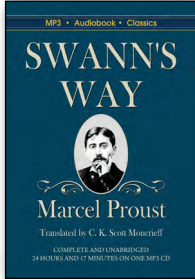


# European Literature



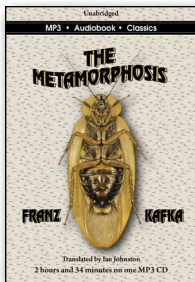
## Swann's Way

Author: Marcel Proust  
Read by: Denny Sayers, Andrew Coleman  
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case  
Length: 24 hours 17 minutes  
Genre: Fiction

*Swann's Way* is the first of seven volumes of *In Search of Lost Time*, the magnum opus by Marcel Proust. 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. The central theme is the nature of involuntary memory and

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MSLP: \$14.99

how associations color and shape feelings in a constantly unfolding manner; 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. *Swann's Way* was initially rejected by numerous publishers; 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 now considered one of the five most important literary achievements of the twentieth century.



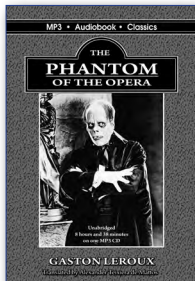
## The Metamorphosis

Author: Franz Kafka (1883-1924) Translated by Ian Johnston  
Read by: David Barnes  
Length: 2 hours 34 minutes  
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case  
Genre: Fiction

*The Metamorphosis* (1915) tells the tale of Gregor Samsa, who one day wakes up transformed into a "monstrous vermin." Part I begins with the discovery. Thinking he is dreaming, he cannot communicate with his family or unlock the door to his bedroom. When he finally enters the room his family is horrified and forces him back in. Part II describes family adapting to their strange situation and Gregor becoming acclimated to his new body. After a scuffle his father pelts him with apples, causing serious injury. In Part

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III Gregor ventures into the living room to listen to his sister play the violin for boarders, who spot him and move out immediately. The exhausted family wishes Gregor would leave. Hearing this, Gregor retreats to his bedroom and dies. Relieved and remorseless, the family makes plans to find a suitable husband for their daughter. *The Metamorphosis* one of the most original and provocative stories ever written. It is considered one of the foundational works of modern literature.

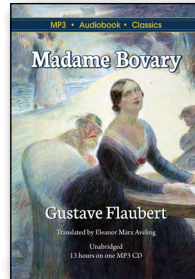


## The Phantom of the Opera

Author: Gaston Leroux  
Read by: Ralph Snelson  
Length: 8 hours 35 minutes  
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case  
Genre: Horror and Supernatural Fiction

Before the Broadway hit and the Lon Chaney movie, *The Phantom of the Opera* (1910) was a book by French author Gaston Leroux, a beautiful, poignant, suspenseful work with a Gallic tone of love wrapped in danger. Christine, the ingénue, takes the stage of the Paris Opera and scores a brilliant success. Her former lover attends the performance, hears her voice and falls in love again. The two plan to wed. On a subsequent night a massive chandelier falls into the audience. In the ensuing confusion the Phantom, known until then only through letters and malevolent acts, kidnaps Christine and whisks her away to his hiding place deep beneath the Opera House. He shows himself to Christine; in time he will remove his mask and show her his face. A love story in the deepest, most mysterious sense, the story portrays the many mansions within a single heart, with its consequent confusion of devotion, jealousy, possessiveness, passion, and desire, contradictory and utterly human.

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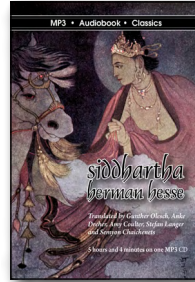


## Madame Bovary

Author: Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880)  
Read by: Multiple readers  
Length: 12 hours and 55 minutes  
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case  
Genre: Fiction

*Madame Bovary* tells the story of the wife of a country doctor who lives beyond her means and has adulterous affairs to escape her bored provincial existence. Emma is a pretty girl yearning for romance and luxury inspired by popular novels. Not surprisingly, her affairs run from infatuation to disappointment, and her consolation is indulgence in luxury goods bought on credit from a wily merchant. While the story is quite simple, the artistry is in the acute depiction of the mundane details of rural French life and the hidden patterns that mature into destiny. Emma's fantasies and aspirations are exposed as illusions that crumble in implacable grip of real life. As such, the book marks a turning point away from romanticism to the realism of the latter 19th century. *Madame Bovary* created a scandal when it was serialized in the fall of 1856. Flaubert was prosecuted for obscenity in January 1857 and acquitted the following month. The resulting notoriety made the book a bestseller when it was published in April of that year. It is now regarded as one of the greatest novels and often described as a "perfect" work of fiction.

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UPC: 0683422134593  
MSLP: \$12.99



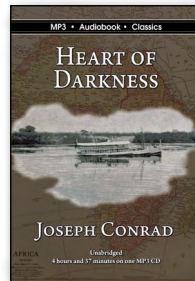
## Siddhartha

Author: Herman Hesse (1877-1962)  
Read by: Adrian Praetzelis  
Length: 5 hours 4 minutes  
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case  
Genre: Fiction

Set in ancient Nepal during the time of the Gautama Buddha, *Siddhartha* (1922) tells the story of a young man who leaves home to seek enlightenment in the ascetic life of a beggar. He meets with Gautama but chooses to follow his individual path instead of joining the order. Crossing a river to the city, he settles and becomes a rich businessman and lover of the beautiful courtesan Kamala. Finding his luxurious life empty, in middle-age he returns to the river, adopts a humble life and finds peace and enlightenment.

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MSLP: \$10.99

He crosses paths with friends and lovers over the years in ways that deepen his understanding of the mysterious connectedness of all things in the cyclical unity of nature. When Hesse wrote *Siddhartha* he lived a reclusive life and immersed himself in Hindu and Buddhist scriptures. The book's structure reflects the three stages of life for Hindu men, the four noble truths, and the eight-fold path. The result is a mesmerizing mixture of religious legend and modern novel, written in a simple, graceful style that harmonizes the tensions in the contrasting forces of life.



## Heart of Darkness

Author: Joseph Conrad (1857-1924)  
Read by: Bob Neufeld  
Length: 4 hours 37 minutes  
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case  
Genre: Fiction

*Heart of Darkness* tells a story of a journey taken by Marlow, the narrator, up the Congo River into the heart of Africa in search of an ivory trader named Kurtz. Things are seldom as they should be. The first station he visits is a scene of brutal devastation. The steamboat he is to pilot is wrecked and takes months to repair. The company personnel are lazy and self-serving. After two months journey his vessel is attacked a few miles from their destination. Fending off the attack, he arrives and soon learns that Kurtz is worshiped by the natives, is very ill, and is probably insane. He gets Kurtz aboard against his will for the return journey, which, of course, is filled with further perils and disasters, and returns to Europe disillusioned and skeptical of humanity's attempts to achieve civilization. Conrad's insights were among the first to expose the pretenses of civilized people and question the behavior of imperialist and colonial powers. Its impact was quick and deep. Modern Library ranks *Heart of Darkness* at number 67 on its list of the 100 Best Novels of the Twentieth Century.

Catalog: DB-1156  
UPC: 0683422134715  
MSLP: \$10.99