

NAXOS
AudioBooks

Marcel Proust
The Fugitive

Read by **Neville Jason**

CLASSIC
FICTION

MODERN
CLASSICS



NA321112D

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST • XI

1	'Mademoiselle Albertine has gone!'	5:10
2	Reflections	8:29
3	I decided to write Albertine a farewell letter	7:00
4	Waiting for a reply	3:34
5	A telegraph from Robert and a letter from me	5:34
6	Francoise brings two rings	3:54
7	A letter from Albertine	4:30
8	The duplicity of Saint-Loup	9:40
9	She never came back	7:24
10	Summer was at hand	9:30
11	Albertine...still excited my jealousy	5:48
12	The mysterious delight of a penetration	6:37
13	In Albertine's case...	2:04
14	We have no hold over the life of another person	4:55
15	Curiosity unbounded	4:26
16	Aimé's report	6:28
17	A further report from Aimé	7:22
18	The loosening of attachments	6:57
19	Andree came to see me	8:27
20	Immense desire – the cruelty of memory	14:23

21	Mlle d'Epouville/Le Figaro	6:23
22	A surprise meeting – Mlle Forcheville	9:49
23	A month later, luncheon with the Guermantes	4:57
24	Sketches by Elstir	5:18
25	The process of oblivion	3:43
26	Another visit from Andrée – some revelations	7:18
27	The real Albertine	6:37
28	My mother brought me to Venice	7:39
29	Breezes, gondolas, and disillusion for Mme Sazerat	7:44
30	A curious telegram	8:07
31	On the train to Paris	6:30
32	The train reached Paris...	6:56
33	About this time I used to see...	11:19
34	A visit to Combray	9:10
35	Fresh touches to the image of a memory	4:04

Total time: 3:58:09

Marcel Proust

The Fugitive

(The Sweet Cheat Gone)

The Fugitive opens with Marcel astonished at the intensity of his mental agony following Albertine's sudden departure, 'How little we know ourselves', he observes, having never dreamed how desperately he depended on Albertine for his peace of mind and happiness.

Unlike more conventional novels, *Remembrance of Things Past* does not depend on its narrative to ensure the continuation of the reader's interest. Events themselves are less compelling than the poetic descriptions and philosophical observations to which they give rise. That said, *The Fugitive* contains one of the most unexpected and shocking occurrences in the novel: the death of Albertine. But even here, the accident itself happens offstage in the manner of a Greek tragedy, and it is the author's penetrating observations on the process of grief and mourning which result from that event that provide the major content of the book.

From the moment Françoise announces

'Mademoiselle Albertine has gone!' we follow the development of the Narrator's emotional states; his initial shock, his astonishment at the power of his feelings, the realisation of how much he has depended on Albertine's presence and how he has avoided acknowledging the signs of her unhappiness and frustration. He lets us see his attempts at self-deception, the 'double-think' which enables him to bear his pain. And at each stage that pain becomes more unbearable; first when he realises Albertine has gone, next when he accepts that she may not come back, and finally when he knows that death has prevented her from returning ever again. And even when she is dead his jealousy persists, and he continues to torture himself by seeking to discover explicit details of her sexual adventures.

Proust's deep understanding of the human soul and his ability to describe his own thoughts and feelings with unparalleled truthfulness and courage

enable us recognise the universality of his experience. He analyses his inner world with the insight of a psychologist, and it is his ability to speak without equivocation, to show himself at his most vulnerable, which touches us so deeply.

But despite Proust's literary honesty, the social climate in which he lived forced certain restrictions on him. Society demanded that any lifestyle, especially homosexuality, which deviated from what was considered acceptable, had to be discreet and hidden from view. The fate of Oscar Wilde loomed as a warning to those who ignored the rules. Proust was not one to flout society, on the contrary, in his youth he had made strenuous efforts to be accepted in the right circles. It was not until after the death of his mother that he was able to indulge his homosexual tendencies, although even then he was never able to live openly as a homosexual.

Proust remarked that as a writer one can say anything providing one does not say 'I', and although *Remembrance of Things Past* is written in the first person, Proust contrived to remain incognito. He denied publicly that the Narrator was intended to be himself (he writes of 'the "I" who is not

"I"', although at one point he teasingly suggests we call the Narrator 'Marcel'), and the Narrator's two great loves, Albertine and Gilberte, are women, although their originals have been identified as male. The device of attributing homosexuality to other characters enabled him to discuss the subject freely without implicating himself.

Proust repudiated accusations by his friends that he had portrayed them, insisting that each character is based not on one, but on many originals, but it is clear that some characters are modelled more closely than others on a single person. It is generally accepted that the main original of Albertine, by sexual transposition, was a young Monegasque, Alfred Agostinelli, who worked initially as Proust's chauffeur and later as his secretary.

Although over time there were several young men engaged by Proust in the capacity of secretary, who lived in his apartment and became 'Captives' as a result of his possessive nature, it was Agostinelli whose tragic death in a plane crash was so closely echoed in Albertine's riding accident, and resulted in the deep grief Proust describes so movingly.

In correspondence Proust referred to

Agostinelli as 'an extraordinary being' and 'a young man whom I loved probably more than all my friends' and added, 'I don't know how I can endure such grief'. Proust used the events of his life more directly than many authors as raw material for his work, and it was Agostinelli's death which was to inspire him to create out of his suffering the enduring monument which is *The Fugitive*.

Notes by Neville Jason

The previous books

Swann's Way, set in the village of Combray, introduces the reader to Marcel's family, their servants including the redoubtable Françoise, and their neighbour Charles Swann, the scholarly man of fashion. There are two country walks favoured by Marcel's family; *Swann's Way*, which lies in the direction of Swann's property, and the *Guermantes Way*, which skirts the estate of the noble Guermantes family.

Swann in Love tells the story of Swann's passion for the former courtesan Odette de Crécy, and Marcel's childish love for their daughter Gilberte.

Within a Budding Grove Part I sees the end of Marcel's infatuation with Gilberte. Following an illness he is sent to recuperate at the seaside resort of Balbec together with his grandmother, who renews her acquaintance with an old school friend, the Marquise de Villeparisis.

In *Within a Budding Grove Part II* Marcel meets a band of charming young girls, to one of whom, Albertine, he is particularly attracted. He encounters the painter Elstir, whom the reader has met earlier as a member of Mme Verdurin's bohemian circle. He is also introduced to the sinister Baron de Charlus, and to Mme de Villeparisis's

nephew, the Marquis Robert de Saint-Loup.

The Guermites Way Part I finds Marcel's family installed in an apartment which forms part of the Paris mansion of the Guermites family. Marcel becomes obsessed with the Duchesse de Guermites, who does not reciprocate his interest. At a reception given by the Marquise de Villeparisis, Marcel discovers that his father's colleague, the former diplomat M. de Norpois, has been the lover of the Marquise for many years.

The Guermites Way Part II sees the death of Marcel's beloved grandmother following a stroke. Now that Marcel is no longer in love with the Duchesse de Guermites, her attitude towards him changes, and she invites him to dine. Seeing nobility at close quarters, Marcel is made aware of the fallibility of his fantasies about them. He receives an invitation from the Baron de Charlus, and is outraged by the manner of his reception. Charles Swann announces that he is suffering from a terminal illness.

In *Sodom and Gomorrah (Cities of the Plain) Part I* Marcel observes a homosexual encounter between the Baron de Charlus and the tailor Jupien, which leads to the

author's meditations on the theme of homosexuality. Marcel continues to rise in the world of high society as he receives an invitation to a ball given by the Prince and Princesse de Guermites. He pays a second visit to Balbec, where feelings of grief for the death of his grandmother vie with those of his desire for Albertine.

In *Sodom and Gomorrah (Cities of the Plain) Part II* Madame Verdurin has taken a house for the summer in the locality of Balbec and invites Marcel and Albertine to join her 'little group' for her 'Wednesdays'. The violinist Charles Morel, whose father was valet to Marcel's uncle, becomes intimate with the Baron de Charlus. Marcel's suspicions regarding Albertine's lesbian tendencies are revived when he learns of her friendship with Mlle Vinteuil, who is due to arrive in Balbec. To avoid their meeting he decides to take Albertine with him to Paris.

The Captive Part I finds Albertine installed in Marcel's Paris apartment in the absence of his parents. Despite enjoying their physical intimacy, Marcel is tortured by his suspicions regarding Albertine's lesbian tendencies, and his efforts to separate her from her women friends end by his keeping

her a virtual prisoner.

In *The Captive Part II* Marcel attends a soirée at the Verdurin's house, to which the Baron de Charlus has invited his aristocratic friends. When the guests all snub Mme Verdurin, she takes her revenge by setting Morel against his protector, the Baron. Marcel attempts to please Albertine with gifts of gowns and expensive jewellery, but she is listless and depressed, deprived of her freedom. Just as Marcel resolves to leave her, he is met with the news that Albertine has taken flight.

The Author

Marcel Proust was born on July 10, 1871. His father, a distinguished professor of medicine, was from a Catholic family, while his mother was Jewish. Although intent on becoming a writer from an early age, Proust was riddled with self-doubt.

During his twenties he co-founded a short-lived review, *Le Banquet*, contributed to *La Revue Blanche* and had his first book published in 1896, a collection of essays entitled *Les Plaisirs et les Jours*.

He became an enthusiastic admirer of Ruskin and translated his *Bible of Amiens* and *Sesame and Lilies* into French. A novel,

Jean Santeuil, which was the precursor of *Remembrance of Things Past*, was abandoned, and eventually published long after Proust's death, in 1954.

For much of his youth Proust led the life of a man about town, frequenting fashionable Paris drawing rooms and literary salons, which were to form the background of a number of his early stories and sketches, and subsequently of *Remembrance of Things Past*.

The death of his adored mother in 1905 resulted in a nervous collapse and aggravated his chronic asthma and insomnia. But despite his grief and the sense of loss from which he never recovered, his mother's death freed him with regard to his homosexual emotional life, and allowed him to address homosexuality in his writing, albeit in a manner which treated such experiences as happening to others rather than to himself.

In 1907 he moved into an apartment in the Boulevard Haussmann where, in the bedroom which he had had lined with cork to keep out noise, he embarked upon his great work *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (*Remembrance of Things Past*).

This long autobiographical cycle was

originally published in eight sections: *Du Côté de Chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*) in 1913; *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* (*Within a Budding Grove*) in 1918; *Le Côté de Guermantes I* (*The Guermantes Way I*) in 1920; *Le Côté de Guermantes II* and *Sodom et Gomorrhe I* (*Cities of the Plain I*) in 1921; *Sodom et Gomorrhe II* in 1922; *La Prisonnière* (*The Captive*) in 1923; *Albertine Disparue* (*The Sweet Cheat Gone*) in 1925; and *Le Temps Retrouvé* (*Time Regained*) in 1927.

Proust was obliged to publish *Swann's Way* at his own expense, and even after it had appeared, had trouble finding a publisher for the next part, *A L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs*. However, when it appeared in 1918 it received considerable acclaim, and was awarded the Prix Goncourt the following year.

By the time Proust died, on November 18, 1922, the first four parts of the cycle had been published, leaving the others to appear posthumously. The English translation from which this abridged version has been prepared was made by C.K. Scott Moncrieff.

Notes by Neville Jason

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

SCRIABIN ETUDES Alexander Paley, piano	8.553070
BRETON STRING QUARTET IN D MAJOR Gyöergy Oravecs, piano; New Budapest Quartet	8.223745
D'INDY STRING QUARTET/PIANO QUINTET Ilona Prunyi, piano	8.223691
WIDOR PIANO QUINTET IN D MINOR Ilona Prunyi, piano; New Budapest Quartet	8.223193
DAVID PIANO TRIOS Ilona Prunyi, piano; Eszter Perényi, violin; Tibor Párkányi, cello	8.223492
CIURLIONIS PIANO WORKS Vol. 1 Mûza Rubackyté, piano	8.223549
CIURLIONIS PIANO WORKS Vol. 2 Mûza Rubackyté, piano	8.223550

Music programmed by Nicolas Soames

Cover picture: *The Amazon* by Edouard Manet.
Courtesy: Giraudon/The Bridgeman Art Library, London.

Marcel Proust

The Fugitive

Read by **Neville Jason**

Albertine has finally made her escape from Marcel's Paris apartment, where his obsessive jealousy had turned her into a virtual prisoner. Not only is Marcel quite unprepared for the effect on him of her flight, but soon he is devastated by news of an even more irreversible loss.



Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the Diction Prize by Sir John Gielgud. He has worked with the English Stage Co., the Old Vic Company and the RSC as well as in films, TV and musicals. He is frequently heard on radio. As well as *Remembrance of Things Past*, he also reads Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, *Far From The Madding Crowd*, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* for Naxos AudioBooks.

CD ISBN:

978-962-634-211-4

View our catalogue online at
www.naxosaudiobooks.com



Abridged by Neville Jason
Produced by Nicolas Soames
Edited by Sarah Butcher, SBS
Recorded by Simon Humphries at Air-Edel

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. UNAUTHORISED PUBLIC PERFORMANCE,
BROADCASTING AND COPYING OF THESE COMPACT DISCS PROHIBITED.
©2001 NAXOS AudioBooks Ltd. ©2001 NAXOS AudioBooks Ltd.
Made in Germany.

Total time
3:58:09