

# Classic Romance

Romantic moments from

**Jane Eyre • Wuthering Heights**

**Anna Karenina • The Odyssey • The Owl and the Pussycat**  
and many more

Introduced by **Alex Jennings**

**CLASSIC  
FICTION**

**COLLECTIONS**



NA443012D

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1	<b>The Old Testament – Adam and Eve</b>	5:32
	Anon	
2	<b>Frankie and Johnny</b>	4:39
	Anon	
3	<b>Pride and Prejudice</b>	9:55
	by Jane Austen	
4	<b>Peter Pan</b>	9:08
	by J M Barrie	
5	<b>Twelfth Night</b>	8:01
	by William Shakespeare	
6	<b>Emma</b>	5:57
	by Jane Austen	
7	<b>Anna Karenina</b>	5:28
	by Leo Tolstoy	
8	<b>The Odyssey</b>	13:31
	by Homer	
9	<b>The Taming of the Shrew</b>	5:11
	by William Shakespeare	
10	<b>Wuthering Heights</b>	11:46
	by Emily Brontë	
11	<b>Around the World in Eighty Days</b>	10:52
	by Jules Verne	

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12	<b>Love's Secret</b> by William Blake	1:01
13	<b>Two Gentlemen of Verona</b> by William Shakespeare	2:50
14	<b>Far From the Madding Crowd</b> by Thomas Hardy	9:56
15	<b>Vanity Fair</b> by W M Thackeray	6:43
16	<b>Aeneid</b> by Virgil	8:23
17	<b>A Midsummer Night's Dream</b> by William Shakespeare	11:40
18	<b>Madame Bovary</b> by Gustave Flaubert	5:52
19	<b>Hiawatha's Wooing</b> by H W Longfellow	8:56
20	<b>A Tale of Two Cities</b> by Charles Dickens	4:46
21	<b>The Mill on the Floss</b> by George Eliot	11:05
22	<b>The Pickwick Papers</b> by Charles Dickens	8:53

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23	<b>She Walks in Beauty</b> by Lord Byron	1:29
24	<b>Ulysses</b> by James Joyce	4:14
25	<b>Henry V</b> by William Shakespeare	11:41
26	<b>Middlemarch</b> by George Eliot	7:20
27	<b>Launcelot and Guenever</b> by Sir Thomas Malory	9:34
28	<b>When We Two Parted</b> by Lord Byron	1:38
29	<b>David Copperfield</b> by Charles Dickens	8:44
30	<b>The Happy Prince</b> by Oscar Wilde	7:29
31	<b>The History of Tom Jones – A Foundling</b> by Henry Fielding	4:31
32	<b>Romeo and Juliet</b> by William Shakespeare	4:02
33	<b>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</b> by Victor Hugo	7:46

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<b>34</b>	<b>Persuasion</b>	10:56
	by Jane Austen	
<b>35</b>	<b>La Belle Dame sans Merci</b>	2:31
	by John Keats	
<b>36</b>	<b>Swann in Love</b>	7:21
	by Marcel Proust	
<b>37</b>	<b>The Owl and the Pussycat</b>	2:32
	Anon	
<b>38</b>	<b>Ivanhoe</b>	5:31
	by Sir Walter Scott	
<b>39</b>	<b>Perfect Woman</b>	2:09
	by William Shakespeare	
<b>40</b>	<b>Tristram Shandy</b>	4:22
	by Laurence Sterne	
<b>41</b>	<b>Jane Eyre</b>	15:15
	Charlotte Brontë	

**Total time: 4:49:37**

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# Classic Romance

What is romance? A glorious sunset, Rachmaninov in full flow, a Renoir chocolate box, a Shakespeare sonnet or the grand sweep of a Russian novel? The answer is all of them – to someone. Love is multi-faceted and changes according to emotional mood. When true, we know it often doesn't run smooth; and even when it is not true, who can deny the flood of illegitimate passions, however temporary? It is the stuff of humanity, central to mankind from the Bible and the Arthurian triangle to the tempestuousness of Frankie and Johnny.

Boy meets girl every generation, and each generation finds its way of dealing with the thrill, the pleasure and the turmoil. And each one has found it equally irresistible to record those wayward feelings, those reckless moments, those satisfying epiphanies which we call Romantic Love. Not all love is expressed by this form, but it is the bedrock of romance.

Most of this selection of extracts from classic works of poetry and prose come into this category, some more loosely than others, it is true. Further, since writers themselves have a variety of perceptions of what constitutes romance, the extracts are a very diverse collection.

Ever since Adam and Eve ran into

difficulties, those travelling the path of love and romance have often found their progress beset with problems. These same problematic situations have fed the imaginations of writers across the centuries; the adversities which they create for their characters providing readers with considerable enjoyment and satisfaction even when, as is often the case, the outcome is sad, perhaps even tragic. Farmer Boldwood's unrequited love in Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd*; Romeo and Juliet's doomed love, as described by Shakespeare, and poems such as Byron's *When We Two Parted* could all be described as writings where sadness is the predominant emotion evoked. Further, Romeo and Juliet, together with couples such as Cathy and Heathcliff, described by Emily Brontë in *Wuthering Heights*, Anthony and Cleopatra, and Frankie and Johnnie in the poem of the same name are all pairs where their doomed affairs end with the death, sometimes the suicide, of one of them; writing designed to pull at the heart strings of any reader.

Fortunately, there are plenty of examples of happier couples in literature, many of them providing us with delightful and charming episodes of love and romance. Thus when

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reading *The Odyssey* we join with Penelope and Odysseus in their happiness when she finally recognises her long lost husband; whilst *Swann in Love* by Proust provides the reader with enjoyment via Charles Swann's seduction of Odette, tastefully described through metaphorical reference to her orchid. Longfellow's Hiawatha and Minnehaha marry, providing romantic fulfilment for both of them and a satisfyingly romantic situation for readers; additionally pleasing since it forges a bond between their two previously antagonistic tribes.

At times writers place their romantic couples in situations where they are in need of a helping hand to reach a happy conclusion to their courtships. Such is the case in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, where the successful pairing of Amelia Osborne and William Dobbin is only achieved through the intervention of Becky Sharp. However, in Virgil's *Aeneid*, after the gods have initiated the romance between Dido and Aeneas, their further intervention results in the tragedy of Aeneas' departure and Dido's subsequent suicide.

Some interventions in others' love lives can produce humorous results. In *Twelfth Night* Shakespeare contrives for Count Orsino's messenger to woo Olivia so effectively on his master's behalf, that Olivia loses her heart to the messenger instead;

complicated enough, but further complicated by the fact that the messenger is a girl in disguise. Shakespeare also provides us with humour in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, when Oberon's actions with a love potion result in the delightfully amusing temporary romance between Titania and Bottom, the latter sporting the head of an ass.

Dickens too, provides readers with examples of amusement in romance. The courtship and eventual marriage of Peggotty and Barkis provide some light-hearted episodes in *David Copperfield*, whilst *The Pickwick Papers* relate the comical episode in which Mr Pickwick's landlady Mrs Bardell mistakenly assumes that he is proposing to her.

Thus we see that romance has many facets. However, probably the most honest portrayals of romance are those which show that often love is only achieved after a hard lesson has been learned, such as that described by Jane Austen in *Pride and Prejudice*, or at a price, with the participants being required to make some kind of sacrifice. *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë best exemplifies the latter and, as a consequence, is often described as the most perfect of all romances.

**Notes by Helen Davies**

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**The extracts are taken from the following  
Naxos AudioBooks recordings**

**CD 1**

<b>The Old Testament – Selections</b> Read by Philip Madoc	ISBN 9626340916
<b>Classic American Poetry</b> Read by Alibe Parsons	ISBN 962634198X
<b>Pride and Prejudice</b> by Jane Austen abridged Read by Jenny Agutter	ISBN 9626341041
<b>Pride and Prejudice</b> by Jane Austen unabridged Read by Emilia Fox	ISBN 9626343567
<b>Peter Pan</b> by J M Barrie Read by Samuel West	ISBN 9626341025
<b>Twelfth Night</b> by Shakespeare Read by Stella Gonet, Lucy Whybrow, Christopher Godwin, Jane Whittenshaw	ISBN 9626341815
<b>Emma</b> by Jane Austen abridged Read by Juliet Stevenson	ISBN 9626340959
<b>Emma</b> by Jane Austen unabridged Read by Juliet Stevenson	ISBN 9789626343944
<b>Anna Karenina</b> by Leo Tolstoy Read by Laura Paton	ISBN 9626340819



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<b>The Odyssey</b> by Homer Read by Anton Lesser	ISBN 9626340312
<b>The Taming of the Shrew</b> by Shakespeare Read by Sarah Woodward	ISBN 9626340150
<b>Wuthering Heights</b> by Emily Bronte abridged Read by Freda Dowie with Ken Drury	ISBN 9626340630
<b>Wuthering Heights</b> by Emily Bronte unabridged Read by Janet McTeer with David Timson	ISBN 9626343974

## CD 2

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<b>Love's Secret</b> Read by Michael Sheen	ISBN 9626340215
<b>Two Gentlemen of Verona</b> by Shakespeare Read by Bill Homewood	ISBN 9626340241
<b>Far From the Madding Crowd</b> by Thomas Hardy Read by Neville Jason	ISBN 962634136X
<b>Vanity Fair</b> by W M Thackeray Read by Jane Lapotaire	ISBN 9626341203
<b>Aeneid</b> by Virgil Read by Geraldine Fitzgerald and Toby Stephens	ISBN 9626342781

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<b>A Midsummer Night's Dream</b> by Shakespeare Read by Warren Mitchell, Sarah Woodward, Ian Hughes, John Moffatt, Peter Kenny, Don McCorkindale	ISBN 9626341505
<b>Madame Bovary</b> by Gustave Flaubert Read by Imogen Stubbs	ISBN 9626341785
<b>Hiawatha</b> by Longfellow Read by William Hootkins	ISBN 9626343400
<b>A Tale of Two Cities</b> by Charles Dickens abridged Read by Anton Lesser	ISBN 9626340576
<b>A Tale of Two Cities</b> by Charles Dickens unabridged Read by Anton Lesser	ISBN 9626343591

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<b>Ulysses</b> by James Joyce unabridged Read by Jim Norton and Marcella Riordan	ISBN 9626343095

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<b>Henry V</b> by Shakespeare Read by Samuel West, Cathy Sara	ISBN 9626342056
<b>Middlemarch</b> by George Eliot Read by Carole Boyd	ISBN 9626341963
<b>Launcelot and Guenever</b> Read by Philip Madoc	ISBN 9626340010
<b>When We Two Parted</b> Read by Michael Sheen	ISBN 9626340215
<b>David Copperfield</b> by Charles Dickens Read by Anton Lesser	ISBN 9626341513
<b>The Happy Prince</b> by Oscar Wilde Read by Anton Lesser	ISBN 9626341394

#### CD 4

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<b>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</b> by Victor Hugo Read by Bill Homewood	ISBN 9626343826
<b>Persuasion</b> by Jane Austen Read by Juliet Stevenson	ISBN 9626341076

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<b>La Belle Dame sans Merci</b> Read by Michael Sheen	ISBN 9626340215
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<b>The Owl and the Pussycat</b>	ISBN 962634279X
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<b>Jane Eyre</b> by Charlotte Bronte unabridged Read by Amanda Root	ISBN 9626343575

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**The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS  
and MARCO POLO catalogues**

- DANZI** Quintet in B flat major Op. 56 No. 1 8.553076  
Michael Thompson Wind Ensemble
- DAVID** Piano Trio No. 3 in C minor 8.223492  
Ilona Prunyi, Piano / Eszter Perényi, Violin / Tibor Párkányi, Cello
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Northern Chamber Orchestra / Nicholas Ward

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**MUSIC OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE**

8.550615

Shirley Rumsey

**RUBENSTEIN** Symphony No. 5 in G minor Op. 107

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George Enescu State Philharmonic Orchestra / Horia Andreescu

**SOLER** Sonata No. 74 in D major for Harpsichord

8.554434

Gilbert Rowland

**TCHAIKOVSKY** Serenade for Strings in C major Op. 48

8.550404

Vienna Chamber Orchestra / Philippe Entremont

**Music programmed by Sarah Butcher**

# Classic Romance

Introduced by **Alex Jennings**

This is a diverting delight, a window on romance in literature. There are high lovers and low lovers, tragic lovers, comic lovers, and lovers who shouldn't be doing what they are doing at all and certainly not then and there. There is the love between man and his dog as documented by Shakespeare in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the affection between the Owl and the Pussycat, the forlorn longing of Dido for Aeneas and Hiawatha's Wooing in an unforgettable metre. Though of special interest for lovers and their special lovers' day of St Valentine, *Classic Romance* is an amusing and surprising collection at all times.



**Alex Jennings** trained at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre Company and has played numerous leading roles for Royal Shakespeare Company productions including *Hamlet*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Measure for Measure*, *Richard III*, *Peer Gynt*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. His film credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Derek Jarman's *War Requiem* and *The Wings of the Dove*. He has also read *The Sonnets*, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and narrated *Stories from Shakespeare Volume 2* for Naxos AudioBooks.

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Total time  
4:49:37