



Swann's Way

Marcel Proust (1871 - 1922) Translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff

Read by:	Andrew Coleman, Denny Sayers	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	24 hours 17 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1177
Language:	English	UPC:	0683422134968
Style:	Solo	MSLP:	\$13.99
Genre:	General Fiction		

Swann's Way is the first of seven volumes of *In Search of Lost Time* (previously translated as *The Remembrance of Things Past*), the magnum opus by Marcel Proust. The central theme is the nature of involuntary memory and how associations color and shape feelings in a constantly unfolding manner. The story is told by a young Narrator, never named, who recounts his visits to the family's country home in the fictional village of Combray and centers on his fascination with Charles Swann, an elegant and well-connected friend of his parents with a beautiful daughter and a difficult marriage. There is a famous moment when the taste of a madeleine cake dipped in tea evokes a powerful nostalgia and uncorks a stream of memories of forgotten

persons, events and connections that evolve and intertwine over a long arc of time. *Swann's Way* is divided into four parts: *Combray I*, sometimes thought of as the "Overture" and which ends with the episode of the madeleine; *Combray II*; *Un Amour de Swann*, a self-contained novella of Swann's affair with Odette de Crecy; and *Nom de pays: le nom* (Names of places: the name). The volume was rejected by numerous publishers and published in 1913 at Proust's expense. Readers and critics were initially confounded by the introspective characters, lack of much action or plot, and by the mass of memories and contemplation, but soon realized the brilliance of the work and the consummate skill of the writer. It is considered one of the five most important literary achievements of the twentieth century.

Valentin Louis Georges Eugene Marcel Proust (July 10, 1871 – November 18, 1922) was a French author best known for his monumental novel *A la recherche du temps perdu* (*In Search of Lost Time*). He was born and raised in the 16th arrondissement of Paris just after the upheaval of the Paris Commune. His father, a Catholic, was a prominent pathologist and epidemiologist; his mother was the daughter of a wealthy Jewish family. Marcel was baptized and raised Catholic but did not practice the faith. He was an asthmatic child whose schooling was frequently disrupted by illness. He spent many long holidays in the village of Illiers, the model for Combray. Nevertheless, he spent a year in the French army as a young man and then immersed himself in the salons of Paris and wrote literary articles and reviews. He was very close to his mother and lived at his parents' apartment until after their deaths. He eventually found a volunteer position at Bibliotheque Mazarine but never worked, obtaining a sick leave that lasted several years. His early work includes *Les Plaisirs du Jour* (1896), a collection of short pieces; a novel, *Jean Auteuil*, which he abandoned in 1899 and was published posthumously in 1952; and two translations of works by Ruskin, a key influence, which were undertaken with the help of his mother and the English cousin of a friend and well received. He started on his masterwork in 1909 at age 38 and produced seven volumes totaling 3,200 pages and containing over 2,000 characters. The revisions of the last three volumes were incomplete at the time of his death in 1922 and were edited and published by his brother Robert.