



## Crime and Punishment

*Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821 - 1881) Translated by Constance Garnett*

Read by:	Mark Nelson	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	21 hours 8 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1253
Language:	English	UPC:	0701236969733
Style:	Solo	MSLP:	\$13.99
Genre:	Fiction		

Raskolnikov, the name of the main character in *Crime and Punishment*, is derived from the Russian “raskolnik”, which means “one who splits or “dissenter”. The figurative meaning of “raskalvyat”, the verb from which it is derived, means “to bring to light”. These two concepts are at the heart of this story of an impoverished former law student who rationalizes his right to murder an elderly, unscrupulous pawnbroker, Alyona Ivanovna, and steal her money to defray his debts, achieve great things, and rescue his sister from a disastrous marriage. He botches the job, kills her half-sister as well, and leaves in a panic without most of the money. Consumed by mental anguish and moral dilemma, his behavior becomes increasingly strange as he

wanders the streets in a delirium. He meets the investigating detective, Porfiry, who begins to suspect him of the murder even though he lacks any evidence and another man has falsely confessed. Raskolnikov confides his secret to Sonya, a virtuous prostitute, who convinces him to clear his conscience and confess. The book is the first and most famous masterpiece in the Dostoevsky canon. It was written at a time when he was deeply in debt soon after his release from five years of Siberian exile. Composed in six parts with an epilogue, it was first published in twelve monthly installments in *The Russian Messenger* 1866 and became a literary sensation. One of the first attempts at psychological exposition, it is considered by many to be the most profound philosophical novel of the 19th century.

**Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky** (November 11, 1821 – February 9, 1881) was a Russian author whose works are noted for their psychological depth and religious and philosophical themes. Born the son of a physician in Moscow, his family introduced him to a wide range of literature. He attended boarding schools in Moscow, followed by Military Engineering School in St. Petersburg. In 1846 he published *Poor Folk*, Russia’s first “social novel”. Success brought access to St. Petersburg literary circles, where he joined a group that discussed banned books critical of “Tsarist Russia”. Members were arrested in 1849 and sentenced to death, commuted to four years in a Siberian prison camp followed by six years of military service. After release from the military in 1859 he published *The House of the Dead* (1861), the first book describing squalid Russian prisons. He lost most of his money gambling while touring Europe in 1862 and 1863. Returning to St. Petersburg in 1864, he published his first major work, *Crime and Punishment*, in 1866, followed by *The Gambler* in 1867. He married his stenographer that same year and left for a three-month honeymoon that lasted four years. He returned to Russia in 1871 and struggled with financial troubles as well as with poor health. *A Writer’s Diary*, a collection of essays that attracted the attention of Tsar Alexander II. His recognition and reputation grew but his health deteriorated. His last years included the publication of *The Brothers Karamazov* and a memorable address at the unveiling of the Pushkin Memorial in 1880.