‘To inherit a great fortune. To inherit a great misfortune.’ These words, from Nathaniel Hawthorne’s notebook, neatly encapsulate the theme of *The House of the Seven Gables* – that of a family whose fortunes are poisoned by its past misdeeds. The sins of the Pyncheon father are visited upon his children over a period of several generations, until such time as one of his descendants unites with a member of the family he has wronged. Love conquers hate, and new blood washes away the original crime. This intriguing and insightful novel truly deserves its significant place in the canon of American literature.

Adam Sims trained at LAMDA. His recordings for radio include *The World According to Humphrey* and *The Salamander Letter* for the BBC. His screen and theatre credits include *Band of Brothers* (HBO), *Lost in Space*, *The Madness of George III* (West Yorkshire Playhouse), *Alice in Wonderland* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Regent’s Park) and *Snake in Fridge* (Manchester Royal Exchange), for which he won the award for Best Actor at the Manchester Evening News Theatre Awards. For Naxos AudioBooks, he has read Mowat’s *Never Cry Wolf*, and James’s *Washington Square* and *The Aspern Papers*, among other titles.
‘In the name of Heaven,’ cried Hepzibah...

‘I set him free!’ reaffirmed Judge Pyncheon...

Sixteen

There would be Judge Pyncheon, – a person...

To incur the ridicule of the younger crowd...

Seventeen

Clifford’s naturally poignant sympathies...

‘It was too soon! I could not bear it’

Eighteen

No matter what it was. The doctor probably...

The Judge’s face, indeed, rigid and singularly...

All try the picture-frame. What do these ghostly...

Nineteen

‘But do hear reason, Mrs Gubbins!’

Neither could he be willing to depart without...

Twenty

Now, there is a minute and almost exact similarity...

Twenty one

The first effect of freedom, as we have witnessed...