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Allan
QUATERMAIN

H. Rider Haggard

Read by **Bill Homewood**

CD 1

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | Allan Quatermain | 0:41 |
| 2 | Introduction | 5:22 |
| 3 | In the centre of the room, however... | 6:23 |
| 4 | And so the balance sways and the story runs... | 5:50 |
| 5 | Chapter 1: The Consul's Yarn | 5:54 |
| 6 | 'Listen, old fellow,' went on Sir Henry... | 7:11 |
| 7 | 'Well, where are you gentlemen steering for?' asked our friend... | 6:10 |
| 8 | The tall man (who among his own people was commonly...) | 6:19 |
| 9 | I shook my head at him. | 6:43 |
| 10 | Chapter 2: The Black Hand | 6:14 |
| 11 | After the first day Good succeeded, with the help of some cloth... | 5:48 |
| 12 | 'Hulloa!' holloaed Sir Henry from the other boat. | 5:42 |
| 13 | Just then, too, although all the other sounds of the forest had ceased... | 5:43 |

Total time on CD 1: 74:06

CD 2

| | | |
|----|--|------|
| 1 | Chapter 3: The Mission Station | 6:38 |
| 2 | In half an hour more we were once again making fair progress... | 6:39 |
| 3 | Crossing over a plank and through a very narrow opening in the wall... | 6:08 |
| 4 | When dinner was over we lit our pipes... | 7:03 |
| 5 | Chapter 4: Alphonse and His Annette | 5:30 |
| 6 | Just as I returned his axe to Umslopogaas... | 7:04 |
| 7 | As Umslopogaas, savage old Zulu that he was... | 6:07 |
| 8 | Alphonse stopped weeping, and began to rub his back. | 5:38 |
| 9 | Chapter 5: Umslopogaas Makes a Promise | 5:13 |
| 10 | For a moment Umslopogaas looked up from his sharpening... | 6:03 |
| 11 | Shortly after this, the people whom Mr Mackenzie had sent out... | 6:31 |
| 12 | The door was unbarred. | 5:06 |

Total time on CD 2: 73:47

CD 3

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | Meanwhile I had been thinking rapidly, as one does in emergencies... | 6:19 |
| 2 | 'Dearest Father and Mother,' ran the note... | 7:03 |
| 3 | Chapter 6: The Night Wears On | 5:54 |
| 4 | 'It is well,' went on Mr Mackenzie. | 6:13 |
| 5 | It so happened that Mr Mackenzie had in his little store... | 6:20 |
| 6 | It was now nearly one o'clock in the morning... | 5:51 |
| 7 | Chapter 7: A Slaughter Grim and Great | 6:43 |
| 8 | Presently Umslopogaas, who was a few paces ahead of me... | 5:11 |
| 9 | When I was two-thirds up I halted... | 6:21 |
| 10 | I soon got the magazine of the repeater filled again with cartridges... | 5:23 |
| 11 | I myself did not go into the mêlée... | 5:41 |
| 12 | Chapter 8: Alphonse Explains | 5:58 |

Total time on CD 3: 73:04

CD 4

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | At the kraal entrance the scene was a strange one. | 6:09 |
| 2 | It struck me as an odd thing that a girl who could find the nerve... | 6:38 |
| 3 | Accordingly we brought him to the tree where he had hidden... | 6:50 |
| 4 | Chapter 9: Into the Unknown | 6:19 |
| 5 | We also promised to give him wages... | 5:59 |
| 6 | Thence we proceeded a distance of about a hundred and fifty miles... | 6:54 |
| 7 | As we were paddling leisurely along... | 4:36 |
| 8 | Up went the swans, circling ever higher till at last they were mere specks... | 5:03 |
| 9 | Chapter 10: The Rose of Fire | 6:31 |
| 10 | 'Well, let us hope for the best and prepare ourselves for the worst,'... | 8:00 |
| 11 | On we rushed towards this pillar of fire... | 6:47 |
| 12 | 'My word,' called out Good, who was on shore the first... | 7:18 |

Total time on CD 4: 77:09

CD 5

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | 'I say, you fellows, let's get out of this or we shall all go off our heads.' | 3:37 |
| 2 | Chapter 11: The Frowning City | 5:09 |
| 3 | Just then, however, the others woke up... | 6:30 |
| 4 | So we hailed back in English, French... | 6:34 |
| 5 | Good did not much like this allusion to his fat... | 5:44 |
| 6 | Curiosity now began to overcome the fear of the onlookers... | 5:52 |
| 7 | On the brow of this precipice stood a great building... | 5:52 |
| 8 | Chapter 12: The Sister Queens | 6:28 |
| 9 | On we went up the first flight of one hundred and twenty steps... | 6:05 |
| 10 | In the exact centre of the hall was a solid mass of black marble... | 6:19 |
| 11 | I have seen beautiful women in my day... | 5:30 |
| 12 | 'Oh, my word!' thought I to myself... | 5:59 |
| 13 | When they were all gone she bent forward... | 6:45 |

Total time on CD 5: 76:28

CD 6

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | Chapter 13: About the Zu-Vendi People | 6:02 |
| 2 | The best bred people in the country are, as I think I have said... | 5:28 |
| 3 | Zu-Vendis has had its king-makers as well as England... | 6:08 |
| 4 | The law of the country is, on the whole, mild and just... | 5:45 |
| 5 | And now comes a question which I find some difficulty in answering. | 4:32 |
| 6 | Chapter 14: The Flower Temple | 6:36 |
| 7 | As soon as we were seated the driver called out... | 6:07 |
| 8 | Overcome at so awe-inspiring a sight, the vast loveliness... | 6:55 |
| 9 | As we appeared there was a murmur through the vast crowd... | 4:14 |
| 10 | There is silence upon the face of the Earth and the waters thereof! | 5:26 |
| 11 | As he spoke a wonderful and a beautiful thing happened. | 5:31 |
| 12 | Then Sorais made answer in her deep quiet tones... | 5:03 |

Total time on CD 6: 67:53

CD 7

| | | |
|----|---|-------|
| 1 | Chapter 15: Sorais' Song | 05:48 |
| 2 | On other days we would pay visits to the country seats... | 06:36 |
| 3 | Next day we were much more lively... | 05:36 |
| 4 | That night, when in fear and trembling we attended the royal... | 05:25 |
| 5 | Another source of imminent danger to us was the rising envy... | 08:24 |
| 6 | Chapter 16: Before the Statue | 06:48 |
| 7 | 'Thou sayest thou dost love me,' she said in a low voice... | 07:21 |
| 8 | I found the old warrior leaning on Inkosi-kaas as usual... | 06:04 |
| 9 | This reading and signing of the laws took a long time... | 06:52 |
| 10 | Chapter 17: The Storm Breaks | 04:49 |
| 11 | From the direction of the quarters of the maids of honour... | 05:17 |
| 12 | At last, whether it was her gaze, or the perfume in her hair... | 06:00 |

Total time on CD 7: 75:05

CD 8

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | I gained audience of the Queen without trouble. | 7:27 |
| 2 | Here we heard from Alphonse, who was deeply aggrieved... | 7:40 |
| 3 | Chapter 18: War! Red War! | 7:08 |
| 4 | This incident was unimportant enough in itself... | 6:13 |
| 5 | Just then Sir Henry joined us, and Good arrived, too... | 6:04 |
| 6 | Throughout this long and eloquent address Good had been... | 6:56 |
| 7 | Up she rose and, descending from the throne... | 7:06 |
| 8 | 'And I tell ye strangers – all save Bougwan...' | 6:33 |
| 9 | Chapter 19: A Strange Wedding | 7:04 |
| 10 | Now, as it happened, Agon had been hurried away that morning... | 6:57 |

Total time on CD 8: 69:14

CD 9

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | It may, perhaps, be remembered... | 4:45 |
| 2 | Well, that night Good and I messed as I have said in solitary grandeur... | 4:35 |
| 3 | Chapter 20: The Battle of the Pass | 5:58 |
| 4 | The main body of the army reached the neck about dinner-time... | 6:31 |
| 5 | And at last up came the red sun... | 6:28 |
| 6 | And so, notwithstanding all that we could do, the enemy drew nearer... | 7:08 |
| 7 | Just then we saw the smaller bodies of cavalry stationed on... | 5:51 |
| 8 | Chapter 21: Away! Away! | 6:36 |
| 9 | Leaving Umslopogaas to hold the horses, I hobbled to the spring... | 7:06 |
| 10 | On, clattering through the sleeping streets. | 7:46 |
| 11 | Chapter 22: How Umslopogaas Held the Stair | 6:10 |

Total time on CD 9: 69:01

CD 10

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | Just then, to my astonishment, the Zu-Vendi officer Kara... | 7:21 |
| 2 | For a moment the black-bearded Nasta stood with bowed face... | 6:56 |
| 3 | A gasp of wonder and astonishment rose from all those who... | 6:58 |
| 4 | I laughed, or rather tried to. | 7:06 |
| 5 | Chapter 23: I Have Spoken | 5:40 |
| 6 | 'Methinks my sister the Queen hath forgotten the chief count...' | 6:58 |
| 7 | And I thank thee, my Lord Incubu... | 6:16 |
| 8 | It is a week since I wrote the above, and now I take up my pen... | 6:59 |
| 9 | Chapter 24: By Another Hand | 5:17 |
| 10 | 'At last,' he gasped, with an attempt at a smile... | 5:52 |
| 11 | Since then things have gone very well with us. | 5:21 |
| 12 | Note by George Curtis Esq. | 2:39 |

Total time on CD 10: 73:29

Total time on CDs 1–10: 12:09:16

H. Rider Haggard

(1856–1925)

Allan QUATERMAIN

Excellent wine is described as having ‘a long nose’ – that is to say that the taste stays in the mouth for a very long time after sipping, and one is loathe to spoil it with further tastings. Sometimes this is also true of literature. The reader’s head can be so filled with the author’s fictional world that to visit another world too soon after is too cruel a thought.

In my sleeve notes for *She* by the same author, I mentioned the bereavement one feels when finally putting down a good book. It is not always possible to pick up another straight away. This is often because the novel has transported us to another place where we can happily lose ourselves, and suddenly, like the secret access to the land of Narnia behind the wardrobe in C.S. Lewis’s *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the door is shut, and we grieve. The bereavement is all the greater if, as we read the final

words of the last paragraph, we are also losing a friend whom, in the course of the book, we have come to know and love.

Perhaps this is Haggard’s greatest skill. In *She* there is no question that Holly, the blunt, self-deprecating scholar, becomes at least a favourite uncle within a few chapters. By the end of the book, through Holly’s humility and surprising courage in the face of great danger, he has actually earned our love – and we miss his companionship terribly.

It is not always so with our heroes. In Victor Hugo’s brilliant *Les Miserables*, for example, we have a marvellous central character in Jean Valjean, and we follow his tormented odyssey with fascination, admiration and sympathy, as he bravely confronts many vicious twists of fate. At the end of the book we are satisfied, the tale is told, we have been copiously reminded of man’s inhumanity to man,

honour and mercy have triumphed – and the world moves on. However, the very next day we can pick up another exciting book, step through another secret door, and lose ourselves again.

Many great writers transport the reader to pleasurable or fantastic places, but perhaps the factor that makes it so difficult to leave the magical worlds that H. Rider Haggard creates is his, and his reader's, direct identification with the hero. Use of the first person in fictional narrative is an attractive but dangerous device, even more so when the tale involves the dramatic re-creation of memories. Incidentally, for the audio book performer this raises a difficult question: in remembered dialogue, is the central character, as narrator, a sufficiently talented mimic to be able to personify age, dialects and gender? In the case of Haggard's heroes one is inevitably drawn to the conclusion that they are born raconteurs; rather than merely reporting the story, one can enter into its recreation with gusto, and without suspension of disbelief. The favourite, much-loved uncle would be the best possible guest at a

party. After the party, when everyone has gone home, he is the one we miss.

Allan Quatermain, of course, is the favourite of favourites. Haggard himself could not put the character down, having introduced us to him in the marvellous adventure of *King Solomon's Mines*. In *She*, the academic Ludwig Horace Holly finds himself drawn into unsought-for adventure, and acquits himself magnificently, whereas in *King Solomon's Mines* and in *Allan Quatermain*, and in further retrospective novels by the same author, Quatermain actually seeks adventure. Despite his humility he is confident in his abilities. Were we to join one of these expeditions, we should always be glad of Holly's wisdom and affability in extreme situations, but it is to the quick-thinking, experienced hunter and guide Allan Quatermain that we would turn first, as to a Superman.

What an adventure this is! And how cleverly Haggard introduces his hero in the first chapter! To explain why and how the book comes to be written in the first person would be to give away a major piece of the plot, which in real time spans

a period of two years. Suffice it to say that at the opening of the book, Allan Quatermain is grieving for the loss of his only son:

We buried him this afternoon under the shadow of the grey and ancient tower of the church of this village where my house is. It was a dreary December afternoon, and the sky was heavy with snow... A robin redbreast came as bold as could be and lit upon the coffin and began to sing. And then I am afraid that I broke down, and so did Sir Henry Curtis, strong man though he is; and as for Captain Good, I saw him turn away too...

Quatermain's companions Curtis ('altogether a magnificent specimen of the higher type of humanity...') and Good ('short, dark, stout... with twinkling black eyes...') are already familiar to us from *King Solomon's Mines*. In the god-like nobility of one and the loyal courage of the other, we have the perfect foils for Quatermain himself. Though not as self-deprecating as Holly in *She*, Quatermain describes himself as

a 'small, withered, yellow-faced man of sixty-three...' The three of them seem to sum up those qualities of 'Englishness' which Haggard so admires. He dedicates the book to his son, in the hope that it may inspire him to 'the highest rank whereto we can attain – the state and dignity of English gentlemen'.

The novel picks up Quatermain's life some years after his adventures in search of King Solomon's Mines, and by a happy chance we travel once again with the magnificent Zulu Umslopogaas ('the Slaughterer'), armed as ever with his dreadful weapon Inkosi-kaas ('...which was nothing else but a pole-axe, with a beautiful handle of rhinoceros-horn...'). Umslopogaas embodies all that is most admirable in the Zulu warrior, and bravely accompanies our intrepid team into the most frightening of unknowns. It is he who, early in the story, reinforces our trust in the modest Quatermain, describing him as:

'...slayer of elephants, eater-up of lions, Clever one! Watchful one! Brave one! Quick one! Whose shot never misses,

who strikes straight home, who grasps a hand and holds it to the death'

It is he who, towards the end, is ready to give his life for Quatermain's cause:

On, axe in hand, he staggered, that dreadful-looking, splendid savage, and the ladies forgot to turn faint at the scene of blood...

Haggard's treatments of women and of the native African seem to us today, though respectful, to be occasionally quaint and chauvinistic – but we should not judge him by modern ethical standards; the book is of its time, and its politics and social attitudes essentially benevolent. He loved both women and Africa, it is plain, and in his introduction to this last great adventure of the hunter Allan Quatermain, he writes: 'Civilisation is only savagery silver-gilt'.

Henry Rider Haggard was born in 1856. His mother was an amateur novelist

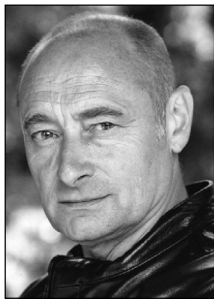
and his father a barrister and country gentleman. Henry was sent to Ipswich Grammar School, before taking a post in South Africa as secretary to Sir Henry Bulwer, Governor of Natal. At the age of 22 he was appointed Registrar of the Natal High Court, at which time he fell in love with an African woman, and became fascinated by Zulu culture and traditions. It is interesting that *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* both feature a loving, brave, black African woman. He returned briefly to England and married a Norfolk heiress, Mariana Louisa Margitson, taking her back to South Africa, where they ran an ostrich farm. Eventually, with the intention of pursuing a career in the law, he moved back to Norfolk with Mariana, and was called to the bar at the age of 28.

Perhaps there was more of his mother in him than his father, for it was not long before he gave up his practice in order to write novels of adventure and discovery. He was excited by R.L. Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, published in 1883, and wrote *King Solomon's Mines*, introducing us to the great scout and hunter Allan Quatermain, in less than a week. The

sequel, *Allan Quatermain*, took him only eight weeks. Haggard became an expert agriculturalist; among the many books which he wrote in a long career, several were on farming. For his services to the British Empire, both diplomatic and

agricultural, he was knighted in 1912 and awarded the KCBE in 1919. He died in London in 1925.

Notes by Bill Homewood



Bill Homewood's West End credits include leads in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Grand Hotel*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *The Boys From Syracuse*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night* and *The Hollow Crown* (Royal Shakespeare Company). His innumerable television series include *The Professionals*, *Berkeley Square*, *A Wing and a Prayer*, *The Renford Rejects*, *London's Burning*, *Casualty*, *Coronation Street*, *Crocodile Shoes*, *The Bill* and *Spy Trap*. Bill also directs theatre in the USA, the UK, and France, where he runs a ranch with his wife Estelle Kohler. His recordings for Naxos AudioBooks include *Les Misérables*, *King Solomon's Mines*, *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *She*.

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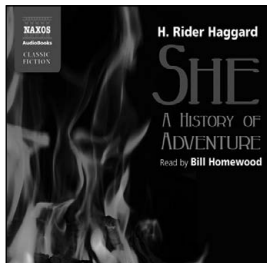
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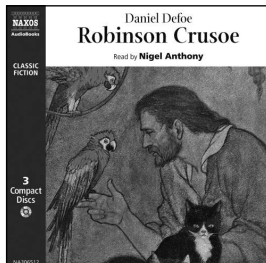
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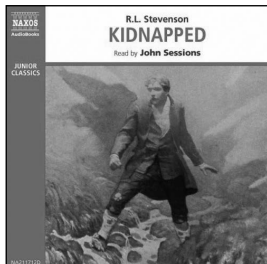
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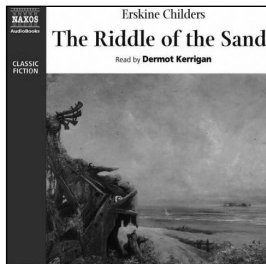
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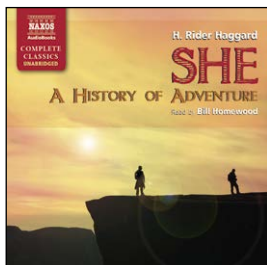
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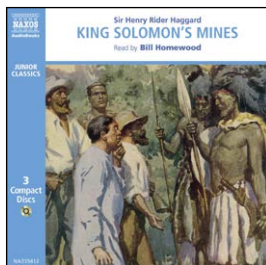
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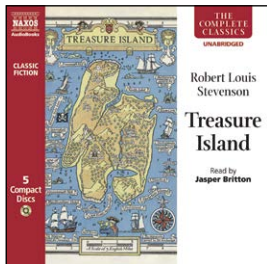
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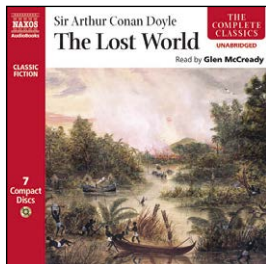
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