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AudioBooks

UNABRIDGED

Alan Garner

# THE WEIRDSTONE OF BRISINGAMEN

Read by **Philip Madoc**

NA539612D

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1	The Legend of Alderley	2:58
2	By Seven Firs and Goldenstone they went...	3:16
3	<b>Part 1 Chapter 1</b> Highmost Redmanhey	3:29
4	Nearer they came to the edge...	3:45
5	<b>Chapter 2</b> The Edge	4:29
6	Just as they were about to turn for home...	2:53
7	Then, close at hand, a dog barked loudly...	3:58
8	<b>Chapter 3</b> Maggot-Breed of Ymir	4:08
9	Colin and Susan roamed all over Stormy Point...	4:17
10	All the while he was looking...	4:05
11	The edge of the swamp was a mass of bodies.	4:42
12	<b>Chapter 4</b> The Fundindelve	4:51
13	Cadellin led the children out of the cave...	4:20
14	'Now it happened that, at the Sealing of Fundindelve...'	3:39
15	Here lay the treasure, piled in banks of jewels...	3:28
16	It looked very black outside, and the memory...	5:27
17	<b>Chapter 5</b> Miching Mallecho	3:55
18	Gowther shone his light into the pen.	3:01
19	Prince gradually quietened down as Gowther rubbed him...	3:49
20	<b>Chapter 6</b> A Ring of Stones	3:23

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21	The following morning in Alderley village...	4:23
22	They reached the top of the Edge...	3:51
23	As the minutes went by, Susan grew more and more uneasy.	4:12
24	Facing the children were two stones...	4:33
25	<b>Chapter 7</b> Fenodyree	3:54
26	Then wrath kindled in him, and spread...	4:08
27	Susan was almost in tears.	4:28
28	They had come to a flat outcrop...	4:00
29	<b>Part 2 Chapter 8</b> Mist over Llyn-dhu	2:52
30	It was a young winter of cloudless skies...	4:41
31	The mist was still there the following morning.	5:27
32	<b>Chapter 9</b> St. Mary's Clyffe	4:30
33	Behind her, two shadows moved out of the mist...	4:18
34	After minutes of brooding quiet a door opened...	4:17
35	In a small room crammed under the eaves...	3:29
36	At the sound of his voice the brute froze...	3:54
37	<b>Chapter 10</b> Plankshaft	4:14
38	In shape and size it was just such another cave...	3:56
39	They thought for some time in silence...	3:48

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40	Colin started out.	3:28
41	She saw the wet rock, ribbed and gleaming...	2:49
42	<b>Chapter 11</b> Prince of the Huldrafolk	5:03
43	Colin reached for the lamp and pressed the switch.	4:13
44	Colin had the greatest difficulty in keeping up...	3:53
45	The tunnel opened into a broad gallery...	3:27
46	<b>Chapter 12</b> In the Cave of the Svartmoot	3:41
47	For a few yards only, the red glow lit their way.	4:30
48	In spite of the knowledge that Durathror was close...	4:40
49	Before them the tunnel ended in a drop...	5:25
50	<b>Chapter 13</b> Where No Svart Will Ever Tread	4:09
51	The V-shaped gully continued for thirty feet...	3:57
52	The patch of light contracted until it appeared...	4:01
53	While the children lay croaking...	3:48
54	'Have you the stone?' whispered Fenodyree...	4:05
55	<b>Chapter 14</b> The Earldelving	4:14
56	Colin unwrapped the lamp to discover how it had withstood...	4:09
57	Both the children had the greatest difficulty...	4:59
58	This moment was to be repeated three times more...	4:54

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59	<b>Chapter 15</b> A Stromkarl Sings	4:26
60	'It never crossed my mind that this would be their course...'	4:43
61	'Well! This is the rummest do I've come across!'	3:34
62	Shortly before midnight Scamp began to growl.	2:54
63	<b>Chapter 16</b> The Wood of Radnor	4:37
64	'Wait on,' said Gowther..	4:48
65	Fenodyree led the way back to the crossroads...	4:16
66	But for all Durathror's shouting...	4:06
67	They forced their way through the glossy hide....	3:50
68	They had to step on to the thicker branches...	4:02
69	The halted at the edge of a clearing.	3:15
70	<b>Chapter 17</b> Mara	4:18
71	And that is what they did.	4:37
72	All this Fenodyree explained; his plan was accepted...	3:58
73	They did not have to wait.	4:40
74	They followed the valley for a quarter of a mile...	3:58
75	Susan began to scream...	4:28

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76	<b>Chapter 18</b> Angharad Goldenhand	4:42
77	It was a curious dream.	4:18
78	Susan was wrapped in a cloak...	3:54
79	<b>Chapter 19</b> Gaberlunzie	4:02
80	Durathror suggested, and the others reluctantly agreed...	4:02
81	'The lodge was bad,' said Susan...	3:53
82	Out across the lake was an island, so overgrown...	4:01
83	'I shall not bide. Listen to my say.'	4:01
84	Trench after trench they crossed....	4:16
85	<b>Chapter 20</b> Shuttlingslow	4:00
86	But he did not come.	4:13
87	The morthbrood were pouring in from all sides...	4:24
88	But he could do nothing to save the others.	4:33
89	Back to back the dwarfs and Gowther fought...	5:18
90	<b>Chapter 21</b> The Headless Cross	4:52
91	The hillside was thick with pell-mell bodies...	3:43
92	Selina Place, fury in every line of her...	4:02

**Total time: 6:19:48**

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Alan Garner

## THE WEIRDSTONE OF BRISINGAMEN

About 150 years ago, my great-great-grandfather, Robert Garner carved the face of an old man with long hair and beard in the rock of a cliff on a hill where my family has lived for at least 400 years, and still does. He carved the face above a well that is much older. How much older, no one knows, but it's centuries older, or even more. And why did he carve it? He carved it to mark that here is the Wizard's Well.

About 68 years ago, Robert's grandson, Joseph, told his own grandson how, under the earth, inside the hill, there was, and still is, an army of knights sleeping an enchanted sleep from which they will wake one day to fight the last battle of the world. But until that day comes, they must not be woken.

I am Joseph's grandson, and I grew up on that hill, Alderley Edge in Cheshire, aware of its magic and accepting it. I didn't know that it wasn't the same for everyone. I didn't know that not all children played, by day and by night, the year long, on a wooded hill where heroes slept in the ground.

Yet there were strange things. Below another ancient well, the Holy Well, a rock lies in a bog. It fell from the cliff above in

1740 and made the Garners' cottage shake. It landed on an old woman and her cow that, for some reason, were standing in the bog, and, as a result, are still there. When I was seven, the bog was dangerous for somebody of my size and I once got stuck in it and thought I was going to drown, even though I sank only to my hips; but I managed to reach the rock and to climb up it to where a fallen tree was lodged, which spanned the bog, and by sliding along the trunk I was able to reach firm land. Nearby, under the leaf mould, is a layer of white clay that we used as soap to wash ourselves before we went home after playing. But there wasn't anything I could do about my clothes, and Grandad was not pleased.

That is how children grew up on the Edge. We knew it in every way: whether it was to find soap or to avoid the Devil in his Grave.

My father taught me about the Devil. One afternoon, when I was about 4, he asked me whether I should like to go up the Edge. I was amazed. My father normally would have been having his Sunday snooze. So off we went and climbed the hill, and we

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walked through the woods, past Thieves' Hole and Seven Firs to Stormy Point, where the Edge is a barren plunge of sand and stone to the plain beneath. At the top there's a trench cut into the rock, which goes to a small cavern. There's a hole in the roof, partly closed by a hewn block. This cavern is the Devil's Grave.

My father stood and looked at the enormous view that lay before us; and then he told me that the block in the hole was the Devil's Gravestone and that if anybody ran round the stone three times widdershins the Devil would come out and get them. 'Is it true?' I said. 'It's what they say,' said my father. 'Can I have a go?' I said. 'If you like,' said my father. So I set off widdershins running around the rock; once; twice. I looked at him. He was watching the sky. Three times.

From inside the cavern beneath us there came a screech and a scream. Twigs, pebbles and sand were thrown up out of the hole between the block and the rim. There was fiendish noise; and more screaming. This time the screams were from me as I fled. I tripped over a tree root, and lay waiting for the Devil to grab me. Instead, I heard two men laughing. I looked. It was my father and his brother, my uncle Syd.

They had planned the whole thing the night before in the pub. Uncle Syd would be in place at three o'clock and my father would have me there at five past. They had decided that I was of an age to understand the Devil's Grave. And I did.

In such ways the children of the Edge learn their place, in every sense. But one thing we never messed with. The mines. The copper mines, worked on and off for 4,000 years until nearly 100 years ago, killed people. But those people were always strangers, never local children. We had lost too many of our families as miners there. The mines were one place we did not go.

The Edge is a land of two worlds: above and below. It took me my childhood to learn about above; when I was 19, I went to learn the wonders of below: a world of darkness and silence, so dark that you can see the lights of brain cells discharging; so silent that blood in the veins can be heard. Yet, shine a lamp and the eye is washed with colour; the colour of minerals with marvellous names: malachite, azurite, galena. They glisten in caves bigger than a church and the size of a cathedral; and on the roof, in places, there are the marks of ripples in the sand, of a sea upside down and hung to dry.



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No miner ever found the sleeping knights. But there is a place on the hill I know, where, if you put your ear to the ground and listen, and if the weather's right and the air is still, you may hear the knights snoring and the clink of harness. And have I heard them? No. Not yet. But my cousin has.

**Notes by Alan Garner**

**The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS catalogue**

**BAX SYMPHONIC POEMS** 8.557599  
Royal Scottish National Orchestra, David Lloyd-Jones

**BAX SINFONIETTA** 8.555109  
Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra, Barry Wordsworth

**Music programmed by Sarah Butcher**

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**Philip Madoc's** extensive theatre work includes the roles of Othello and Iago, Faust and Macbeth and, with the RSC, The Duke in *Measure for Measure* and Professor Raat in *The Blue Angel*. TV roles include Lloyd George, Magua in *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Brookside* and *A Mind to Kill*. He reads *The Death of Arthur*, *Canterbury Tales I* and the part of Host in *Canterbury Tales II*, *Arabian Nights*, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, *The Old Testament*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Essential Dylan Thomas* for Naxos AudioBooks.

**Alan Garner**

# THE WEIRDSTONE OF BRISINGAMEN

Read by **Philip Madoc**

Exploring Alderley Edge in Cheshire, Colin and Susan are chased and captured by sinister creatures. Cadellin Silverbrow rescues them and takes them to Fundindelve, deep inside the Edge, where he watches over one hundred and forty knights who lie in enchanted sleep until the day 'when England shall be in direst peril and they must ride and drive the enemy into the sea.'

Fundindelve was guarded by the strongest magic the world has ever known, magic that would keep the warriors from growing old and weak. The heart of the magic was sealed within Firefrost, the Weirdstone of Brisingamen.

But the wizard Cadellin has lost the Weirdstone of Brisingamen, and the evil forces of Nastrond are searching to destroy the stone and reign over the world.

Colin and Susan must risk their lives in the quest to return Firefrost to its rightful guardian.

First published in 1960, four decades before Harry Potter, Alan Garner's novel of magic and wizards has endured. It is a classic of children's literature.

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