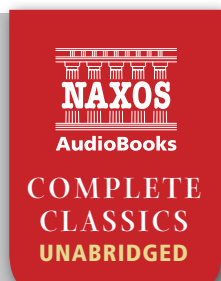




The Well-Beloved

THOMAS HARDY

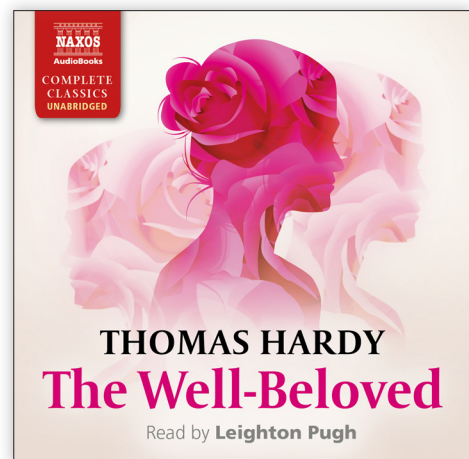
Read by **Leighton Pugh**



Jocelyn Pierston, a successful sculptor, is helpless in the face of 'the well-beloved': the manifestation of perfect womanhood that seems to move like a will-o'-the-wisp from one acquaintance to the next. It shapes his whole life. Where his artistry involves permanence – cold stone objects – his heart is caught by ephemeral beauty. After years spent in London, a return to his rocky birthplace, the Isle of Slingers, sparks Pierston's extraordinary involvement with three generations of the Caro family. As a reworking of his earlier *The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved*, it is the last novel that Hardy wrote, in 1897 – not a realist work, but instead a rather fantastical exploration of male desire.



Leighton Pugh trained at LAMDA, after studying Modern Languages at Queen's College, Oxford. Radio work includes the plays *Murder by the Book* and *Scenes from Provincial Life* for BBC Radio 4 and the voice of Heinrich von Kleist in the BBC Radio 3 documentary *The Tragical Adventure of Heinrich von Kleist*. Leighton has been in five productions for the National Theatre, most recently *The Lehman Trilogy* (NT Live 2018–19, New York, West End). For Naxos AudioBooks he has recorded *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, Zola's *Germinal*, *Nana* and *L'Assommoir*, and featured in Walton's *The Compleat Angler*.



Total running time: 6:39:36

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|-----------|--|-------|-----------|--|-------|
| 1 | The Well-Beloved | 10:04 | 21 | While they were sitting after dinner that evening... | 8:41 |
| 2 | Chapter 2: The Incarnation is Assumed to be True | 13:08 | 22 | Chapter 10: She Fails to Vanish Still | 10:48 |
| 3 | Chapter 3: The Appointment | 3:59 | 23 | Chapter 11: The Image Persists | 11:11 |
| 4 | Chapter 4: A Lonely Pedestrian | 8:12 | 24 | Chapter 12: A Grille Descends Between | 9:18 |
| 5 | Chapter 5: A Charge | 11:41 | 25 | No sooner had the words slipped out than Pierston... | 8:03 |
| 6 | Chapter 6: On the Brink | 7:13 | 26 | Chapter 13: She is Enshrouded from Sight | 8:20 |
| 7 | Chapter 7: Her Earlier Incarnations | 12:28 | 27 | Part Third: A Young Man Turned Sixty | 11:08 |
| 8 | Chapter 8: 'To Like the Lightning' | 14:01 | 28 | The first sensation was to find that she had long... | 9:38 |
| 9 | Chapter 9: Familiar Phenomena in the Distance | 8:29 | 29 | Chapter 2: Misgivings on the Re-embodiment | 13:25 |
| 10 | Part Second: A Young Man of Forty | 9:47 | 30 | Chapter 3: The Renewed Image burns itself in | 14:38 |
| 11 | That lady remained for the present partially screened... | 10:48 | 31 | Chapter 4: A Dash for the Last Incarnation | 10:25 |
| 12 | Chapter 2: She Draws Close and Satisfies | 12:29 | 32 | No more was said in argument, and the thing was... | 8:52 |
| 13 | Chapter 3: She Becomes an Inaccessible Ghost | 8:17 | 33 | Chapter 5: On the Verge of Possession | 8:53 |
| 14 | He began to divine the truth. Avice, the departed one... | 7:54 | 34 | Half-way up the steepest part of the pass he saw... | 8:46 |
| 15 | Chapter 4: She Threatens to Resume Corporeal... | 9:03 | 35 | Chapter 6: The Well-Beloved is – Where? | 13:14 |
| 16 | Chapter 5: The Resumption Takes Place | 7:05 | 36 | The second was in a man's hand: 'Dear Mother...' | 10:59 |
| 17 | Chapter 6: The Past Shines in the Present | 14:15 | 37 | Chapter 7: An Old Tabernacle in a New Aspect | 11:13 |
| 18 | Chapter 7: The New Becomes Established | 13:44 | 38 | Chapter 8: 'Alas for this Grey Shadow, Once a Man!' | 12:18 |
| 19 | Chapter 8: His Own Soul Confronts Him | 8:35 | 39 | As soon as he was strong enough he got her to... | 11:45 |
| 20 | Chapter 9: Juxtapositions | 6:49 | | | |

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