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AudioBooks

**JUNIOR
CLASSICS**

NA387312D

David Timson

STORIES FROM SHAKESPEARE 3

Read by **Juliet Stevenson** and **Simon Russell Beale**
and **cast**



WITH EXCERPTS FROM THE PLAYS

1	Much Ado About Nothing	2:35
2	Act I Scene 1	1:09
3	To celebrate the army's victory...	3:12
4	Act II Scene 1	1:12
5	But Don Pedro's plan to disguise himself...	0:25
6	Act II Scene 1	0:30
7	Even Benedick was convinced...	1:05
8	Act II Scene 1	1:16
9	So Don Pedro and his friends began to hatch a plot...	1:08
10	Act II Scene 3	1:20
11	Just then, Claudio and Don Pedro also came into the garden...	0:20
12	Act II Scene 3	1:37
13	Benedick was troubled by what he heard.	1:04
14	Benedick was quite excited by this new idea...	1:27
15	Act III Scene 1	1:39
16	For once in her life...	0:56
17	Everyone in Leonato's household was getting excited...	2:42
18	Act IV Scene 1	1:12
19	Beatrice could hardly contain her fury...	4:18
20	Act V Scene 4	1:52
21	The Comedy of Errors	5:51
22	Act I Scene 2	1:24

23	Antipholus stared open-mouthed at Dromio...	3:14
24	Act II Scene 2	2:11
25	And so as if he was in a dream...	0:43
26	Act III Scene 1	0:21
27	Storming off, Antipholus of Ephesus...	0:34
28	Act III Scene 2	1:02
29	Dromio of Syracuse was having a spot of bother too.	0:15
30	Act III Scene 2	1:13
31	Antipholus of Syracuse was now convinced...	7:56
32	Antony and Cleopatra	5:07
33	Act I Scene 2	0:43
34	The soldier in Antony now took over...	0:22
35	Act I Scene 3	1:43
36	Cleopatra could not help teasing...	1:18
37	While Antony was away...	0:55
38	On returning to Rome...	1:54
39	Act II Scene 2	1:34
40	It sounded almost as if Enobarbus was in love...	2:41
41	Act 3 Scene 11	1:35
42	It was time to make peace...	1:22
43	The next day...	1:30
44	Cleopatra heard his raving...	1:25

45	Act IV Scene 15	1:56
46	When the news of Antony's death reached Caesar...	0:43
47	Act V Scene 2	1:05
48	Cleopatra's thoughts were now only...	1:17
49	Despite assurances from Caesar himself...	0:41
50	Act V Scene 2	2:36
51	Love's Labours Lost	1:10
52	Act I Scene 1	1:23
53	Berowne is obviously the second type of student...	2:37
54	Act I Scene 1	1:32
55	Don Armado had provided a much needed laugh...	3:27
56	Act III Scene 1	0:43
57	Berowne decided he too, like Don Armado...	3:28
58	Act IV Scene 3	0:44
59	Berowne was enjoying himself...	0:52
60	Act IV Scene 3	1:45
61	So convincing was Berowne...	3:48
62	Act V Scene 2	0:52
63	Berowne said that he was also speaking...	1:29
64	Act V Scene 2	2:04
65	The King willingly agreed to the Princess's wishes.	0:22
66	Act V Scene 2	1:28

67	All's Well That Ends Well	2:13
68	Act I Scene 1	0:52
69	How unhappy she would be now Bertram had gone...	0:45
70	Act I Scene 3	2:07
71	Helena then poured out her heart...	3:46
72	Act II Scene 3 Bertram was horrified.	1:45
73	Act III Scene 2	1:32
74	And that night, Helena left Rossillion...	4:49
75	Act IV Scene 1	0:56
76	Then with yells and whoops...	1:18
77	But Bertram's thoughts were far away from Parolles.	1:38
78	Act IV Scene 3	1:11
79	But there was worse to come.	2:14
80	Helena cleverly impersonated Diana...	2:26
81	Act V Scene 3	0:47
82	To make matters worse for Bertram...	2:10
83	Act V Scene 3	2:10
84	Measure For Measure	2:02
84	Act II Scene 1	1:14
85	Claudio's situation looked hopeless...	0:46
87	Act II Scene 2	2:59
88	As Isabella left the room...	0:15

89	Act II Scene 3	1:08
90	The next day, when Isabella returned...	0:17
91	Act II Scene 4	1:14
92	Left alone, Isabella knew only too well...	1:34
93	Act III Scene 1	1:27
94	Just as Isabella was about to walk out in disgust...	3:23
95	Act IV Scene 2	0:19
96	Seeing the Provost's concern for Claudio...	0:41
97	Act IV Scene 2	1:12
98	But when the executioner came to Barnadine's cell...	0:55
99	Act IV Scene 3	1:10
100	The news that the Duke was suddenly returning...	0:47
101	Act V Scene 1	1:13
102	The Duke pretended Isabella was mad...	2:45
103	Act V Scene 1	0:59
104	The Duke then explained to Isabella...	0:35
105	Act V Scene 1	1:59
106	The Two Gentlemen of Verona	1:00
107	Act I Scene 1	0:54
108	Valentine was not ready to fall in love...	1:08
109	Act I Scene 2	1:16
110	Although Julia and Proteus's love-affair...	0:59

111	Act I Scene 3	0:27
112	Valentine meanwhile was a changed man.	0:53
113	Act II Scene 2	0:18
114	Valentine's joy at realising Silvia loved him...	0:45
115	But trouble was brewing...	1:21
116	Proteus turned over in his mind all the trouble...	1:54
117	Act III Scene 1	1:07
118	When the Duke went on to tell him...	1:20
119	Proteus, who appeared to have forgotten his friendship...	3:01
120	Act IV Scene 4	0:54
121	Finding Silvia, Julia in her disguise...	1:40
122	Silvia was moved by the story...	0:18
123	Act IV Scene 4	1:06
124	Silvia meanwhile was riding with Sir Eglamour...	2:08
125	Act V Scene 4	1:17
126	Now Julia, still disguised as Proteus's page Sebastian...	0:32
127	Act V Scene 4	1:21
128	With Proteus and Julia reunited...	1:15
129	A Winter's Tale	2:13
130	Act I Scene 2	0:23
131	Gripped by sudden jealousy...	0:14
132	Act I Scene 2	1:08

133	But beneath the surface, Leontes jealously continued to bubble.	4:29
134	Act III Scene 2	0:58
135	But her honour did matter to her...	1:00
136	Hermione at this news collapsed...	0:35
137	Act III Scene 2	1:11
138	Meanwhile Antigonus and his precious cargo...	2:56
139	Act IV Scene 4	1:49
140	While the young couple danced...	2:08
141	Act IV Scene 4	1:01
142	Polixenes was very angry...	0:20
143	Act IV Scene 4	0:41
144	But Florizel was determined to follow his heart...	2:57
145	Act V Scene 3	1:58
146	As he gazed on the statue...	0:26
147	Act V Scene 3	1:20
148	It was the living Hermione they saw...	1:05

Total time: 3:52:27

David Timson

STORIES FROM SHAKESPEARE 3

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

This is one of Shakespeare's most popular plays, mainly because of the witty arguments between Beatrice and Benedick which audiences love to this day. So popular are these two quarrellers that they have often given their names as an alternative title to adaptations. The composer Hector Berlioz for instance in 1862 called his operatic version of the play *Béatrice et Bénédicte*.

In the 18th century Benedick was one of David Garrick's great parts. Garrick was the leading actor of his day and he played Benedick dozens of times. He even appeared dressed as the character in a procession of Shakespeare's characters at the Great Shakespeare Jubilee held in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1769, though he didn't speak one word of the play at the Jubilee.

In the 19th century Beatrice was a favourite part of Ellen Terry's, the great

actress who played opposite Sir Henry Irving at the Lyceum Theatre. She first played Beatrice in 1882, and it had such a success that she continued to play it for a further 25 years!

The play lends itself very well to being up-dated to a different setting. Most recently the Royal Shakespeare Company set it in 1950s Cuba, and there have been productions setting it in Victorian times or the time of the British Raj in India. It is best known today through Kenneth Branagh's 1993 lively knockabout film version. Branagh was Benedick and Emma Thompson was Beatrice.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

This is Shakespeare's shortest play and the only one with 'Comedy' in the title. Even without this, no one would have any doubt as it is brilliantly packed with confusion and knockabout comedy. It is based on a Roman play called *The*

Menaechmi by Plautus, and Shakespeare may have written it at the request of some lawyers who were looking for a Christmas entertainment in 1594.

This light-hearted play has often been adapted. It was turned into a musical in 1938 called *The Boys from Syracuse* which had a long run on Broadway, and in 2003 a rap version was performed in London with just 4 actors playing all the parts.

Shakespeare used the idea of twins getting mixed up later in *Twelfth Night*. Perhaps he had a liking for stories involving twins as he was the father of twins himself. Hamnet and Judith were born in 1585, but sadly Hamnet died at the age of 11.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

This play only survived because it was included in the First Folio edition of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1623. There was no version printed in Shakespeare's life time and no records of any performances. Shakespeare took the story from Plutarch's *Lives*, written

in the first century AD. In some cases he 'borrowed' whole paragraphs from Plutarch turning them into verse as he did so. Enobarbus's description of Cleopatra's barge is an example.

It's a complicated story to tell and there are 42 scenes in Shakespeare's version, the largest number of scenes in any Shakespeare play.

Sometimes Shakespeare seems to forget in which century he is setting his play, for he gives Cleopatra the line: 'Let's to billiards', when this game wasn't invented until late medieval times.

Cleopatra is the second longest female part in Shakespeare, the longest being Rosalind in *As You Like It*. As all the female parts were played by young boys in Shakespeare's day, he must have had a very talented young boy indeed to play such a complex character as Cleopatra.

The part of Cleopatra in modern times has attracted many great actresses, from Peggy Ashcroft in 1953, to Judi Dench in 1987. The husband and wife team of Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh played the main parts in 1951.

The great Edwardian actor Sir Herbert

Beerbohm Tree loved to put on epic productions of Shakespeare, and he produced *Antony and Cleopatra* in 1906 with a cast of hundreds.

Antony and Cleopatra was one of the first of Shakespeare's plays to be filmed, in 1908, though because it was a silent film none of Shakespeare's words were heard!

Because Cleopatra is such a fascinating character there have been more than 50 film versions of her story, though not necessarily with words by Shakespeare. The most famous version starred Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in 1963.

There was also an operatic version of the play written by Samuel Barber in 1966.

LOVE'S LABOURS LOST

An early play by Shakespeare that is all about students. Nobody knows if Shakespeare went to university, though it is probable that he didn't. The play is about falling in love, and Shakespeare – who was fond of writing love-poems, known as sonnets – fills this play with

them, often making fun of the words used when writing about love. It also contains the longest word ever used by Shakespeare: 'Honorificabilitudinitatibus' – a Latin word, which is a mouthful for 'honourableness.'

If Shakespeare wrote this play as early as 1595, the defeat of the Spanish Armada eight years before would still have been in the minds of his audience, who would have loved to see their Spanish enemies made fun of in the character of Don Armado, whose name is itself a reminder of 'Armada'.

Love's Labours Lost has had a mixed stage history. It is the only play of Shakespeare's that we definitely know Queen Elizabeth saw, but it wasn't often performed in the 18th and 19th centuries, and it wasn't until the 20th century, when Peter Brook revived it at Stratford in 1946, in a highly costumed production, that it began to gain popularity. In 2000, Kenneth Branagh produced a light-hearted and youthful film version set in the 1940s, full of songs and dance music from that period.

The play ends rather abruptly with

the lovers parting and promising to meet again in a year's time. This ending may have been a preparation for a sequel, for in a list of Shakespeare's plays compiled in 1588 by a poet called Francis Meres, there is a mysterious play called *Love's Labours Won*. No play with this title has ever been discovered. It might be the further adventures of the characters in *Love's Labours Lost*, or, as some scholars believe, another title for *The Taming of the Shrew*.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

This play too could be a candidate for the missing *Love's Labours Won* (see *notes on Love's Labours Lost*.) It seems, however, not to have been performed often in Shakespeare's lifetime or after, for the first recorded performance is in 1741. It may be that the trick Helena uses to capture her wandering husband was not popular in the 18th and 19th centuries, when women were not supposed to be so forward. It is much more suited to today's audiences though and is now regularly performed.

The rogue Parolles is a popular character, in fact King Charles I, in his own copy of Shakespeare's plays at Windsor Castle, renamed the play after him, scribbling in the margin 'Monsieur Parolles'. The comic success of the play depends on this role and therefore it is a great favourite with actors; the young Laurence Olivier played him in Birmingham in 1920, when he was 27.

The part of the King of France, which may well have been one of the 'kingly parts' that Shakespeare played, has attracted star actors too. Sir Alec Guinness played it in Stratford, Ontario, Canada in 1953, and Richard Griffiths played it in a radio version in 2002.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

This is a late play of Shakespeare's and, though much-performed today, was neglected in the 18th and 19th centuries, as it was considered too outspoken about morals. The plot comes from an Italian book by Cinthio which had not been translated into any other language in Shakespeare's time, showing that it is

highly likely that Shakespeare could speak Italian.

The part of Isabella is popular with leading actresses today, such as Judi Dench who played it in 1962, and Juliet Stevenson in 1983. In the 18th century it was one of the great actress Sarah Siddons's successes.

Angelo too, although not a large part, has been played by many star actors including Hollywood legends like Charles Laughton, famous as the Hunchback of Notre-Dame, and James Mason, who appeared in hundreds of films including the 1953 film version of *Julius Caesar*.

The character of the Duke dominates the play, speaking more than 30% of the lines, and may have been played by Shakespeare himself, who was described by a contemporary as specialising in 'kingly parts.'

Although listed in 'The Complete Works' as a comedy, it is a dark and serious play, and it is unclear if it ends happily. The play's serious side appealed to the composer Richard Wagner who turned it into an opera in 1836 called *Das Liebesverbot*.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

This may be Shakespeare's very first play. It's about young men falling in and out of love. There is also a dog called Crab who appears with the servant Launce, and is the only animal in Shakespeare to appear on stage as a named character.

This play contains one of Shakespeare's greatest songs: 'Who is Silvia?' which has been set to music by many composers, the most famous being by Franz Schubert in the early 19th century.

In 1971, Joseph Papp at the New York Shakespeare Festival created a rock musical version of this play. The story of young love fitted well into the age of the hippies and the show was a great success on Broadway.

In this play, Julia disguises herself as a man, which was a trick Shakespeare first used here and developed in the later plays *As You Like It*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Twelfth Night*.

THE WINTER'S TALE

This play is both a tragedy and a comedy,

and the story spans sixteen years. It was one of Shakespeare's most popular plays in his lifetime and was performed seven times before James I at Court.

In the 18th century the great actor David Garrick did not like the wide time span and cut the play, concentrating on the section set in Bohemia, and called it *Florizel and Perdita*.

The second half of the play is set in Bohemia, and Shakespeare provides it with a sea-coast when it is completely surrounded by land! It seems that geography was not Shakespeare's best subject at school, for he got it wrong in other plays as well.

This play contains one of the most difficult stage-directions in all Shakespeare, when Antigonus, after leaving the baby Perdita in Bohemia, has to *'Exit, pursued by a bear.'*

This is a difficult effect to achieve without making it very funny! The actor Alec Guinness wondered if Shakespeare might have used a real bear, borrowed from the nearby bear-baiting pit. If this was true, it wouldn't have been easy to persuade an actor to play Antigonus, but

there were no rules of Health and Safety in those days!

This play meant a great deal to the Victorian actress Ellen Terry. She made her first stage appearance in the part of Mamillius, aged nine in 1856, and fifty years later, she appeared as his mother, Hermione, to celebrate her Golden Jubilee on the stage.

'WHAT'S IN A NAME?', OR DID SHAKESPEARE REALLY WRITE SHAKESPEARE?

Because we know so little about Shakespeare's life, some people have wondered if he ever really existed, or whether the name 'William Shakespeare' was adopted by another writer to hide his or her true identity.

To add to the confusion there are more than 25 different spellings of his name in documents from his lifetime, including: Shackespeare, Shagspere, Shaxberd and Shexpere.

In the 18th century some scholars found it difficult to believe that a country bumpkin like Shakespeare, who

hadn't gone to college, could possibly write such brilliant plays. So, in 1785, it was suggested for the first time – by a Warwickshire clergyman called James Wilmot – that **Francis Bacon** was the real author. Bacon had all the right credentials: university-educated, aristocratic background, influential at court and had an interest in philosophy and science. He wrote a collection of Essays, full of wise advice, but as far as is known, except as a student, did not write a single play!

He once wrote: 'Stage-playing is a thing indeed, if practiced professionally, of low repute' – hardly the opinion of a man who wrote 37 excellent plays.

Could he have secretly written the plays of Shakespeare under a false name, and if so, why? Writing plays in the 16th century was not considered to be an occupation for an aristocratic gentleman, but it does seem a complicated scheme to hide behind another man's name just so as not to lose your reputation as a member of a class that didn't need to work for its living!

But the question about Shakespeare's

authorship has grown over the years, so that at the present time there are more than 60 people who are believed by some to have written the works of Shakespeare. Here are a few of them:

Christopher Marlowe, the most successful playwright before Shakespeare. He was murdered in a pub brawl in 1593, though some people believe he wasn't and this was a cover so he could assume the identity of Shakespeare and continue to write plays under that name.

Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, like Bacon a courtier and favourite of Queen Elizabeth I. He wrote poetry and some plays under his own name, but he died in 1604, years before some of the great plays such as *Hamlet* and *King Lear* were written!

Queen Elizabeth I herself is a candidate, as some people are convinced the plays were written by a woman. She was a highly educated and cultured woman who wrote poetry, but when she would have had the time between governing an

unruly country, warding off suitors for her hand in marriage and fighting the Spanish Armada to write all the plays and sonnets is not clear!

What's the truth?

There definitely was a man called William Shakespeare working in the Elizabethan theatre. Some of his plays were printed with his name as author; there are many references to him by contemporaries; and his best friend and fellow playwright Ben Jonson wrote the following about Shakespeare's picture, published in the First Folio edition of Shakespeare's plays:

'This figure that thou here seest put
It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;
Wherein the graver had a strife
With nature, to out-do the life:
O could he but have drawn his wit
As well in brass, as he hath hit
His face; the print would then surpass
All, that was ever writ in brass.
But, since he cannot, Reader, look
Not on his picture, but his book.'

Jonson also wrote: 'I love the man, and

do honour his memory...' Would he have written this if Shakespeare did not exist? Jonson also referred to him in other verses as the 'sweet swan of Avon', thus definitely linking him with Stratford-upon-Avon, and included him at the head of a list of actors who had appeared in his plays.

There doesn't seem any good reason to doubt that Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare, but no doubt the argument will continue for years. What really matters is not who wrote the plays, but the fact that they have survived and are as exciting to watch today as when they were first written.

'SPEAK THE SPEECH', OR WHY IS SHAKESPEARE IMPORTANT?

Shakespeare is important because he almost single-handedly changed the English language. Before Shakespeare, English was still rooted in the medieval age. Many books were still being written in Latin, and written English owed its style to Geoffrey Chaucer, who had written *The Canterbury Tales*, the first full English

epic, towards the end of the 14th century. After Shakespeare, English had become a modern language that would make its influence felt all over the world. Quite simply, if a word didn't exist, the Bard made it up! Some of these words, used by Shakespeare for the first time, have survived into everyday speech:

abstemious,
addiction,
accommodation,
barefaced,
discontent,
downstairs,
fashionable,
laughable,
priceless,
schoolboy,
silliness,
soft-hearted,
unreal,
useful

– and many hundreds more, though some of these, such as *exsufflicate* (meaning puffed up), used in *Othello*, have fallen by the wayside. His vocabulary was about

20,000 words, large for his time, and he used his words like tools to create many memorable phrases and sayings we still use to this day. Here are a few:

'Neither rhyme or reason'
'It's all one to me'
'Give the devil his due'
'Too much of a good thing'
'Good riddance'
'A Tower of strength'
'Dead as a doornail'
'What's done is done'
'For goodness sake'
'A wild-geese chase'.

Notes by David Timson



Juliet Stevenson has worked extensively for the RSC and the Royal National Theatre. She received an Olivier Award for her role in *Death and the Maiden* at the Royal Court, and a number of other awards for her work in the film *Truly, Madly, Deeply*. Other film credits include *The Trial*, *Drowning by Numbers* and *Emma*. She has recorded *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *To the Lighthouse* (abridged), *Sense and Sensibility*, *Mansfield Park* (abridged), *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Persuasion*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Stories from Shakespeare*, *Mansfield Park* and *To the Lighthouse* for Naxos AudioBooks.



John Cummins trained at RADA. His stage credits include *Romeo and Juliet* (winning a JMK Award in 2007) for The BAC, *The Reporter* and *The Alchemist* for The National Theatre, *The Beaver Coat* for The Finborough Theatre, and *2000 ft Away* and *The Strindberg Project* for The NT Studio. BBC Radio Credits include *To Sicken And So Die*, *A Fare To Remember*, *Agatha Rasin*, *Clare in the Community* and *Troilus and Cressida*. John won the Carlton Hobbs Award in 2005.



Since leaving The Bristol Old Vic Theatre School in 2002 **Oliver Le Sueur** has, amongst other theatre and television work; been a winner of The BBC Radio Drama Departments Carleton Hobbs Competition and appeared in a National Tour of *The Tempest* alongside Richard Briers. He performed the role of The Soldier in Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* with The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. He has also read *Kafka on the Shore* for Naxos AudioBooks.



Simon Russell Beale is one of Britain's leading classical actors. He won Best Actor in the Evening Standard Awards for his individual interpretation of *Hamlet*, and his Ariel in *The Tempest* was marked by an Olivier Award. Among his many other starring roles in London theatre was *Candide* and *Mosca* in *Volpone*. He has a busy career in TV and film too, with appearances in Branagh's production of *Hamlet* and in the outstanding TV dramatization of *Persuasion*. For Naxos AudioBooks he has also recorded *The Life of Oscar Wilde*, *Great Speeches and Soliloquies of Shakespeare* and *William Shakespeare – A Biography*.



Clare Corbett was the Carleton Hobbs winner in 2000 and since then has been heard on BBC Radio Repertory and seen in regional theatres. She is a familiar face to television viewers having appeared in *The Bill*, *Fastnet*, *Spooks*, *Casualty* and *Final Demand*. She has also read *Venus and Adonis* and *Great Scientists and their Discoveries* for Naxos Audiobooks.



David Timson has made over 1,000 broadcasts for BBC Radio Drama. For Naxos AudioBooks he wrote *The History of the Theatre*, which won an award for most original production from the Spoken Word Publishers Association in 2001. He has also directed for Naxos AudioBooks four Shakespeare plays, including *King Richard III* (with Kenneth Branagh), which won Best Drama Award from the SWPA in 2001. In 2002 he won the Audio of the Year Award for his reading of *A Study in Scarlet*. He also reads *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes I, II, III, IV, V and VI* and *The Return of Sherlock Holmes I, II and III*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Sign of Four*, *The Valley of Fear* and *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*.



Emily Raymond has played Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Royal Shakespeare Company as well as a number of other roles in plays such as *The Changeling*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, and *The Beggar's Opera*. For other theatres she has appeared in *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Seagull* and *Of Mice and Men*. Her TV credits include *Robin Hood* and *Highlander* and her film credits, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *A Murder of Quality*. She has also read the part of Helena from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Naxos Audiobooks.

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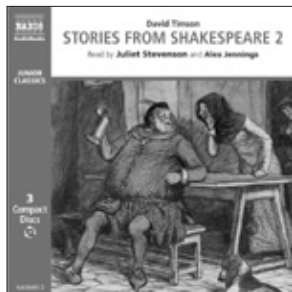
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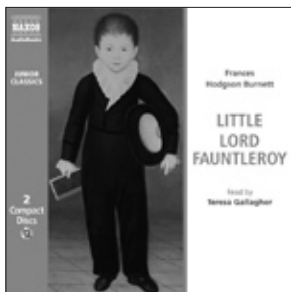
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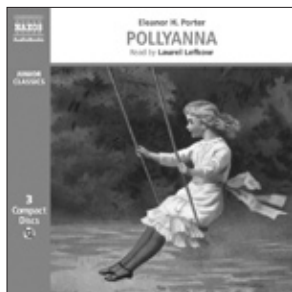
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