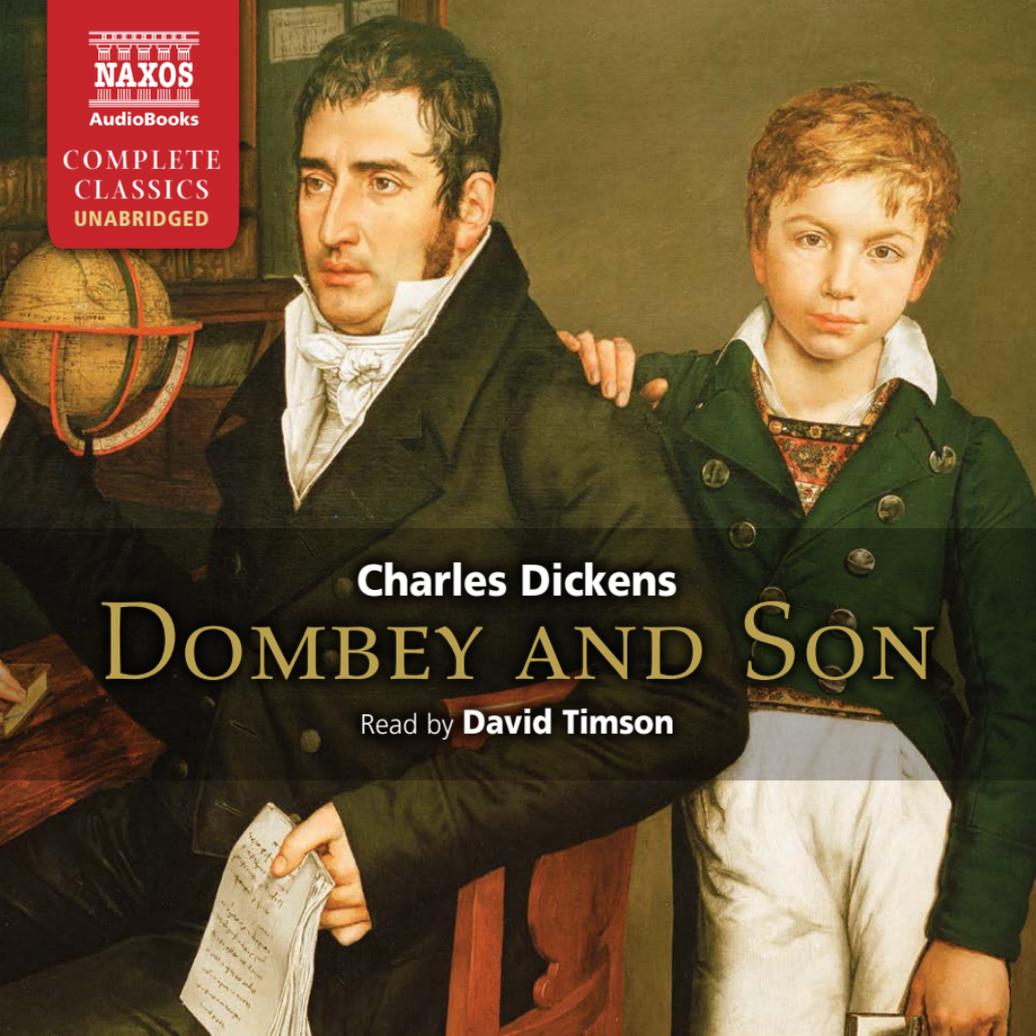




NAXOS
AudioBooks

COMPLETE
CLASSICS
UNABRIDGED



Charles Dickens
DOMBEY AND SON

Read by **David Timson**

CD 1

1	Chapter One	5:44
2	Or, at all events, with one drawback.	4:21
3	'Good! We must not disguise from you Sir,'...	5:39
4	The lady thus specially presented...	5:23
5	'Well!' said Mrs Chick, with a sweet smile...	3:37
6	There was no sound in answer...	3:13
7	Chapter Two	5:11
8	Miss Tox had arrived on the wheels...	5:13
9	Miss Tox seemed to be so little enlightened...	5:08
10	Thus arrested on the threshold...	4:51
11	As his unusual emotion subsided...	5:15
12	Chapter Three	4:15
13	The apartments which Mr Dombey reserved...	4:41
14	The child, who had dropped her head...	5:29
15	Spitfire seemed to be...	4:01
16	She suddenly appended...	4:15

Total time on CD 1: 76:28

CD 2

1	When little Florence timidly presented herself...	5:15
2	Chapter Four	4:44
3	Here he lived too, in skipper-like state...	4:58
4	'The Lord Mayor, Wally,' said Solomon...	4:59
5	'Dear Uncle,' said the boy...	4:51
6	Solomon Gills rubbed his hands...	5:46
7	Upon that he whistled as he filled his glass...	5:32
8	Chapter Five	4:47
9	'Louisa,' said Mr Dombey, after a short pause...	5:25
10	The two interlopers...	5:50
11	'Have the goodness, if you please, Towlinson,'...	5:09
12	It happened to be an iron-grey autumnal day...	4:11
13	The baby soon appeared, carried in great glory...	5:28
14	Before he turned again to lead the way...	4:22
15	There they found Mr Pitt turning up his nose...	4:44

Total time on CD 2: 76:12

CD 3

1	'I was about to say to you, Richards,' ...	3:03
2	Such temporary indications of a partial thaw...	3:33
3	Chapter Six	5:25
4	Staggs's Gardens was uncommonly incredulous.	4:52
5	'But where's my pretty boy?' said Polly...	5:03
6	Now, it happened that poor Biler's life...	5:24
7	They had not gone very far...	4:46
8	Mrs Brown's was not a melodious cry...	5:40
9	'If you please, is this the city?'	5:16
10	As they stood deliberating in the street...	4:51
11	Solomon Gills was quite as hot...	5:01
12	'Why, I believe I found Miss Dombey, Sir,' ...	3:37
13	The entrance of the lost child...	3:59
14	Chapter Seven	4:26
15	Although Major Bagstock had arrived...	4:21
16	But still, when that day...	6:02

Total time on CD 3: 75:31

CD 4

1	Chapter Eight	4:59
2	Some philosophers tell us that selfishness is...	5:06
3	Heaven and Earth, how old his face was...	5:29
4	Mr Dombey was so astonished...	5:43
5	'Surely you must know, Louisa,'...	6:00
6	This celebrated Mrs Pipchin...	4:52
7	'Well, Sir,' said Mrs Pipchin to Paul...	5:24
8	Such was life at Mrs Pipchin's.	5:23
9	This, however, never came to pass.	4:55
10	It being clear that somebody was dead...	4:08
11	With this notable attendant to pull him along...	3:46
12	Chapter Nine	4:07
13	In this way, Walter, so far from forgetting...	5:14
14	'What I mean, Uncle Sol,' pursued Walter...	5:57
15	Walter looked from the broker to his uncle...	5:07

Total time on CD 4: 76:21

CD 5

1	Walter, in his impatience...	5:22
2	These directions were not issued...	4:44
3	'I'm behind the time altogether, my dear Ned,' ...	4:23
4	Chapter Ten	4:52
5	'An old campaigner, Sir,' said the Major...	6:06
6	None the worse on account...	5:35
7	At the same time the Captain...	5:15
8	'What was the debt contracted for?'	4:15
9	As he motioned towards the door...	5:09
10	Chapter Eleven	5:33
11	'Mrs Pipchin,' said Mr Dombey...	6:08
12	Mr Dombey waited...	5:49
13	The Doctor's was a mighty fine house...	4:44
14	'Doctor Blimber is at home, I believe?'	4:17
15	'Mrs Pipchin', said his father...	4:25

Total time on CD 5: 76:51

CD 6

1	A learned enthusiasm is so very contagious...	4:10
2	'I think,' said Mr Dombey...	4:06
3	Chapter Twelve	4:55
4	Cornelia took him first to the schoolroom...	5:01
5	Young Toots who was ready...	5:45
6	'It is remarkable, Mr Feeder,'...	5:09
7	Tea was served in a style no less polite...	4:52
8	Miss Blimber presented exactly the appearance...	5:23
9	He acquitted himself very well...	5:32
10	The books were not easy to procure...	4:40
11	Such spirits as he had in the outset, Paul soon lost...	3:13
12	'I say!' cried Toot, speaking...	4:42
13	Chapter Thirteen	5:02
14	The gentleman last mentioned...	5:28
15	'You respect nobody, Carker, I think,'...	3:59
16	'Gay,' said Mr Dombey, turning a little...	4:54

Total time on CD 6: 77:04

CD 7

1	During this conversation...	5:46
2	'You have only yourself to thank for it,'...	3:40
3	Again his last few words hung...	3:05
4	Chapter Fourteen	4:20
5	It was perfectly understood...	5:29
6	'It may be generally observed of Dombey,'...	5:54
7	Over and above these extensive privileges...	4:21
8	Mr Feeder then told him, to his great joy...	5:02
9	'If I grow up,' said Paul.	5:15
10	'Our little friend,' observed Doctor Blimber...	5:04
11	He had to think of a portrait on the stairs...	5:29
12	There was a grand array of white waistcoats...	5:23
13	It was Sir Barnet Skettles, Lady Skettles...	4:30
14	From his nest among the pillows...	4:20
15	Once, when there was a pause in the dancing...	5:03
16	Diogenes was the dog: who had never in his life...	3:31
17	How Florence laughed!	2:31

Total time on CD 7: 78:59

CD 8

1	Chapter Fifteen	5:08
2	This the Captain, in a moment of uncommon...	5:06
3	'Keep her off a point or so!' observed the Captain...	5:13
4	The Captain, however...	5:47
5	As these reflections presented themselves...	4:46
6	Though still, of what the house had suggested to him...	5:17
7	There was no such place as Staggs's Gardens.	5:49
8	Miss Nipper then took breath...	2:41
9	Chapter Sixteen	4:51
10	The people around him changed...	4:46
11	Paul closed his eyes with those words...	2:49
12	For an instant, Paul looked at her...	3:08
13	Chapter Seventeen	4:45
14	One fact was quite clear to the Captain...	4:45
15	As it was a contest of affection and self denial...	4:11
16	The Captain's equanimity was so impenetrable...	4:24
17	The acuteness and significance...	4:32

Total time on CD 8: 78:12

CD 9

1	The Captain's complacency...	4:02
2	The unconscious Captain walked out...	3:10
3	Chapter Eighteen	5:12
4	The feathers wind their gloomy way...	5:08
5	'My dear child,' said Mrs Chick...	4:34
6	'Florence, my dear child, your poor papa...'	5:00
7	Mrs Chick approved of this resolution...	5:01
8	It was easy to know when he had gone out...	4:58
9	One day, about a week after the funeral...	4:56
10	Mr Toots, seeing Florence in tears...	4:48
11	Although Miss Nipper was nervous...	5:33
12	Her father sat at his old table...	6:15
13	Chapter Nineteen	5:20
14	'And I added,' pursued Walter...	4:38
15	'You remember me, ' said Florence with a smile...	4:46
16	'Oh! but Walter,' said Florence...	5:18

Total time on CD 9: 78:53

CD 10

1	Had Florence any misgiving...	5:09
2	Walter was coming down...	3:47
3	The relentless chronometer at last announced...	4:19
4	Chapter Twenty	5:20
5	'Where is my scoundrel!' said the Major...	4:54
6	'Dombey,' said the Major warmly...	5:57
7	But before the carriage moved away...	5:25
8	'Take advice from plain old Joe...'	5:15
9	Breasting the wind and light...	5:03
10	The sweet, calm, gentle presence...	6:04
11	Chapter Twenty-One	5:04
12	The discrepancy between Mrs Skewton's fresh...	4:39
13	'Stop a moment, Withers!' said Mrs Skewton...	4:39
14	Mr Dombey's eyes sought the ground...	5:05
15	'I hope, Mrs Granger,' said Mr Dombey...	3:28
16	Withers the Wan, at this period...	3:45

Total time on CD 10: 78:06

CD 11

1	The Major, who was quite forgiven...	3:29
2	Chapter Twenty-Two	5:10
3	'Don't mistake me.'	5:04
4	Still that passage, which was in a postscript...	5:14
5	Obedient to a nod from Mr Carker...	5:07
6	Mr Perch was too deferential to express surprise...	5:21
7	Mr Carker the Manager...	5:09
8	Mr Carker looked at Polly...	4:14
9	Mr Carker's mouth expanded...	6:01
10	The Game Chicken...	5:37
11	Everything happened as usual...	4:18
12	Chapter Twenty-Three	5:52
13	For Florence lived alone in the deserted house...	5:19
14	But there was one thought...	5:47
15	'And so,' said Florence...	5:27

Total time on CD 11: 77:22

CD 12

1	Arriving in good time...	4:50
2	In fine, Rob was despatched for a coach...	5:59
3	But when the Captain...	5:15
4	Captain Cuttle picked up his hat...	5:08
5	'Clara a-hoy!' cried the Captain...	4:50
6	Captain Cuttle, whose delicacy was shocked...	5:35
7	'My name's Jack Bunsby!'	3:58
8	But meeting the eyes of Florence...	3:40
9	Chapter Twenty-Four	5:38
10	There were some children staying in the house.	5:26
11	As they stopped soon afterwards...	5:44
12	Even in the response she made...	5:24
13	The man drew a deep sigh.	4:22
14	The father and his sick daughter...	4:47
15	Chapter Twenty-Five	3:39
16	'My dear Ned Cuttle. Enclosed is my Will!'	4:18

Total time on CD 12: 78:46

CD 13

1	The Captain's first care was to establish himself...	5:07
2	Not a station-house, or bone-house...	5:20
3	These innocent MacStingers...	3:08
4	Rob nodded his understanding...	2:55
5	Chapter Twenty-Six	5:14
6	'I shall have the pleasure, Carker'...	4:50
7	While they were thus engaged...	4:59
8	'I feel that I am weak...'	5:23
9	The Major advancing his double chin...	5:08
10	'This morning, Ma'am,' returned the Major...	5:04
11	'Your regards, Edith, my dear?'	5:41
12	The Major gave the horse's cough...	4:26
13	'This was respectful and becoming...	4:38
14	Chapter Twenty-Seven	5:00
15	A withered and very ugly old woman...	5:24
16	'Mrs Skewton,' said Mr Dombey...	5:49

Total time on CD 13: 78:20

CD 14

1	Few people had less reason to complain...	4:34
2	Mr Carker cantered behind the carriage...	4:27
3	They were not exchanging a word or a look.	5:13
4	Warwick Castle being at length...	6:00
5	The dinner was the counterpart...	4:57
6	The very voice was changed...	3:33
7	'You might have been well married,'...	3:53
8	Chapter Twenty-Eight	5:34
9	Again, Florence, in pursuit of her strong purpose...	5:13
10	Stretched on a crimson cushion...	4:38
11	Such of her late friends and companions...	4:52
12	'There is nothing the matter?' inquired Florence.	3:14
13	'Mrs Skewton,' said her father...	3:50
14	Chapter Twenty-Nine	5:45
15	A flush – it was warm weather...	4:35
16	Miss Tox assented...	3:52
17	Miss Tox left her seat in a hurry...	3:15

Total time on CD 14: 77:39

CD 15

1	In the moment's silence that ensued...	5:26
2	Miss Tox directed an imploring...	5:37
3	Figuratively speaking, that is to say...	4:23
4	Chapter Thirty	5:22
5	Edith sat looking at her...	4:42
6	Oh Edith! it were well to die...	5:46
7	'I hear him now!' cried Florence...	4:53
8	The conversation was almost entirely sustained...	4:39
9	No bad representation of the body...	5:20
10	My dear Dombey,' said Cleopatra...	5:04
11	'I am tired to death,' said she...	3:41
12	Edith bent the same fixed look upon her...	4:11
13	Chapter Thirty-One	5:35
14	The pastry cook is hard at work...	4:29
15	Mr Dombey leaves his dressing room...	4:12
16	'Dombey', says the Major...	4:17

Total time on CD 15: 77:51

CD 16

1	There is a pause while Mr Sownds...	5:38
2	'I am proud to see,' says Mr Carker...	4:23
3	Now, there are more congratulations...	5:29
4	'But I know sufficient of my friend...'	5:07
5	The chariot is at the door; the Bride is descending...	2:39
6	Mrs Skewton sleeps upstairs...	4:30
7	Chapter Thirty-Two	5:14
8	Nevertheless, the Captain did not tempt ill fortune...	5:12
9	The wind still rushing, and the rain still pattering...	5:36
10	Captain Cuttle preferred a glass of rum...	5:12
11	As I was coming out,' said Mr Toots...	5:10
12	'Wal'r my dear lad,' said the Captain...	5:41
13	'Thankee Captain Gills,' said Mr Toots...	4:50
14	'My lad,' returned the captain...	4:04
15	'You hatch nice little plots...'	4:07
16	But the Captain was not unmindful...	3:30

Total time on CD 16: 76:35

CD 17

1	Chapter Thirty-Three	4:47
2	The second home is on the other side of London...	5:44
3	The cordial face she lifted up to his...	5:05
4	'There is a kind of pride, Sir,' she returned...	4:56
5	'We are contented, Sir.'	4:54
6	Many half forgotten emotions were awakened...	5:00
7	She was now opposite the house...	6:11
8	Chapter Thirty-Four	4:46
9	The old woman, mumbling...	5:15
10	'!' cried the old woman.	4:13
11	The old woman leaned her elbows on the table...	4:48
12	In uttering this last word...	5:34
13	'You seem to say you know a great deal...'	4:14
14	At the sound of her raised voice...	4:24
15	Chapter Thirty-Five	3:09
16	Florence is ready to receive her father...	4:54

Total time on CD 17: 78:07

CD 18

1	With that Mr Dombey stalked away...	5:42
2	Soon after tea, Mrs Skewton...	5:02
3	There are yielding moments...	5:01
4	Florence and Edith, seated before the fire...	5:14
5	She saw that Florence would have spoken here...	2:58
6	She sat for some time silent...	3:42
7	Chapter Thirty-Six	5:05
8	The next arrival was a Bank Director...	5:12
9	Cousin Feenix was in great force...	5:23
10	Mr Dombey's face was not a changeful one...	5:09
11	Mrs Chick had some such thoughts too...	5:06
12	At last, the guests were all gone...	4:41
13	There was a sharpness...	2:48
14	Chapter Thirty-Seven	5:50
15	'I have presumed,' said Mr Carker...	5:00
16	'You may pass that by, Sir,' she returned...	4:29

Total time on CD 18: 76:39

CD 19

1	Edith raised her head quickly...	5:33
2	She got on no better towards night...	4:50
3	'Where is Mrs Dombey?'	5:57
4	Chapter Thirty-Eight	5:23
5	'Polly, my gal,' said Mr Toodle...	5:30
6	At these desperate words...	5:10
7	'You never mean to say, Mrs Richards,'...	4:20
8	Mr Toodle, who had a great respect for learning...	4:39
9	Chapter Thirty-Nine	5:05
10	Captain Cuttle also, as a man of business...	5:46
11	'Well, you'll excuse me...'	5:11
12	'And so you've got another berth...?'	4:27
13	Therefore Captain Cuttle read the newspaper...	5:13
14	'For why?' growled Bunsby...	5:27
15	'If so be,' returned Bunsby...	5:42

Total time on CD 19: 78:26

CD 20

1	'Oh I was a weak and trusting Fool...'	5:57
2	Some uneasy ideas that he must be walking...	5:11
3	Chapter Forty	4:58
4	Yes, and he would have it...	4:59
5	She looked upon him as she said so...	4:59
6	His insolence of self importance...	4:56
7	The hand that had so pressed the bracelet...	5:48
8	Mr Dombey took a long respiration...	5:38
9	But she was youthful...	5:23
10	From Edith she would sometimes look...	5:14
11	Mrs Skewton, on one particular day...	3:33
12	'My Lady, don't believe her,'...	3:40
13	Chapter Forty-One	5:23
14	And here is Doctor Blimber...	4:09
15	There is much shaking of hands...	3:48
16	'Certainly, Miss Dombey,' says Mr Toots...	4:18

Total time on CD 20: 78:08

CD 21

1	Mr Toots is likewise roaming up and down...	5:34
2	A shadow even on that shadowed face...	3:27
3	'There's an uncommon good church...'	3:30
4	Chapter Forty-Two	5:00
5	Thoroughly checked in his expectations...	5:00
6	He directed a sharp glance...	5:24
7	'Mrs Dombey and myself,' said Mr Dombey...	5:18
8	'You know,' said Mr Carker...	5:32
9	Mr Carker bowed his head...	5:01
10	'There is nothing more?' quoth Carker...	4:22
11	He rode direct to Mr Dombey's house...	3:42
12	Nothing escaped him.	3:51
13	Chapter Forty-Three	5:35
14	'Papa thinks well of Mrs Pipchin, Susan,'...	5:43
15	She listened at her own.	4:53
16	He may sleep on now.	5:05

Total time on CD 21: 77:11

CD 22

1	'I have dreamed,' said Edith in a low voice...	4:50
2	Chapter Forty-Four	5:02
3	'Miss Floy,' said Susan Nipper...	5:29
4	But the inflexible Nipper...	5:10
5	'What is it! Why is it?' said Florence...	5:21
6	'Yes,' said Florence hurriedly...	5:50
7	Chapter Forty-Five	5:19
8	'Sir', returned Edith...	5:20
9	She bit her blood-red lip...	4:50
10	'Mr Dombey...'	3:47
11	'You know you are free to do so Sir,'...	4:35
12	Chapter Forty-Six	4:35
13	'See where he goes!'	5:05
14	'Will you hold your tongue, Misses Brown?'	3:36
15	Turning into a silent little square...	4:12
16	As Rob took another cautious survey of the yard...	4:49

Total time on CD 22: 78:06

CD 23

1	Alone again, in his own room...	5:38
2	'I tell you,' said the Manager...	2:59
3	He rode near Mr Dombey's house...	4:03
4	Chapter Forty-Seven	5:12
5	Those who study the physical sciences...	5:12
6	Florence loved him still...	5:27
7	Her voice died away into silence...	5:16
8	Thus living, in a dream...	5:24
9	'However doubtful reason I may have...'	5:13
10	'It may be natural enough...'	5:21
11	'Release me, then,' said Edith...	4:52
12	'Perhaps,' said Carker...	5:23
13	As Florence stood transfixed...	5:40
14	Her father seized a candle...	5:20
15	Chapter Forty-Eight	3:25
16	With this last adherent, Florence hurried away...	3:29

Total time on CD 23: 78:10

CD 24

1	'Cheerily,' said the Captain...	5:30
2	In evidence of these convictions...	5:37
3	'How do you do, Captain Gills?'	4:53
4	The Captain nodded his own as a mark of assent.	3:51
5	The Captain removed his hand from his face...	4:16
6	Chapter Forty-Nine	5:11
7	Her tears burst forth afresh...	5:43
8	Florence essayed to eat a morsel...	4:22
9	Unlike as they were externally...	5:37
10	When they were alone again...	4:43
11	The Captain did not go to bed for a long time.	5:22
12	'What! Lady lass,' returned the Captain...	5:51
13	'Were they saved!' cried Florence.	3:50
14	But Walter sought him out...	3:34
15	'I am the cause of your going away...'	5:01

Total time on CD 24: 73:33

CD 25

1	Chapter Fifty	4:42
2	'I have been thinking of this...'	4:39
3	'Yes, Captain Cuttle,' replied Walter...	5:42
4	'The young woman?' returned the Captain.	5:02
5	All these good wishes, and better intentions...	5:29
6	Mr Toots was so manifestly delighted...	4:32
7	Interested in her, anxious for her...	5:00
8	She laid her hand on his...	5:30
9	The head was still bent down, the tears...	5:20
10	Chapter Fifty-One	5:19
11	It is not a phantom of his imagination.	5:20
12	'Dombey!,' says the Major...	4:30
13	'Shocking circumstances occur, Towlinson,' says Miss Tox.	4:50
14	'As to Perch, the messenger...'	2:13
15	Chapter Fifty-Two	4:45
16	'Woman,' said Mr Dombey to the old witch...	4:35

Total time on CD 25: 77:42

CD 26

1	Mr Dombey followed her with his eyes...	5:39
2	'Drink a little drop to comfort you...'	5:04
3	'What, young woman!' blubbered Rob...	5:08
4	The impetuous Mrs Brown rising directly...	4:47
5	'No, Rob. Not yet,' answered Mrs Brown...	4:32
6	'Well then, the way was this...'	4:45
7	Chapter Fifty-Three	5:36
8	John Carker broke the seal...	4:50
9	'Oh, dearest sister! Tied, of your own noble...'	5:28
10	'John!' she said, half breathless.	4:45
11	'Its matter was not new to me...'	5:07
12	'That he has abused his trust...'	5:11
13	John Carker had gone out...	3:53
14	Still upon her knees...	3:54
15	'Since then,' said Alice...	3:57
16	Chapter Fifty-Four	5:30

Total time on CD 26: 78:18

CD 27

1	The men – the second of whom...	5:19
2	'Hard, unrelenting terms they were!'	4:55
3	'I am a woman,' she said, confronting him...	5:15
4	He sprung up from his chair...	5:33
5	He did not venture...	4:21
6	Chapter Fifty-Five	5:42
7	'Who goes there! Monsieur?'	5:31
8	The word soon brought carriage, horses...	4:25
9	Of morning, noon, and sunset...	5:13
10	Of receding from the coast, and looking back...	5:19
11	For now, indeed, it was no fancy.	4:37
12	He passed his hand across his throbbing head...	4:09
13	Chapter Fifty-Six	5:43
14	'This, however, ' said Mr Toots, 'is not the point...'	5:28
15	'Aye!' nodded the Captain.	5:58

Total time on CD 27: 77:42

CD 28

1	This piece of Generalship accomplished...	5:11
2	Walter was busy and away all day...	5:39
3	Walter seemed to understand her...	5:02
4	The church Walter had chosen...	5:33
5	These proceedings on the part of Mr Toots...	5:46
6	'Although,' stammered Mr Toots...	5:19
7	'Began to think as how he was a scientific...'	5:09
8	At an early hour...	4:03
9	His patron being much engaged...	3:57
10	Chapter Fifty-Seven	5:09
11	Not even in that childish walk of long ago...	5:28
12	They are married, and have signed their names...	5:51
13	The Captain and Old Sol have been on board...	5:44
14	Chapter Fifty-Eight	4:46
15	Mr Perch always closed these conferences...	5:18

Total time on CD 28: 78:09

CD 29

1	The clerks dispersed after holding...	5:29
2	'The extent of Mr Dombey's resources...	4:47
3	'Dear Sir,' she went on to say...	4:40
4	He handed her down to a coach...	5:13
5	Oh the strong eyes, and the weak frame!	4:49
6	'My handsome gal – '	3:58
7	With another of those wild cries...	5:02
8	Chapter Fifty-Nine	4:59
9	It is wonderful how good they feel...	4:36
10	Mr Towlinson then says...	6:12
11	Then the mouldy gigs and chaise-carts reappear...	5:11
12	'Besides,' says the discreet lady...	5:28
13	The house is such a ruin...	4:33
14	And the ruined man.	3:37
15	As one by one, they fell away before his mind...	3:25

Total time on CD 29: 72:13

CD 30

1	He came out of his solitude...	5:41
2	The world was very busy and restless...	4:48
3	He would have said it, if he could.	4:16
4	Miss Tox addressed herself...	3:28
5	Chapter Sixty	4:58
6	The Doctor, with his learned legs...	5:18
7	'My dear,' said Mrs Toots, 'I was only talking.'	5:02
8	'Why, my love,' said Mr Toots...	5:10
9	The first impulse of the Captain was to run away.	5:21
10	'Why not sheer off?' said the Captain.	2:49
11	The ceremony was concluded...	5:15

Total time on CD 30: 52:16

CD 31

1	Chapter Sixty-One	5:40
2	It chanced one evening, towards sunset...	4:33
3	'The fact is,' said Cousin Feenix...	4:42
4	'I will leave,' said Cousin Feenix...	5:06
5	Florence was the first to change.	4:42
6	'I trust,' said Cousin Feenix...	4:53
7	Edith remained silent for some minutes...	3:41
8	Her sternness seemed to yield...	4:46
9	Chapter Sixty-Two	5:21
10	As to his partner, Captain Cuttle...	5:15
11	'"Here he is" says my wife...'	5:41

Total time on CD 31: 54:28

Total time on CDs 1–31: 39:08:18

Charles Dickens

(1812–1870)

DOMBEY AND SON

'There's no writing against such power as this... it is stupendous' (W.M. Thackeray)

In his Preface to the 1867 edition of *Dombey and Son*, Charles Dickens wrote: 'I began this book by the Lake of Geneva and went on with it for some months in France, before pursuing it in England.' As was his custom in London when planning a new novel, Dickens walked the streets of Lausanne, as well as the surrounding hills and by the shores of the lake, covering as much as eight or nine miles a night. It was an unlikely book to write on a family holiday, dealing as it does with a dysfunctional family – the Dombey – and particularly the estrangement between Mr Dombey and his young daughter Florence. It would also seem to be unlikely that Dickens would have found any inspiration in his own family for the book's central theme – his relationship with his daughters appears to have been affectionate and

close. Indeed, his daughter Kate once wrote that he was only strict towards them regarding tidiness and punctuality.

Dickens had taken two years off from his self-imposed writing schedule of producing a new novel in monthly parts on a regular basis, and he began writing *Dealings with the Firm Dombey and Son: Wholesale, Retail, and for Exportation*, to give the novel its full original title, in 1846. It is the first of Dickens's novels for which his working notes have survived, and they clearly show that he developed the shape of his novels in detail beforehand. His subject matter was to be pride and its effects on a family, epitomised by Dombey and his attitudes and actions: he has pride in himself, his achievements and his unchallenged position in the material world of commerce. However, it is an arid world,

a prison of his own making that shuts out Florence from any emotional contact. She is also considered to be barred by her gender from a future role in her father's business, while he over-burdens his little son Paul with expectations that the child could never sustain.

Incapable of feeling love and affection for his family, his natural emotions being warped by the pursuit of material success, Dombey has to be dismantled piece by piece throughout the novel and reconstructed as a loving father and a man of feeling through the power of forgiveness. It forms the main thrust of Dickens's narrative – an investigation into the mind and heart of Mr Dombey and also, antithetically, Florence, creating in essence what is a psychological novel, though this genre was not given a name until the studies of Sigmund Freud 50 years later. Dickens painstakingly dissects Dombey's emotions as he becomes more and more isolated from the living world and withdraws into a reclusive state of mind that denies everything that contradicts his own fixed opinions of himself and his importance, leading him, by the end of the book, to a

state bordering on madness.

Florence is a study in emotional deprivation and depression (she bursts into tears 88 times). She takes upon herself the blame for her father's indifference towards her. Her confusion leads her to believe that love is something that can be learnt, and painfully observes its effects in other families, seeking the key to affection but never finding it. Such analysis gives a darker and more sombre mood to the novel than anything Dickens had written previously.

It was, apparently, a difficult book to write, and at times a melancholy experience for Dickens. He was always deeply moved by the death scenes he created and whilst he was writing of the death of young Paul, his own son, Charley, was struck down by scarlet fever, a serious and often fatal disease in the nineteenth century. Charley survived but Dickens had decided in the early stages of the novel's publication that, 'Paul I shall slaughter at the end of number five'. Whilst writing this episode Dickens was in France and took time 'wandering desolate and sad about the streets of Paris'. As with the

death of Little Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop*, the Dombey boy's demise 'flung a nation into mourning', but Dickens invests Paul's death with more import than that of Little Nell, as he enters the very mind of the child. Dickens wrote in his notes: 'His illness only expressed in the child's own feelings – not otherwise described', while his friend and mentor John Forster described it as 'a fairy vision to a piece of actual suffering'. Such comments fortified Dickens's reputation with the public as a master of pathos, an important aspect of his relationship with his readers as the Victorians enjoyed pathos. There was even a contemporary song, with music by Stephen Glover, based on Little Paul's story, called *What Are the Wild Waves Saying?* which was sung in drawing-rooms throughout the country.

Meanwhile, Florence, doomed to live neglected in her father's forbidding home, echoed Dickens's own neglected childhood. Desperate for a mother substitute, Florence endows a great deal in Edith, her father's second wife, pointedly calling her 'Mama', but Edith too, we learn, is a deprived child. She

blames her own mother, the grotesque Mrs Skewton, for corrupting her as a child, teaching her, she says, to be 'artful, designing, mercenary. Laying snares for men – before I knew myself.' Dickens's relationship with his own mother was troubled. His bitter experience as a child working in a blacking factory, bottling the noxious liquid used to clean kitchen ranges, which cast such a shadow on his life that he could never talk about it, had been prolonged by his mother. She had insisted that he continue the work, which he found so demeaning, to provide income for the rest of the family. He never forgave her for this betrayal of his sensibilities. Until *Dombey & Son*, Dickens had been reluctant to visit his unhappy youth for fictional purposes. Once he had made the connection, however, it proved to be such a rich source of material that he used it to even greater effect in his next novel, the largely autobiographical *David Copperfield*.

Edith Dombey, too, is a study in pride, and has the power both to attract and repel the reader. The confrontations between her and her husband show

us the destructive power of two proud temperaments that have developed unnaturally. Dickens contrasts the unnatural (the pursuit of power and wealth) with the natural (the love of family and friends), showing the constant struggle between the two that exists in every human being and the society they create.

Published in book form in 1848, *Dombey & Son* was the first novel to include passages dealing with the burgeoning railway system in some detail. Dickens had an ambivalent attitude to the railway, regarding it as an unnatural development on the one hand, destroying communities and bringing speed and danger into our daily lives, but he could also see that this was the face of progress and perhaps a necessary evil. He also seemed to fear it, with some justification as he was injured in a railway accident at Staplehurst in 1865. In the novel, the railway symbolises the unfeeling and unstoppable, ruthless, mechanical drive of progress and business – Dombey's world.

By contrast Dickens uses water as an image of a flexible, shifting flow

of emotion, epitomised in one of his happiest creations: the 'old salt' Captain Cuttle. 'Glorious Captain Cuttle,' wrote Forster, 'laying his head to the wind and fighting through everything.' He is a comic character but presented as a fully rounded individual, and indeed Dickens integrates all his comic characters more successfully into the plot in this novel than he had heretofore. He surrounds the Dombey's with a set of thoroughly dysfunctional characters, disconnected now from their former place in society. Major Bagstock is used to being obeyed, but out of the army is out of step with the world. Miss Tox clings to the time when she had position, but is now a symbol of faded gentility. Likewise, Mrs Skewton, her beauty gone but once the toast of fashionable society, presents a pathetic picture. They all have an important part to play in illustrating the book's theme of natural versus unnatural, whilst not failing to entertain the reader.

With the novel finished, Dickens regained his usual high spirits, bolstered by the substantial sales figures for the monthly parts which were eagerly snapped

up as they appeared. And with this novel it can be said that Dickens came of age as a writer. 'I have great faith in *Dombey*,' he wrote, 'and a strong belief that it will be remembered and read years hence.' He was not wrong in this prediction.

Notes by David Timson



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 four Shakespeare plays for Naxos AudioBooks, 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 reads the entire Sherlock Holmes canon.

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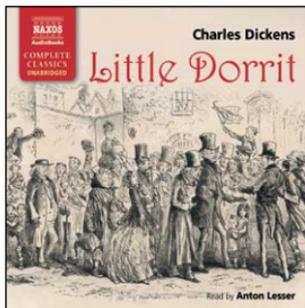
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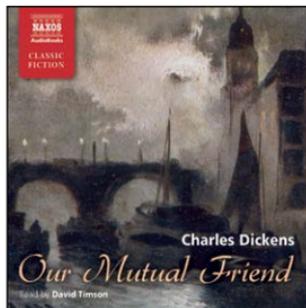
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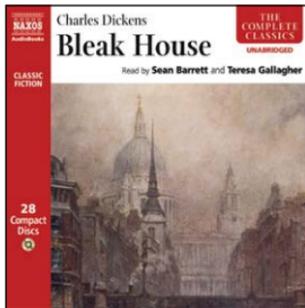
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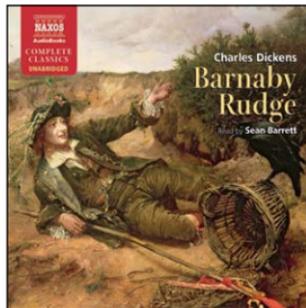
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