Certain women who were old friends of Swann...	12:29

39	Gilberte recognised the drawings.	12:26
40	Notwithstanding this, in her snobbishness...	14:22
41	The illusions of paternal affection are perhaps no less...	14:51
42	Well, the next day, which was my mother's at-home day...	11:52
43	It is precisely the same. For the woman...	13:35
44	On the other hand, Albertine and Andrée...	11:54
45	'Did those excursions to the Buttes-Chaumont...'	15:32
46	Albeit I was not exactly a man of that category...	13:26
47	Some time later, when I attended the first performances...	6:36
48	Chapter 3	8:06
49	And as I went indoors to join my mother who had left the window...	8:33
50	Notwithstanding his contempt, the waiter was...	14:33
51	The Prince, to put the Marquis at his ease...	12:01
52	Thus for instance one evening a letter from...	13:23
53	What she might or might not have done with Andrée...	12:19
54	The sun continued to sink. My mother must be nearing...	14:08
55	Chapter 4	12:05
56	Can't you imagine how it would have amused her...	10:12
57	Other friends of my mother who had met Saint-Loup...	13:49

58	These two marriages which I had already begun to discuss...	15:12
59	The person who profited least by these two marriages...	12:55
60	I gathered that Robert and his wife had been on...	14:59
61	One fine day she had changed her tune, the son-in-law...	10:48
62	The doubt that Aimé's words had left in my mind...	10:55
63	'And the second time,' Gilberte went on...	9:24

Total time: 13:22:07

Marcel Proust

(1871–1922)

The Fugitive

The critic André Maurois described Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* as 'one of the greatest works of the imagination of all time'.

The literal translation of the work's French title, 'In Search of Lost Time', contains within it a clue to the creation of this monumental work of biographical fiction. Having wasted time living a dilettante existence in the fashionable world, Proust, in middle age, decided to re-dedicate his life to art, and to attempt at last to achieve the great work of which he knew himself capable.

Remembrance of Things Past was his chance to justify his life, and to cheat death through an act of artistic creation. It was the means he would use to conquer time through recreating his lost years. Memory was the material with which he would weave the magic cord to be launched into infinity; that cord which now binds us to

him, and stretches forward into the future, linking his genius to unborn generations.

The Author

Marcel Proust was born on 10 July, 1871. His father, a distinguished professor of medicine, was from a Catholic family, while his mother was Jewish. Although convinced from an early age of his calling as a writer, Proust was riddled with self-doubt and wrote relatively little at the beginning of his career.

During his twenties, he co-founded a short-lived review, *Le Banquet*; contributed to another literary publication, *La Revue Blanche*; and in 1896 had his first book published, a collection of essays entitled *Les Plaisirs et Les Jours*.

He became an enthusiastic admirer of Ruskin and translated his *Bible of Amiens* and *Sesame and Lilies* into French.

A novel, *Jean Santeuil*, which was the precursor of *Remembrance of Things Past*, was abandoned, and eventually published long after Proust's death, in 1954.

For much of his youth Proust led the life of a man-about-town, frequenting fashionable Paris drawing rooms and literary salons, which were to form the background of a number of his early stories and sketches, and subsequently of *Remembrance of Things Past*.

The death of his adored mother in 1905 resulted in a nervous collapse and aggravated his chronic asthma and insomnia. But, despite his grief and the sense of loss, from which he never recovered, his mother's death freed him with regard to his homosexual way of life, and allowed him to address same-sex love in his writing, albeit in a form which treated such experiences as happening to others rather than to himself.

In 1907 he moved into an apartment in the Boulevard Haussmann where, in the bedroom which he had had lined with cork to keep out noise, he embarked upon his great work *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (*Remembrance of Things Past*). In

it the minuteness of his observation, the depth of his psychological understanding, and the vividness of his descriptive powers combined to create one of the most poetic and magical works in all literature.

Publication of *Remembrance of Things Past*

This long autobiographical cycle was originally published in eight sections: *Du Côté de Chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*) in 1913; *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* (*Within a Budding Grove*) in 1918; *Le Côté de Guermantes I* (*The Guermantes Way I*) in 1920; *Le Côté de Guermantes II* and *Sodom et Gomorrhe I* (*Cities of the Plain I*) in 1921; *Sodom et Gomorrhe II* in 1922; *La Prisonnière* (*The Captive*) in 1923; *Albertine Disparue* (*The Sweet Cheat Gone/The Fugitive*) in 1925 and *Le Temps Retrouvé* (*Time Regained*) in 1927.

Proust was obliged to publish *Swann's Way* at his own expense, and even after it had appeared, had trouble finding a publisher for the next part, *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs*. However, when it appeared in 1918 it received considerable

acclaim, and was awarded the Prix Goncourt the following year.

By the time Proust died, on 18 November, 1922, the first four parts of the cycle had been published, leaving the others to appear posthumously.

The Fugitive

The Fugitive opens with Marcel astonished at the intensity of his mental agony following Albertine's sudden departure. 'How little we know ourselves,' he observes, having never dreamed how desperately he needed Albertine for his peace of mind and happiness.

Unlike more conventional novels, *Remembrance of Things Past* does not depend on its narrative to ensure the continuation of the reader's interest. Events themselves are less compelling than the poetic descriptions and philosophical observations to which they give rise. That said, *The Fugitive* contains one of the most unexpected and shocking occurrences in the novel: the death of Albertine. But even here, the accident itself happens offstage in the manner of a Greek tragedy, and it is

the author's penetrating observations on the process of grief and mourning which result from that event, that provide the major content of the book.

From the moment Françoise announces 'Mademoiselle Albertine has gone!', we follow the development of the Narrator's emotional states: his initial shock, his astonishment at the power of his feelings, the realisation of how much he has depended on Albertine's presence and how he has avoided acknowledging the signs of her unhappiness and frustration. He lets us see his attempts at self-deception, the 'double-think' which enables him to bear his pain. And at each stage that pain becomes more unbearable: first when he realises Albertine has gone, next when he accepts that she may not come back, and finally when he knows that death has prevented her from returning ever again. And even when she is dead his jealousy persists, and he continues to torture himself by seeking to discover explicit details of her sexual adventures.

Proust's deep understanding of the human soul and his ability to describe

his own thoughts and feelings with unparalleled truthfulness and courage enable us to recognise the universality of his experience. His insightful analysis of his inner world and his ability to speak without equivocation, to show himself at his most vulnerable, touches us deeply.

But despite Proust's literary honesty, the social climate in which he lived forced certain restrictions on him. Society demanded that any lifestyle, especially homosexuality, which deviated from what was considered acceptable, had to be discreet and hidden from view. The fate of Oscar Wilde loomed as a warning to those who ignored the rules. Proust was not one to flout society. On the contrary, in his youth he had made strenuous efforts to be accepted in the right circles. It was not until after the death of his mother that he was able to indulge his homosexual tendencies, although even then he was never able to live openly as a homosexual.

Proust remarked that as a writer one can say anything providing one does not say 'I', and although *Remembrance of Things Past* is written in the first person, Proust contrived to remain incognito. He

denied publicly that the Narrator was intended to be himself (he writes of 'the "I" who is not "I"', although at one point he teasingly suggests that we call the Narrator 'Marcel') and the Narrator's two great loves, Albertine and Gilberte, are women, although their originals have been identified as male. The device of attributing homosexuality to other characters enabled him to discuss the subject freely without implicating himself.

Proust repudiated accusations by his friends that he had portrayed them, insisting that each character is based not on one, but on many originals. However, it is clear that some characters are modelled more closely than others on a single person. It is generally accepted that the main original of Albertine, by sexual transposition, was a young Monegasque, Alfred Agostinelli, who worked initially as Proust's chauffeur and later as his secretary.

Although over time there were several young men engaged by Proust in the capacity of secretary, who lived in his apartment and became 'Captives' as a result of his possessive nature, it was

Agostinelli whose tragic death in a plane crash, so closely echoed in Albertine's riding accident, resulted in the deep grief Proust describes so movingly.

In correspondence, Proust referred to Agostinelli as 'an extraordinary being', adding, 'I don't know how I can endure such grief.' Proust used the events of his life more directly than many authors as raw material for his work, and it was Agostinelli's death which was to inspire him to create out of his suffering the enduring monument which is *The Fugitive*.

The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

To avoid any confusion, it may be helpful to point out that Proust's great work, *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, was originally translated into English by Charles K. Scott-Moncrieff and published in 1922 under the title, *Remembrance of Things Past*. It was subsequently re-translated by Terence Kilmartin and appeared in 1981 as *In Search of Lost Time*. In 2002 a new edition appeared under the same title, with each volume assigned to a different translator. The Naxos AudioBooks recordings use the

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I was delighted to discover that Illiers, where Marcel Proust spent his holidays as a child, and which figures in the book as Combray, is now marked on maps and road signs as Illiers-Combray, in official recognition of the reason for this sleepy village's wider fame.

In a narrow street just off the market

square in Illiers-Combray is the house in which Proust's father, Adrien Proust, was born, and further along is the house of his aunt Élisabeth, now a Proust museum, where Élisabeth's fictional counterpart, the bedridden Aunt Léonie, watched the world go by from her bedroom window. Around the corner from the house is a little boulangerie with a sign in the window announcing proudly: 'This is where Aunt Léonie bought her madeleines'. It only occurs to me as I buy a packet of the scallop-shaped cakes, that Aunt Léonie is a creature of fiction. Never mind, Aunt Élisabeth might well have patronised the establishment, or one very like it. Up the hill there is a real house called Tansonville, the name of the house occupied by Charles Swann, and later by his daughter Gilberte and her husband Robert de Saint-Loup, and further on there is a real village called Méréglise, a name almost identical to the fictional Méséglise.

Water lilies are still reflected in the glassy surface of the river Loir, which in the book bears the more poetic name the Vivonne, and beyond the stream lies the Pré Catalan, the enchanting park created

by Proust's horticulturally minded Uncle Jules. From Illiers I travelled on to Cabourg, a seaside resort on the Normandy coast, the original of the fictional Balbec. Here I found the Grand Hotel in all its Edwardian splendour. It was rebuilt after Proust spent holidays there as a child, but he returned as an adult, and sections of *Remembrance of Things Past* were written beneath its roof. As in *Within a Budding Grove*, the great glass windows of the restaurant look out over the promenade to the beach below, and with a little imagination, that group of budding young girls in bikinis is transformed into the little band of 'jeunes filles en fleurs' outlined against the sea.

I travelled on to Paris, visiting 102 Boulevard Haussmann, Proust's home for many years, where he wrote so much of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The building is still owned by the same bank that purchased it from Proust's aunt, when her inconsiderate decision to sell it forced him to move. His bedroom is still there, but unfurnished, and to see the room as it was, one is obliged to visit the Musée Carnavalet, where his bed, chaise-longue and other effects are displayed in a recon-

struction of the famous cork-lined room.

A walk to the gardens of the Champs Élysées brought me to an area with a sign announcing that I am in the Allée Marcel Proust. Children chase each other – perhaps playing the modern equivalent of ‘prisoners base’, the game played by Gilberte and her friends. This is where the real Marcel played as a child with the real Marie de Benardaky, with whom he fell in love, just as the fictional Marcel falls in love with the fictional Gilberte Swann.

In the real world the same spaces are occupied now by different people. Time has moved on, but places remain, and we have the privilege of being present in not only the imaginary world Proust created, but that portion of the real world which had a part in its creation. His presence has left behind a trace of magic, and we see places differently, because we see them through his eyes. One day those places will have crumbled into dust, as will we ourselves, and the space we now consider ours will be occupied by others. But as long as civilisation remains, those who come after us will be able to share Proust’s vision and enter his world. Proust

was aware that art is the only true reality and that through his creations the artist continues to live after his death, beyond space and beyond time.

Notes by Neville Jason



Marcel Proust (right) and his younger brother Robert, c. 1877

A Proust Chronology

1871, July 10	Marcel Proust born
1873, May 24	Robert Proust born
1878–1886	holiday visits to Illiers (now Illiers-Combray)
1880, spring	Marcel's first attack of asthma
1882–1888	attends the Lycée Condorcet
1888	contributed to <i>La Revue Lilas</i> and <i>La Revue Verte</i>
1889–1890	military service at Orléans
1890, January 3	death of maternal grandmother, Adèle Weil
1890, August	holiday at Cabourg
1890, November	enrols as a student in the Faculty of Law and at the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques
1890, November – 1891, September	contributes to <i>Le Mensuel</i>
1892, March	first edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, March	last edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, April 13	meets Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac
1893	contributes to <i>La Revue Blanche</i> ; degree in law

1894, May 22	meets Reynaldo Hahn
1894, December	trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus
1895, March	degree in philosophy
1895, summer	holiday in Brittany with Reynaldo Hahn
1896	publication of <i>Les Plaisirs et Les Jours</i> ; writing <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1897, February 6	duel with Jean Lorrain
1898, January 13	Emile Zola's article <i>J'Accuse</i> published
1899	begins translation of Ruskin's <i>Our Fathers Have Told Us (La Bible d'Amiens)</i>
1899, summer	holiday at Evian-les-Bains, visits the Brancovan family at Amphion
1900, June and October	visits Venice
1902	abandons work on <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1903, November 26	death of Adrien Proust
1904	publication of <i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>

1905, September 26	death of Jeanne Proust
1906, June	publication of <i>Sesame and Lilies</i> (<i>Sésame et les Lys</i>)
1906, July	Dreyfus declared innocent
1906, December	moves to 102 Boulevard Haussmann
1907, summer	holiday at Cabourg, where he will spend the next seven summers. Meets Alfred Agostinelli
1908–09	begins writing <i>À la Recherche du Temps Perdu</i>
1913	Agostinelli re-enters Proust's life. Employs Celeste Albaret
1913, November	<i>Du Côté de Chez Swann</i> (<i>Swann's Way</i>) published
1914, May 30	Alfred Agostinelli dies in an aircraft accident
1918, June	publication of <i>A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs</i> (<i>Within a Budding Grove</i>), <i>Pastiches et Melanges</i> and new edition of <i>Swann's Way</i>
1919, June	moves to 8, rue Laurent-Pichat
1919, December	<i>Within a Budding Grove</i> awarded the Prix Goncourt

1920, October	moves to 44, rue Hamelin
1920, October	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes I</i> (The Guermantes Way I) published
1920, April	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes II</i> and <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe I</i> (Cities of the Plain I) published
1921, December 11	death of Montesquiou
1922, April	<i>Sodom et Gomorrhe II</i> published
1922, October	awarded the Légion d'Honneur
1922, November 18	death of Marcel Proust
1923	<i>La Prisonnière</i> (<i>The Captive</i>) published
1925	<i>Albertine Disparue</i> (<i>The Fugitive/The Sweet Cheat Gone</i>) published
1952	<i>Jean Santeuil</i> published
1954	<i>Contre Sainte-Beuve</i> (<i>Against Sainte-Beuve</i>) published



Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. His first appearance in the theatre was in Peter Brook's production of *Titus Andronicus* starring Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. He is a former member of the Old Vic Company, the English Stage Company, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Birmingham Repertory Company. Roles include John Worthing in *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Robert Browning in *Robert and Elizabeth*. He is a trained singer and has

appeared in numerous musicals including *The Great Waltz*, *1776*, *Ambassador*, *Lock Up Your Daughters*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Irma La Douce*, *Robert and Elizabeth* and *Mutiny*.

Television appearances include *Maigret*, *Dr Who* (The Androids of Tara), *Hamlet* (Horatio), *Crime and Punishment* (Zamyatov), *Emergency Ward Ten*, *Dixon of Dock Green*, *When the Boat Comes In*, *Angels*, *Minder*, *Dempsey and Makepeace*, *The Richest Woman in the World*, *The Dancing Years*, *The Magic Barrel* and *Windmill Near a Frontier*. Films include *From Russia with Love* and *The Message*. He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and may be heard in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud*, *War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Favourite Essays*, *The Once and Future King*, *Evgenii Onegin*, *Wessex Tales* and *Remembrance of Things Past*, both unabridged and abridged. He plays Antonio in *The Tempest*, and has directed productions of *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. As a director he was awarded Talkies awards for *Great Expectations* and *Poets of the Great War*. As a reader he won AudioFile Earphone awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace* (Best Audiobooks of the Year 2007 and 2009).

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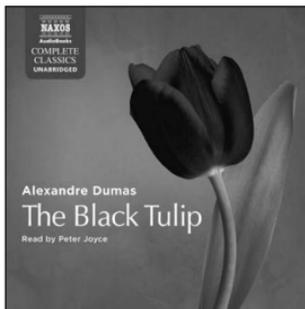
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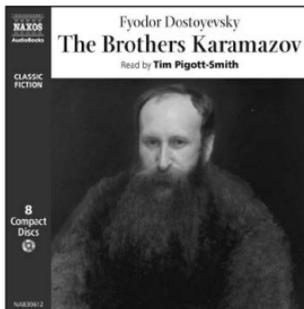
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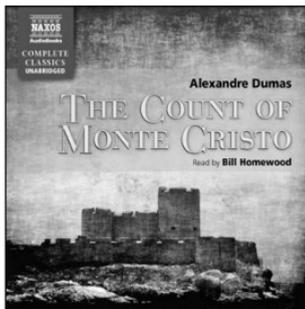
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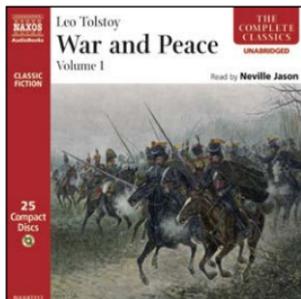
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Marcel Proust

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Neville Jason trained at RADA, where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and may be heard in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud, War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Favourite Essays*, *The Once and Future King*, *Evgenii Onegin*, *Wessex Tales* and *Remembrance of Things Past*, both unabridged and abridged. He won AudioFile awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace*.

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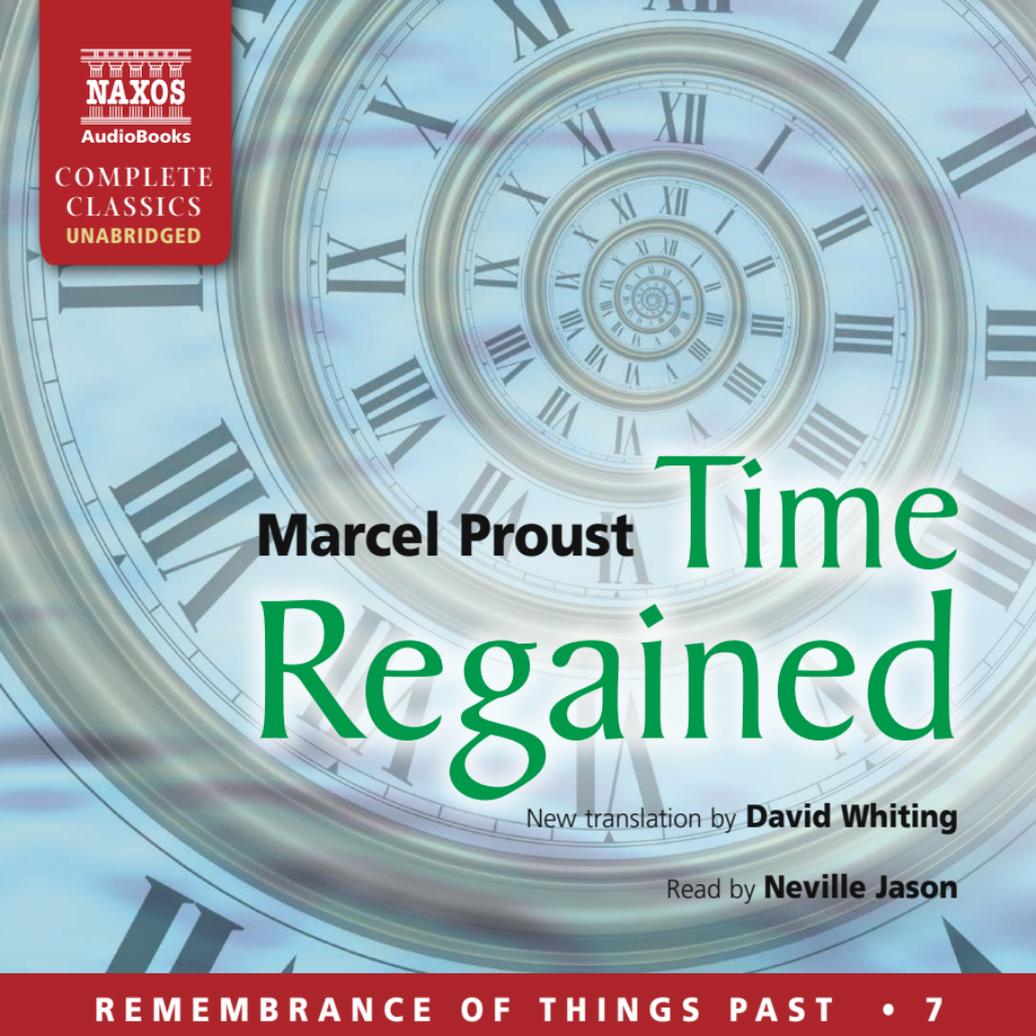
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The background of the cover is a large, detailed image of a clock face. The clock is circular and features Roman numerals for the hours. The hands of the clock are visible, and the overall color palette is a mix of light blues, greys, and gold tones, giving it a classic and elegant appearance. The clock face is slightly out of focus, creating a sense of depth.

Marcel Proust **Time
Regained**

New translation by **David Whiting**

Read by **Neville Jason**

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST • 7

1	Time Regained: Chapter One	4:47
2	Robert came several times to Tansonville while I was there.	5:55
3	Françoise, who had already seen...	5:46
4	One day when Robert was due to come to Tansonville...	5:22
5	As for that love he kept talking to me about...	4:13
6	Once Robert had gone off again...	5:26
7	It occurred to me that it was because Robert had...	6:11
8	'The day before yesterday...'	5:46
9	'You Westerners find that impossible to understand...'	4:58
10	When I spoke to Verdurin of the subtle pleasure...	5:46
11	'Yes, I give you my word...'	4:39
12	Hearing this, Doctor Cottard...	3:39
13	I stopped there...	5:40
14	The result of this was...	4:29
15	Thus it was that the Goncourts' journal had revealed to me...	4:47
16	I had realised earlier that it is not the most witty...	5:25
17	Chapter Two	4:26
18	'The sadness of the present moment, it is true...'	5:00
19	Saint-Euverte's salon had a faded image...	6:16
20	M. Bontemps would not hear of peace...	5:38

21	Now Morel ought not to have been there...	4:53
22	These words, which would have injured...	6:42
23	Before the time when the afternoon teas came to an end...	5:16
24	The silhouettes of the trees were reflected sharply...	4:58
25	'Have you heard,' he asked me as he left...	6:11
26	Bloch left us at the door of his house...	5:31
27	Robert (who at the time seemed to me much more a Saint-Loup...)	5:50
28	No doubt the boy was fed up with going up...	5:49
29	One might have thought that I was the only person...	6:04
30	Whether the German staff officers had indeed behaved well...	5:47
31	It was no good the general telling the man...	4:51
32	'In a word, Gilberte now believed...'	4:12
33	When Saint-Loup had come into my room...	5:39
34	In certain respects the comparison was not a false one.	6:03
35	Later he was to say to me...	7:03
36	While recalling Saint-Loup's visit...	4:54
37	One might say that in his case...	6:10
38	And thinking probably...	5:08
39	Thus it was that when seeking to hurt the baron...	6:31
40	However, even if M. de Charlus and Mme Verdurin...	6:05

41	However, just as there are animals' bodies and human bodies...	6:14
42	M. de Charlus went further...	7:14
43	For M. de Charlus, therefore...	5:00
44	The war was going on for ever...	6:35
45	'It's a strange thing too,' M. de Charlus added...	5:27
46	The Duc de Guermantes' opinions had quickly changed.	5:11
47	It's quite obvious that those peoples...	4:11
48	And since M. de Charlus began to be extraordinarily childish...	6:44
49	M. de Charlus was right about that.	6:05
50	So it was that journalism...	4:43
51	Her fury with Brichot increased all the more...	4:33
52	'I don't know, old chap,' M. de Charlus went on...	7:07
53	'The symbol of it,' I replied.	5:21
54	I would be very surprised...	6:34
55	'You must admit that would be very funny,' he said.	4:46
56	What is more, M. de Charlus literally did not know which way to turn...	5:49
57	The night was just as lovely as it had been in 1914...	5:52
58	At this point the violinist...	5:52
59	I then understood Morel's fear.	4:05
60	'I admire all the heroes in this war,' he said.	5:06

61	It was a transparent night...	4:51
62	Something did strike me, though...	5:10
63	'It's amazing the boss isn't back...'	5:58
64	The oldest member of the group...	5:19
65	All at once the door opened and someone entered...	4:59
66	The baron even felt slightly resentful towards Jupien...	4:57
67	A relationship with a woman one loves...	5:52
68	I made my way downstairs...	5:30
69	However, it was no good his suggesting...	4:48
70	He anyway had no other room to offer me.	5:36
71	'I don't doubt for a single moment...'	4:27
72	It was no good the young man...	4:50
73	'Apparently he's got a million francs a day to burn through.'	6:04
74	'The main reason I did that,' added Jupien...	5:48
75	Jupien appeared to be very troubled by what I had said...	6:13
76	The moment the alarm had sounded...	5:16
77	Nonetheless the darkness went on...	5:43
78	As for M. de Charlus...	5:26
79	Now, aberrations are like love affairs...	5:24
80	I advised Françoise and the butler to go and get some sleep.	6:44

81	Françoise was all the more troubled by these remarks...	5:28
82	Every morning at six o' clock...	4:20
83	I recalled his arrival that first time at Balbec...	4:57
84	Françoise received the news...	6:29
85	He must have been really magnificent in those final hours.	5:33
86	If not through his death...	6:17
87	Chapter Three	4:38
88	My long absence from Paris...	6:03
89	For me there was one good thing at least...	5:02
90	The most moving thing, though...	4:14
91	Mme de Saint-Euverte's snobbery...	5:52
92	At that moment the Duchesse de Létourville...	6:08
93	I need not add...	4:57
94	Turning the sad thoughts I was mentioning a moment ago...	4:37
95	While asking myself this question...	4:33
96	The piece of music being played...	5:51
97	I glossed swiftly over all that...	6:52
98	However, this optical illusion...	6:28
99	This meant that the person within me...	6:07
100	Impressions such as those I was trying to pin down...	5:08

101	And even as I thought this...	5:30
102	A slanting ray from the setting sun...	6:48
103	'No more style,' people had said at the time,...	5:24
104	Thus it was that for me that book...	4:47
105	If I see a thing from another period...	5:18
106	The library I would build up for myself in this way...	5:42
107	An hour is not just an hour...	6:40
108	Even when it comes to artistic joys...	5:55
109	That group imagined that this was the criterion...	5:41
110	How could descriptive literature possibly have any value...	5:17
111	And it was certainly very tempting...	5:54
112	As for the truths that the intellect...	4:50
113	In this matter, the very comparisons which are false...	3:30
114	It is not certain that imagination...	5:04
115	Moreover, I felt infinite sympathy...	5:36
116	From this first point of view...	5:09
117	If we had no rivals, pleasure would not turn into love.	5:25
118	Just as the painter needs to have seen many churches...	5:39
119	I was perhaps wrong...	5:15
120	A writer says 'my reader' ...	6:17

121	What made it possible that this perverse way of thinking...	5:20
122	I had seen nobles become vulgar...	6:29
123	Jealousy is a good recruiting sergeant...	5:49
124	I was going to try to find the objective reason...	6:18
125	Initially I could not understand...	5:27
126	Even supposing that d'Argencourt had the same desire to smile...	5:55
127	This was a puppet-show featuring dolls...	4:45
128	As for the woman whose lover M. d'Argencourt had been...	6:45
129	The letter from this friend I had dreamed of having...	6:08
130	When somebody, hearing that I was unwell...	5:27
131	In certain people the replacement of each cell by a series of others...	5:41
132	There was no doubt that the cruel discovery I had just made...	5:06
133	I asked M. de Cambremer how his mother was.	6:49
134	In several people I ended up recognising not only their actual selves...	6:19
135	Certain faces, beneath their hood of white hair...	5:19
136	It was difficult to reconcile the two aspects...	6:43
137	The women tried to stay in touch...	5:32
138	The old men whose features had changed...	5:40
139	Nonetheless it is necessary to make one reservation...	6:33
140	Just as a candidate at the baccalauréat...	5:31

141	Someone who had been a minister before the Boulangist period...	4:54
142	Mme de Forcheville's appearance was so miraculous...	4:59
143	Mme de Forcheville's eyes, which were still very lovely...	6:02
144	'You may be painting too rosy a picture of it all,' he said to me.	5:40
145	On the other hand, it was possibly true...	5:49
146	Certain foreigners who, when I had begun to move in society...	5:49
147	During the war, Bloch had stopped 'going out'...	6:52
148	In the end, after an elderly man...	5:17
149	The woman who was a friend of Bloch...	5:51
150	For the rest, one does have to say...	5:16
151	It is true to say that having been impertinent...	6:31
152	I must have so shocked men...	5:11
153	There is no doubt that Bloch had formerly been...	4:34
154	Not only do certain people have a good memory...	5:24
155	It was not only the appearance of these individuals...	5:44
156	Our parallel lives were like the edges...	4:40
157	'What's the news of the Marquise d'Arpajon?'	5:37
158	The spinster spotted that her mother...	5:47
159	I had sat down beside Gilberte de Saint-Loup.	5:46
160	'There is one aspect of war he was beginning to notice,' I said to her...	5:36

161	'But how is it that you come to receptions...'	5:25
162	And anyway, was it not in order to concern myself...	5:54
163	As I looked at Gilberte I did not think...	5:10
164	Now, the law that had governed the dreams of each year...	6:10
165	The duchess was still hesitating...	5:12
166	Now meanwhile, at the other end of Paris...	5:14
167	Unfortunately these notes merely allowed her son-in-law...	5:38
168	Berma uttered not a word of reproach...	4:29
169	All the guests looked at one another...	5:04
170	While this woman reciting La Fontaine's loveliest lines...	5:39
171	I realised that the passage of time...	6:21
172	However, since the talent of the best writers often dries up...	5:33
173	'I can't tell you how pleased I am to see you,' the duchess continued.	5:58
174	To her, though...	5:29
175	The past had become so transformed...	6:02
176	The judgements the duchess then pronounced on Rachel...	5:49
177	In the antechamber, where the couple's wait had gone...	5:20
178	The life of the duchess went on being very unhappy too...	5:03
179	I would certainly not have recognised him...	4:43
180	Thus it was that the apparently impregnable positions...	5:39

181	In fact every time I subsequently tried to see her I failed to do so...	4:57
182	There is not necessarily any contradiction, though...	7:19
183	To greet the duchess, she slightly bowed her fine head...	4:55
184	'But how can I talk to you about stupid things like that?	5:00
185	However, she did not pursue her thoughts...	4:51
186	Later on this daughter...	5:50
187	One might say that if I tried not to use it unconsciously...	6:05
188	How happy anyone who could write such a book would be...	5:57
189	The papers that Françoise called my paperies...	6:05
190	It was not like that now.	5:16
191	Now it did not trouble me...	5:47
192	One of my selves...	5:33
193	All at once, though, after a month...	5:51
194	I myself had to write something different...	4:50
195	I could, although the mistake would be more serious...	4:54
196	At that very moment, in the Prince de Guermantes' mansion...	6:37

Total Time: 18:08:24

Marcel Proust

(1871–1922)

Time Regained

The critic André Maurois described Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* as 'one of the greatest works of the imagination of all time'.

The literal translation of the work's French title, 'In Search of Lost Time', contains within it a clue to the creation of this monumental work of biographical fiction. Having wasted time living a dilettante existence in the fashionable world, Proust, in middle age, decided to re-dedicate his life to art, and to attempt at last to achieve the great work of which he knew himself capable.

Remembrance of Things Past was his chance to justify his life, and to cheat death through an act of artistic creation. It was the means he would use to conquer time through recreating his lost years. Memory was the material with which he would weave the magic cord to be launched into infinity; that cord which now binds us to

him, and stretches forward into the future, linking his genius to unborn generations.

The Author

Marcel Proust was born on 10 July, 1871. His father, a distinguished professor of medicine, was from a Catholic family, while his mother was Jewish. Although convinced from an early age of his calling as a writer, Proust was riddled with self-doubt and wrote relatively little at the beginning of his career.

During his twenties, he co-founded a short-lived review, *Le Banquet*; contributed to another literary publication, *La Revue Blanche*; and in 1896 had his first book published, a collection of essays entitled *Les Plaisirs et Les Jours*.

He became an enthusiastic admirer of Ruskin and translated his *Bible of Amiens* and *Sesame and Lilies* into French.

A novel, *Jean Santeuil*, which was the precursor of *Remembrance of Things Past*, was abandoned, and eventually published long after Proust's death, in 1954.

For much of his youth Proust led the life of a man-about-town, frequenting fashionable Paris drawing rooms and literary salons, which were to form the background of a number of his early stories and sketches, and subsequently of *Remembrance of Things Past*.

The death of his adored mother in 1905 resulted in a nervous collapse and aggravated his chronic asthma and insomnia. But, despite his grief and the sense of loss, from which he never recovered, his mother's death freed him with regard to his homosexual way of life, and allowed him to address same-sex love in his writing, albeit in a form which treated such experiences as happening to others rather than to himself.

In 1907 he moved into an apartment in the Boulevard Haussmann where, in the bedroom which he had had lined with cork to keep out noise, he embarked upon his great work *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (*Remembrance of Things Past*). In

it the minuteness of his observation, the depth of his psychological understanding, and the vividness of his descriptive powers combined to create one of the most poetic and magical works in all literature.

Publication of *Remembrance of Things Past*

This long autobiographical cycle was originally published in eight sections: *Du Côté de Chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*) in 1913; *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* (*Within a Budding Grove*) in 1918; *Le Côté de Guermantes I* (*The Guermantes Way I*) in 1920; *Le Côté de Guermantes II* and *Sodom et Gomorrhe I* (*Cities of the Plain I*) in 1921; *Sodom et Gomorrhe II* in 1922; *La Prisonnière* (*The Captive*) in 1923; *Albertine Disparue* (*The Sweet Cheat Gone/The Fugitive*) in 1925 and *Le Temps Retrouvé* (*Time Regained*) in 1927.

Proust was obliged to publish *Swann's Way* at his own expense, and even after it had appeared, had trouble finding a publisher for the next part, *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs*. However, when it appeared in 1918 it received considerable

acclaim, and was awarded the Prix Goncourt the following year.

By the time Proust died, on 18 November, 1922, the first four parts of the cycle had been published, leaving the others to appear posthumously.

Time Regained

Time Regained is the final part of *Remembrance of Things Past*. In between lengthy stays in a sanatorium, the Narrator, Marcel, makes several return visits to Paris during the First World War. When he finally leaves the sanatorium at the end of the war, he discovers that the old social order has changed. The two Ways of his childhood walks in Combray have now come together: the Méséglise or Swann's Way representing the bourgeois society into which Marcel was born, and the Guermantes Way, the aristocratic circle of the Guermantes family into which he has been admitted, are now united, and members of both worlds are to be found mingling in Paris society.

Gilberte, Swann's daughter, has married Robert de Saint-Loup, thus

becoming a member of the Guermantes family; the Prince de Guermantes marries Mme Verdurin, formerly 'Mistress' of 'the little clan', a bohemian artistic circle, whose husband has since died; the aged Duc de Guermantes is in love with Swann's widow, the former courtesan Odette de Crecy; Marcel's previously socially inept school friend Bloch is now a respected playwright and has become much in demand in society salons; the Duchesse de Guermantes, previously unwilling to acknowledge any but the most fashionable member of her world, now cultivates the friendship of the actress Rachel, previously the mistress of her nephew Saint-Loup, and originally a whore.

In attempting to find his way home through the darkened streets during an air raid, Marcel becomes lost and stumbles into a male brothel. He sees a shadowy figure reminiscent of Saint-Loup leave the building. His curiosity leads him to witness the Baron de Charlus undergoing an episode of sado-masochistic whipping. A croix-de-guerre is discovered in the brothel, which later on turns out to have been lost by Saint-Loup. Unknown to Gilberte,

Robert has been involved in homosexual affairs, and is in love at present with the violinist Charles Morel. Morel is the son of Marcel's uncle's valet, and was formerly the protégé of the Baron de Charlus whom he has treated with cruelty and ingratitude. Later Marcel is devastated to learn that Robert de Saint-Loup has been killed in battle, having proved himself a daring and valiant officer.

Gilberte returns to Tansonville, her house at Combray, which has been requisitioned by German troops. She writes to Marcel that the hawthorn path where they first met has become a military objective and is the centre of a fierce battle, while Combray church has been destroyed by the British and the French, because it was used as a look-out post by the Germans.

When Marcel returns to Paris from his sanatorium after the war, he accepts an invitation to attend a reception at the Prince de Guermantes's magnificent new mansion. Here he experiences several episodes of involuntary memory in which the past is so vividly recreated that it becomes indistinguishable from

the present. These experiences lead to his discovering that the theme for which he has been searching as the subject for his work is his own life. He meets friends from an earlier time whom he is astonished to find have become old, and it is brought home to him that if time has passed for them it has passed for him as well, and that he too is now old. He realises that he only has a limited time in which to work, and that he must begin at last.

Time Regained brings together the two themes of the book: time lost and time rediscovered. The novel's original title in French, *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, translates literally into 'In Search of Lost Time', and the phrase 'lost time' may be taken to refer both to time which has passed, and time which has been wasted. The two meanings are relevant both to Proust's own life and to the novel, which, if not directly autobiographical, is certainly a record of Proust's inner journey through life.

Proust wanted to be a writer from his early youth, but he was tortured by self-doubt and the fear that he lacked talent. He was also highly susceptible to

the attractions of society, and spent much of his time in the fashionable salons of the day which were frequented by well-known writers, composers, artists and politicians as well as by members of the aristocracy and the social elite. But Proust was aware that his life as a man about town was sapping time and energy which ought to be devoted to his writing, and he constantly berated himself for lacking the willpower to keep regular hours and embark on a sustained regime of work.

However, in retrospect, his whole life can be seen as preparation for writing his masterpiece, *Remembrance of Things Past*. All his experiences, both serious and frivolous, were to serve as raw material for his novel. Despite Proust's self-criticism, and although he never earned his living from writing and depended on a private income, before he embarked on *Remembrance of Things Past*, he wrote quite constantly and produced, in addition to endless letters, articles, essays, poetry and translations of several works of Ruskin, a volume of short stories and an unfinished novel. The volume of stories, *The Pleasures and the Days*, was published

in 1896 to little public acclaim, while the unfinished novel, *Jean Santeuil*, an unsuccessful first attempt to write what was to become *Remembrance of Things Past*, lay among Proust's papers until it was discovered and published in 1954, more than thirty years after his death.

The Narrator of *Remembrance of Things Past* is a thinly disguised version of the author himself. Like Proust, he is an invalid who wastes his time socialising, constantly putting off the work he intends to write. In the last volume, *Time Regained*, he finally realises that the subject for his book, which always eluded him, was there in front of him all the time: it is his own life.

Because of its digressive nature, *Remembrance of Things Past* has been criticised as formless, lacking shape. But although Proust altered and added enormously to the original scheme of the novel, which ended up unimaginably longer than he originally planned, its structure was there from the beginning, and it is not until we reach the final part that the author's intention can be fully appreciated.

Remembrance of Things Past is the story of a man who is unable to bring himself to write. Finally, he discovers his theme and decides it is time to begin. And as we finish reading the novel, we realise that it is the book on which he is about to start. Here we have the perfectly formed circle of time lost and time regained, which was Proust's original plan.

Proust's theory of involuntary memory is central to the work. The incident of the madeleine dipped in lime-flower tea which brings back for the Narrator a whole lost world of childhood, takes place in the first part of the novel, *Swann's Way*, and with it the author sets forth his subject as a composer states a theme which he intends to develop in the rest of the symphony.

According to Proust, it is the power of involuntary memory which enables us to re-experience the past, rather than merely to visualise it, which is a function of the intellect. On such occasions we feel again the same sensations which surrounded the original event. And when the Narrator returns to Paris after many years in a sanatorium, several instances of

involuntary memory are crowded together in one day. These lead to his realisation that he is able to use these experiences, in which the past and the present are inextricably mixed, to relive his life, to regain lost time.

As Marcel arrives at the Prince de Guermantes's mansion, he steps on an uneven paving stone and he is immediately filled with a sense of coolness and dazzling light. He searches for the origin of these feelings, and realises that they have transported him back to Venice, where he had encountered a similar uneven paving stone in the Baptistry of St Mark's. In the library a servant accidentally knocks a spoon against a plate, and Marcel finds himself again in a railway carriage contemplating the beauty of the evening light on a row of trees, a sight to which he had felt unable to respond the previous day. When he wipes his mouth with a starched napkin he relives the sensation of being once again in Cabourg, drying his face by the open window with one of the hotel's stiff linen towels, and as he breathes the salt air he feels he has only to open the windows to step out

onto the beach. These experiences serve to remove all his self-doubt and to give him courage by affirming that the past is alive within him and that his youthful self is still accessible.

And so 'lost time' – in the sense both of time which has passed and time which has been wasted, becomes 'time regained', that is time which can not only be lived through again, but can be captured and immobilised through literature. Encapsulated in a work of art, time is suspended, and a life which would otherwise have been as ephemeral as a plant which blooms only for a season and then dies, is enabled to exist indefinitely.

This yearning for immortality is the spur which drives the artist forward, impelling him to create art as a defence against the finality of death. And the last third of Marcel Proust's short life was taken up with the struggle against mortality as, bedridden and suffering, he called upon all his remaining strength to complete his task.

Proust, the life-long invalid, sensed the advance of death and was conscious of the shortness of time remaining for

the accomplishment of his work. And with an irony worthy of one of his own characters, who so often turn out to be quite different from what we have been led to suspect, the fashionable man about town who had been seen by his critics as a dilettante, who since his youth had berated himself for his lack of willpower and his inability to work, now became an example of courage, single-minded determination and tenacity, as he battled against illness and death to finish what he had set out to do.

In the end, Proust succeeded in completing his novel before death claimed him, and in *Remembrance of Things Past* he leaves us in his legacy a distillation of his life through which he enables us to see our own more clearly. As he wrote, 'Our greatest fears, like our greatest ambitions, are not beyond our strength, and we are able in the end to overcome the one and to realise the other.' The work he feared he might never accomplish stands now for all time: a reminder that with sufficient courage and will, we too have the power to transform time lost into time regained.

The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

To avoid any confusion, it may be helpful to point out that Proust's great work, *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, was originally translated into English by Charles K. Scott-Moncrieff and published in 1922 under the title, *Remembrance of Things Past*. It was subsequently re-translated by Terence Kilmartin and appeared in 1981 as *In Search of Lost Time*. In 2002 a new edition appeared under the same title, with each volume assigned to a different translator. The Naxos AudioBooks recordings use the Scott-Moncrieff text and, in references to the work, I use Scott-Moncrieff's title.

My own contact with Proust began when, as a 17-year-old schoolboy, I first read *Swann's Way*. I could not have guessed then that, many years into the future, Proust would take over my life to such an extent. Over a six year period during the 1990s, I abridged and recorded *Remembrance of Things Past* for Naxos AudioBooks, for whom I have now recorded this entire, uncut text.

When I was asked to write *The Life and Work of Marcel Proust* (see www.naxosaudiobooks.com), it occurred to me

that, although the people on whom Proust based his characters were no longer living, the places he wrote about were still there, and so I travelled to France to see them.

I was delighted to discover that Illiers, where Marcel Proust spent his holidays as a child, and which figures in the book as Combray, is now marked on maps and road signs as Illiers-Combray, in official recognition of the reason for this sleepy village's wider fame.

In a narrow street just off the market square in Illiers-Combray is the house in which Proust's father, Adrien Proust, was born, and further along is the house of his aunt Élisabeth, now a Proust museum, where Élisabeth's fictional counterpart, the bedridden Aunt Léonie, watched the world go by from her bedroom window. Around the corner from the house is a little boulangerie with a sign in the window announcing proudly: 'This is where Aunt Léonie bought her madeleines'. It only occurs to me as I buy a packet of the scallop-shaped cakes, that Aunt Léonie is a creature of fiction. Never mind, Aunt Élisabeth might well have patronised the

establishment, or one very like it. Up the hill there is a real house called Tansonville, the name of the house occupied by Charles Swann, and later by his daughter Gilberte and her husband Robert de Saint-Loup, and further on there is a real village called Méréglise, a name almost identical to the fictional Méséglise.

Water lilies are still reflected in the glassy surface of the river Loir, which in the book bears the more poetic name the Vivonne, and beyond the stream lies the Pré Catalan, the enchanting park created by Proust's horticulturally minded Uncle Jules. From Illiers I travelled on to Cabourg, a seaside resort on the Normandy coast, the original of the fictional Balbec. Here I found the Grand Hotel in all its Edwardian splendour. It was rebuilt after Proust spent holidays there as a child, but he returned as an adult, and sections of *Remembrance of Things Past* were written beneath its roof. As in *Within a Budding Grove*, the great glass windows of the restaurant look out over the promenade to the beach below, and with a little imagination, that group of budding young girls in bikinis is transformed into the little band of 'jeunes

filles en fleurs' outlined against the sea.

I travelled on to Paris, visiting 102 Boulevard Haussmann, Proust's home for many years, where he wrote so much of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The building is still owned by the same bank that purchased it from Proust's aunt, when her inconsiderate decision to sell it forced him to move. His bedroom is still there, but unfurnished, and to see the room as it was, one is obliged to visit the Musée Carnavalet, where his bed, chaise-longue and other effects are displayed in a reconstruction of the famous cork-lined room.

A walk to the gardens of the Champs Élysées brought me to an area with a sign announcing that I am in the Allée Marcel Proust. Children chase each other – perhaps playing the modern equivalent of 'prisoners base', the game played by Gilberte and her friends. This is where the real Marcel played as a child with the real Marie de Benardaky, with whom he fell in love, just as the fictional Marcel falls in love with the fictional Gilberte Swann.

In the real world the same spaces are occupied now by different people. Time

has moved on, but places remain, and we have the privilege of being present in not only the imaginary world Proust created, but that portion of the real world which had a part in its creation. His presence has left behind a trace of magic, and we see places differently, because we see them through his eyes. One day those places will have crumbled into dust, as will we ourselves, and the space we now consider ours will be occupied by others. But as long as civilisation remains, those who come after us will be able to share Proust's vision and enter his world. Proust was aware that art is the only true reality and that through his creations the artist continues to live after his death, beyond space and beyond time.

Notes by Neville Jason

A Proust Chronology

1871, July 10	Marcel Proust born
1873, May 24	Robert Proust born
1878–1886	holiday visits to Illiers (now Illiers-Combray)
1880, spring	Marcel's first attack of asthma
1882–1888	attends the Lycée Condorcet
1888	contributed to <i>La Revue Lilas</i> and <i>La Revue Verte</i>
1889–1890	military service at Orléans
1890, January 3	death of maternal grandmother, Adèle Weil
1890, August	holiday at Cabourg
1890, November	enrols as a student in the Faculty of Law and at the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques
1890, November – 1891, September	contributes to <i>Le Mensuel</i>
1892, March	first edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, March	last edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, April 13	meets Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac
1893	contributes to <i>La Revue Blanche</i> ; degree in law

1894, May 22	meets Reynaldo Hahn
1894, December	trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus
1895, March	degree in philosophy
1895, summer	holiday in Brittany with Reynaldo Hahn
1896	publication of <i>Les Plaisirs et Les Jours</i> ; writing <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1897, February 6	duel with Jean Lorrain
1898, January 13	Emile Zola's article <i>J'Accuse</i> published
1899	begins translation of Ruskin's <i>Our Fathers Have Told Us (La Bible d'Amiens)</i>
1899, summer	holiday at Evian-les-Bains, visits the Brancovan family at Amphion
1900, June and October	visits Venice
1902	abandons work on <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1903, November 26	death of Adrien Proust
1904	publication of <i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>

1905, September 26	death of Jeanne Proust
1906, June	publication of <i>Sesame and Lilies</i> (<i>Sésame et les Lys</i>)
1906, July	Dreyfus declared innocent
1906, December	moves to 102 Boulevard Haussmann
1907, summer	holiday at Cabourg, where he will spend the next seven summers. Meets Alfred Agostinelli
1908–09	begins writing <i>À la Recherche du Temps Perdu</i>
1913	Agostinelli re-enters Proust's life. Employs Celeste Albaret
1913, November	<i>Du Côté de Chez Swann</i> (<i>Swann's Way</i>) published
1914, May 30	Alfred Agostinelli dies in an aircraft accident
1918, June	publication of <i>A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs</i> (<i>Within a Budding Grove</i>), <i>Pastiches et Melanges</i> and new edition of <i>Swann's Way</i>
1919, June	moves to 8, rue Laurent-Pichat
1919, December	<i>Within a Budding Grove</i> awarded the Prix Goncourt

1920, October	moves to 44, rue Hamelin
1920, October	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes I</i> (The Guermantes Way I) published
1920, April	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes II</i> and <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe I</i> (Cities of the Plain I) published
1921, December 11	death of Montesquiou
1922, April	<i>Sodom et Gomorrhe II</i> published
1922, October	awarded the Légion d'Honneur
1922, November 18	death of Marcel Proust
1923	<i>La Prisonnière</i> (<i>The Captive</i>) published
1925	<i>Albertine Disparue</i> (<i>The Fugitive/The Sweet Cheat Gone</i>) published
1952	<i>Jean Santeuil</i> published
1954	<i>Contre Sainte-Beuve</i> (<i>Against Sainte-Beuve</i>) published



Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the diction prize by Sir John Gielgud. His first appearance in the theatre was in Peter Brook's production of *Titus Andronicus* starring Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. He is a former member of the Old Vic Company, the English Stage Company, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Birmingham Repertory Company. Roles include John Worthing in *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Robert Browning in *Robert and Elizabeth*. He is a trained singer and has

appeared in numerous musicals including *The Great Waltz*, *1776*, *Ambassador*, *Lock Up Your Daughters*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Irma La Douce*, *Robert and Elizabeth* and *Mutiny*.

Television appearances include *Maigret*, *Dr Who* (The Androids of Tara), *Hamlet* (Horatio), *Crime and Punishment* (Zamyatov), *Emergency Ward Ten*, *Dixon of Dock Green*, *When the Boat Comes In*, *Angels*, *Minder*, *Dempsey and Makepeace*, *The Richest Woman in the World*, *The Dancing Years*, *The Magic Barrel* and *Windmill Near a Frontier*. Films include *From Russia with Love* and *The Message*. He has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company three times, and may be heard in radio plays, documentaries and arts programmes. For Naxos AudioBooks his readings include Vasari's *Lives of the Great Artists*, *Freud*, *War and Peace*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Favourite Essays*, *The Once and Future King*, *Evgenii Onegin*, *Wessex Tales* and *Remembrance of Things Past*, both unabridged and abridged. He plays Antonio in *The Tempest*, and has directed productions of *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. As a director he was awarded Talkies awards for *Great Expectations* and *Poets of the Great War*. As a reader he won AudioFile Earphone awards for *The Captive*, *Time Regained*, *The Once and Future King* and *War and Peace* (Best Audiobooks of the Year 2007 and 2009).

Credits

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Marcel Proust

Time Regained

New translation by **David Whiting**

Read by **Neville Jason**

Remembrance of Things Past is one of the monuments of 20th-century literature. Neville Jason's unabridged recording of the work runs to 150 hours.

Time Regained is the final volume. Lost in the blacked-out streets of Paris during the First World War, Marcel stumbles into a brothel and accidentally witnesses a shocking scene involving the Baron de Charlus. Later, at a reception given by the Prince de Guermantes, his meditations on the passage of time lead to his determination to embark on his life's work at last.



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BIOGRAPHY



Neville Jason
The Life
and Work of
**Marcel
Proust**

Read by
Neville Jason

NA325212D

1	Reynaldo Hahn sings Offrande, 1909	8:00
2	Three fictional creative artists:	6:52
3	Proust's episodes of 'involuntary memory'	3:53
4	The Franco-Prussian War	2:06
5	The birth of Marcel Proust, 10 January 1871	6:30
6	The goodnight kiss	11:47
7	Military service	5:50
8	The first short story	4:30
9	Influential drawing rooms	3:49
10	Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac	8:08
11	Reynaldo Hahn	13:43
12	Lucien Daudet	2:05
13	The Dreyfus Case	2:16
14	The Dreyfus Case (cont.)	3:53
15	Pleasures and Days	6:31
16	Jean Santeuil, the early, autobiographical novel	6:34
17	Anna de Noailles	3:30
18	Marcel Proust and John Ruskin	7:55
19	More work: Ruskin's The Bible of Amiens	5:01
20	The move to 102 Boulevard Haussmann	5:12

21	Time Lost, Time Regained, involuntary memory	5:35
22	Alfred Agostinelli	7:36
23	Sergei Diaghilev, Jean Cocteau, Pablo Picasso	9:20
24	Looking for a publisher	8:23
25	The manuscript is delivered to Grasset	4:47
26	Proust and Agostinelli	4:47
27	Proust and Agostinelli (cont.)	1:27
28	The publication of Swann's Way	9:57
29	The First World War begins, 3 August 1914	7:50
30	The year of 1915	7:56
31	The poet Paul Morand	3:07
32	Proust begins to go out again into the world	4:58
33	Proust changes publishers	6:00
34	The Armistice	2:34
35	Within a Budding Grove published in 1919,	6:22
36	The meeting with James Joyce	2:15
37	Proust and Music	6:30
38	The Guermantes Way Part II	4:09
39	Colette remembers	1:22
40	People and characters	7:47
41	Worsening health and death	7:07

Total time: 3:58:18

Neville Jason

The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

Few authors have attracted as many biographers as Marcel Proust. And yet, to the best of my knowledge, *The Life and Work of Marcel Proust* has the distinction of being the first audio-biography.

To avoid any confusion, it may be wise to point out that Proust's great work, *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, was originally translated into English by Charles K. Scott-Moncrieff and published in 1922 under the title, *Remembrance of Things Past*. It has subsequently been retranslated by Terence Kilmartin and appeared in 1981 as *In Search of Lost Time*. Naxos AudioBooks' abridged version has been prepared from the Scott-Moncrieff text (except for *Time Regained*, which was translated by myself), and references to the work in this audio-biography use the original English title.

My own contact with Proust began when as a seventeen-year-old schoolboy I first read *Swann's Way*. I could not have guessed then that many years into the future Proust would take over my life for a period of some six years, during which time I would abridge and record his three-thousand-page

masterpiece, *Remembrance of Things Past*.

Having once embarked on this daunting but exciting task, it occurred to me that although the people on whom Proust based his characters were no longer living, the places he wrote about were still there, and so I set off to see them.

I was delighted to discover that Illiers, where Marcel Proust spent his holidays as a child, and which figures in the book as Combray, is now marked on the maps as Illiers-Combray, in official recognition of the reason for this sleepy village's wider fame.

In a narrow street just off the market square is the house in which Proust's father, Adrien Proust, was born, and further along is the house of his aunt Elisabeth, now a Proust museum, where Elisabeth's fictional counterpart, the bedridden Aunt Léonie, watched the world from her bedroom window. Around the corner from the house is a little boulangerie with a sign in the window announcing proudly that 'This is where Aunt Léonie bought her madeleines'. It only occurs to me as I buy a packet of the scallop-shaped cakes, that Aunt Léonie is a

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Water lilies are still reflected in the glassy surface of the river Loir, which in the book bears the more poetic name the Vivonne, and beyond the stream lies the Pré Catalan, the enchanting park created by Proust's horticulturally-minded Uncle Jules.

Each spring a group of members of The Society of Friends of Marcel Proust gather in Illiers on a Proustian pilgrimage, following a tradition originated by Marcel Proust's brother Robert who, during the 1930s, started bringing friends here every May to enjoy the hawthorn blossom. I join them as they climb the gently sloping hawthorn path which borders the Pré Catalan. In the book this is the route to Charles Swann's estate – *Swann's Way*. From time to time the little group comes to a halt while someone reads out loud an excerpt from the text which describes the scene before us.

My own pilgrimage has an additional aim – to record a radio programme on Proust for the BBC, and so having said goodbye to my fellow pilgrims, I travel on to Cabourg, a seaside resort on the Normandy coast, and the original of the fictional Balbec. Here the Grand Hotel in all its Edwardian splendour has remained much as Proust describes it as the setting for his summer holidays with his grandmother. The great glass windows of the restaurant look out over the promenade to the beach below, and with a little imagination that group of budding young girls in bikinis is transformed into the little band of 'jeunes filles en fleurs' outlined against the sea.

On to Paris, and 102 Boulevard Haussmann, Proust's home for many years, where he wrote so much of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The building is still owned by the same bank that purchased it from Proust's aunt, when her inconsiderate decision to sell it forced him to move. His bedroom is still there, but unfurnished, and to see the room as it was, I visit the Musée Carnavalet, where his bed, chaise-longue and other effects are displayed in a reconstruction of the famous cork-lined room.

A walk to the gardens of the Champs

Elysées brings me to an area with a sign which tells me I am in the Allée Marcel Proust. Children chase each other – perhaps playing the modern equivalent of ‘prisoner’s base’, the game played by Gilberte and her friends. This is where the real Marcel played as a child with the real Marie de Benardaky, with whom he fell in love, just as the fictional Marcel falls in love with the fictional Gilberte Swann.

In the real world the same spaces are occupied now by different people. Time has moved on, but places remain, and we have the privilege of entering, not only the imaginary world Proust created, but that portion of the real world which had a part

in its creation. His presence in the places he passed through left behind a trace of magic, and we see them differently, because we see them through his eyes. One day those places, too, will have crumbled into dust, as will we ourselves, and the space we now consider ours will be occupied by others. But as long as civilization remains, those who come after will be able to share Proust’s vision and enter into his world. Proust was aware that art is the only true reality, and that through his creations the artist continues to live after his death, beyond space and beyond time.

Notes by Neville Jason



Marcel Proust (right) and his younger brother Robert, c. 1877

A Proust Chronology

1871, July 10	Marcel Proust born
1873, May 24	Robert Proust born
1878-1886	holiday visits to Illiers (now Illiers-Combray)
1880, spring	Marcel's first attack of asthma
1882-1888	attends the Lycée Condorcet
1888	contributes to <i>La Revue Lilas</i> and <i>La Revue Verte</i>
1889-1890	military service at Orléans
1890, January 3	death of maternal grandmother, Adèle Weil
1890, August	holiday at Cabourg
1890, November	enrols as a student in the Faculty of Law and at the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques
1890, November-	
1891, September	contributes to <i>Le Mensuel</i>
1892, March	first edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, March	last edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893, April 13	meets Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac
1893	contributes to <i>La Revue Blanche</i> , degree in law
1894, May 22	meets Reynaldo Hahn
1894, December	trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus
1895, March	degree in philosophy
1895, summer	holiday in Brittany with Reynaldo Hahn
1896	publication of <i>Les Plaisirs et Les Jours</i> , writing <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1897, February 6	duel with Jean Lorrain
1898, January 13	Emile Zola's article <i>J'Accuse</i> published
1899	begins translation of Ruskin's <i>Our Fathers Have Told Us</i> (<i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>)

1899, summer	holiday at Evian-les-Bains, visits the Brancovan family at Amphion
1900, June and October	visits Venice
1902	abandons work on <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1903, November 26	death of Adrien Proust
1904	publication of <i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>
1905, September 26	death of Jeanne Proust
1906, June	publication of <i>Sesame and Lilies (Sésame et les Lys)</i>
1906, July	Dreyfus declared innocent
1906, December	moves to 102 Boulevard Haussmann
1907, summer	holiday at Cabourg, where he will spend the next seven summers. Meets Alfred Agostinelli
1908-09	begins writing <i>A la Recherche du Temps Perdu</i>
1913	Agostinelli re-enters Proust's life. Employs Celeste Albaret
1913, November	<i>Du Côté de Chez Swann (Swann's Way)</i> published
1914, May 30	Alfred Agostinelli dies in an aircraft accident
1918, June	publication of <i>A l'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs (Within a Budding Grove)</i> , <i>Pastiches et Melanges</i> and new edition of <i>Swann's Way</i>
1919, June	moves to 8, rue Laurent-Pichat
1919, December	<i>Within a Budding Grove</i> awarded the Prix Goncourt
1920, October	moves to 44, rue Hamelin
1920, October	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes I (The Guermantes Way I)</i> published
1920, April	<i>Le Côté de Guermantes II</i> and <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe I (Cities of the Plain I)</i> published
1921, December 11	death of Montesquiou
1922, April	<i>Sodom et Gomorrhe II</i> published

1922, October	awarded the Légion d'Honneur
1922, November 18	death of Marcel Proust
1923	<i>La Prisonnière</i> (The Captive) published
1925	<i>Albertine Disparue</i> (<i>The Fugitive</i> / <i>The Sweet Cheat Gone</i>) published
1927	<i>Le Temps Retrouvé</i> (Time Regained) published
1952	<i>Jean Santeuil</i> published
1954	<i>Contre Sainte-Beuve</i> (Against Sainte-Beuve) published

Some further biographical reading available in English:

Marcel Proust, A Life by Jean-Yves Tadié, Viking Penguin 2000

Marcel Proust, A Life by William C. Carter, Yale University Press 2000

Marcel Proust by George D. Painter, Chatto & Windus 1959, 1965, revised Chatto & Windus Pimlico 1996

Proust by Edmund White, Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1999

Proust by Samuel Beckett, Grove Press Inc./Chatto & Windus 1931

Proust: A Biography by Ronald Hayman, Heinemann 1990

Monsieur Proust by Céleste Albaret, Collins/McGraw-Hill 1976

The Quest for Proust by André Maurois, Jonathan Cape 1950

The Translation of Memories by P.F. Prestwich, Peter Owen 1999

Proust by William Sansom, Thames and Hudson 1973



Reynaldo Hahn, 1898

Proust during military service at Orléans,
1889-90



Acknowledgements

Just as the abridged readings of *Remembrance of Things Past* may lead some listeners to read the original novel in its entirety, it may be that this spoken word overview of Proust's life and work will encourage some to turn to the more comprehensive works which are available. The most important of these are *Marcel Proust, A Life*, by Jean-Yves Tadié and *Marcel Proust, A Life*, by William Carter. Both are works of enormous diligence and scholarship, and I freely admit my indebtedness to them in the preparation of this spoken word biography. I should also like to acknowledge my debt to George D. Painter's *Marcel Proust*, which I found deeply moving, and which has waited thirty-five years before being surpassed in scope and accuracy by the works of Tadié and Carter. Other works on Proust I have consulted for the purpose of this work are included in the brief bibliography.

My gratitude is also due to those who have helped, directly or indirectly, towards the completion of this project; to Nicolas Soames who commissioned it, and who has led me patiently and skilfully not only through this recording, but through twelve studio sessions of *Remembrance of Things Past*; to Dr. Cynthia Gamble, who has been

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Notes by Neville Jason



Comte Robert de Montesquiou, 1885

The music was programmed by Neville Jason

HAHN Offrande, Paris, 1919

Reynaldo Hahn, baryton

HAHN La barchèta from Venezia – in Venetian dialect by Pietro Buratti

Reynaldo Hahn, Paris circa 1911

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Le Grand Hôtel, Cabourg in Proust's day



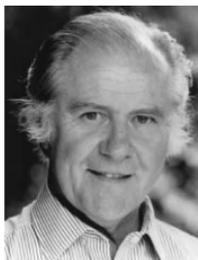
Céleste Albaret, 1914



Elaine Claxton has worked extensively in the theatre, including London's Royal National Theatre where she appeared in *The Children's Hour*, *The Machine Wreckers* and *Richard II*. She has twice been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company during which time she participated in over 200 broadcasts. She also appears on Naxos AudioBooks' *Lady Windermere's Fan*.



Gordon Griffin has recorded over 220 audiobooks. His vast range includes nine Catherine Cookson novels, books by Melvyn Bragg, David Lodge, and the entire Wycliffe series by W J Burley. Gordon also appears regularly on television and in films. He was dialogue coach (Geordie) on *Byker Grove* and *Kavanagh QC*.



Denys Hawthorne's long and distinguished career has encompassed extensive work in theatre, television and film both in England and Ireland. Drama has included Shakespeare and Chekhov, as well as many contemporary plays, while he has appeared in popular TV series including *Inspector Morse* and *Father Ted*, and *The Russia House* and *Emma* on the wide screen. Throughout, radio performance has been a constant theme, notably in drama and poetry.

Neville Jason

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Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the Diction Prize by Sir John Gielgud. He has worked with the English Stage Co., the Old Vic Company and the RSC as well as in films, TV and musicals. He is frequently heard on radio. As well as *Remembrance of Things Past*, he also reads Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, *Far From The Madding Crowd*, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* for Naxos AudioBooks.

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