

NAXOS
AudioBooks

Mikhail Bulgakov
**The Master
and Margarita**

**THE
COMPLETE
CLASSICS**

UNABRIDGED

Read by **Julian Rhind-Tutt**



**MODERN
CLASSICS**

NAX93512D

Part 1

1	Chapter 1: Never Talk to Strangers	8:08
2	And just as Mikhail Alexandrovich was describing...	7:02
3	'But, allow me to ask you,' the foreign guest inquired...	8:21
4	Homeless stared at the insolent stranger...	7:25
5	Chapter 2: Pontius Pilate	6:55
6	A minute later, he again stood before the procurator.	8:18
7	The secretary stared at the prisoner...	9:03
8	Just then, a swallow flew swiftly into the colonnade...	7:47
9	For a while, only the fountain's song interrupted the silence...	6:03
10	When the legate left the balcony...	5:39
11	It was all over, and nothing more remained to be said.	4:31
12	Chapter 2 (cont.): 'I know, I know!'...	6:20
13	All those present set...	4:45
14	Even as Pilate cried out the words...	4:54
15	Chapter 3: The Seventh Proof	6:26
16	Berlioz's plan was admittedly sound...	5:18
17	Chapter 4: The Chase	6:30
18	Ivan gasped and then saw the despicable foreigner...	5:42
19	The luck was not all good, however!	5:38
20	Chapter 5: The Incident at Griboedov	8:54

21	At half past ten on the evening when Berlioz died...	5:33
22	And exactly at midnight...	6:27
23	Then, out of nowhere...	5:58
24	At this point the onlookers...	3:53
25	Chapter 6: Schizophrenia, as Described	3:03
26	Chapter 6 (cont.): Ruekhin looked more carefully at Ivan...	4:57
27	Suddenly, the clock struck twice.	4:52
28	Several minutes later...	6:26
29	Chapter 7: A Fishy Apartment	7:04
30	At last, realizing that he was abandoned and alone...	7:10
31	Yesterday afternoon he arrived in Moscow...	6:24
32	Stiopa turned away from the phone...	6:18
33	Chapter 8: The Duel of the Professor and the Poet	7:29
34	At last, they let Ivan go.	7:01
35	He found the professor's offer quite appealing.	6:49
36	Chapter 9: Koroviev's Capers	8:01
37	Taking into account that Sir Woland...	6:56
38	As soon as the chairman left the apartment...	7:05
39	Chapter 10: News from Yalta	6:53
40	There could be no doubt...	6:44

41	The financial-director's face was literally frightening.	7:40
42	Somehow, the office quickly grew dark.	6:13
43	Chapter 11: A Rift in Ivan	4:36
44	After a drink of hot milk...	4:48
45	Chapter 12: Black Magic and its Exposure	7:24
46	A minute later...	6:59
47	The orchestra stirred...	6:44
48	Two and a half thousand people in the theatre...	6:22
49	The audience was excited...	7:18
50	Chapter 12 (cont.): 'Last night, Arkady Appolonovich...'	4:27
51	Chapter 13: Enter the Hero	6:39
52	Ivan did not leave anything out...	6:08
53	The guest moped and twitched...	7:39
54	And the guest continued...	7:35
55	It was finished in the month of August...	7:13
56	And so, it was at that accursed time...	6:26
57	But no one came.	5:48
58	When everything was quiet again...	6:29
59	Chapter 14: Glory to the Rooster	5:38
60	And then he felt a sort of putrid dampness...	9:11

61	Rimsky extended his hand suddenly...	5:11
62	Chapter 14 (cont.): White as snow...	2:37
63	Chapter 15: Nikanor Ivanovich's Dream	7:18
64	Then came the soft ringing of a bell...	6:12
65	Dunchill turned out to be a respectable...	5:55
66	The promised Kurolesov appeared on stage...	7:16
67	Kanavkin did not at all anticipate...	6:25
68	Chapter 16: The Execution	8:07
69	It would not be entirely correct to say...	7:04
70	And then, when the procession had moved...	8:03
71	The man ascending the mountain...	8:53
72	Chapter 17: A Troublesome Day	5:39
73	The investigation headquartered itself in Varenuvka's office...	5:57
74	Chapter 17 (cont.): Upon arriving at his destination...	7:40
75	The Entertainment Commission's branch was situated...	5:15
76	The faces of the budding rock-climbers...	5:27
77	Chapter 18: Unfortunate Visitors	7:09
78	The door opened as soon as the economist rang the bell...	6:57
79	First of all he picked up the passport...	7:50
80	And so, leaving the economist...	7:53

81	The man roasting the meat turned...	8:37
82	The bartender sat very still...	4:19
83	It is well known what happened to him thereafter.	5:37
84	The professor saw few patients that evening...	6:07

Part 2

85	Chapter 19: Margarita	5:53
86	Chapter 19 (cont.): The dream that visited Margarita that night...	7:28
87	Leaning back in the trolley's soft, comfortable seat...	6:00
88	Surprised, Margarita Nikolayevna turned...	5:08
89	Turning white, Margarita returned to the bench.	7:41
90	Chapter 20: Azazello's Cream	7:17
91	At the same time...	5:42
92	Chapter 21: The Flight	7:37
93	They say that, to this very day...	6:56
94	Then, suddenly, the savage destruction ceased.	6:48
95	The low noise of separating air came from behind...	6:22
96	Margarita sensed she was approaching water...	7:46
97	Chapter 22: By Candlelight	4:40
98	Chapter 22 (cont.): Koroviev's appearance had changed...	6:30

99	They passed between the columns...	6:33
100	Finally, Woland smiled and spoke...	6:49
101	Meanwhile, confusion reigned on the chessboard.	5:38
102	'Blood is a great thing...'	5:17
103	Chapter 23: Satan's Grand Ball	7:21
104	Finally they arrived on the platform...	8:39
105	A steady stream now flowed up the staircase.	8:59
106	A second later, without knowing how she got there...	8:36
107	A lone new guest stepped into the hall...	5:03
108	Chapter 24: The Extraction of the Master	5:10
109	'But tell me,' Margot asked Azazello...	4:50
110	Chapter 24 (cont.): 'I wouldn't want to run across you...'	7:11
111	Margarita felt short of breath.	6:31
112	A gust of wind burst into the room...	7:03
113	The cat instantly jumped up from his seat...	7:42
114	'Forgive me,' Koroviev exclaimed.	5:40
115	Woland's order was carried out instantaneously.	5:27
116	What happened was this...	6:14
117	Annushka hid the find in her shirt...	5:38
118	Chapter 25: How the Procurator Tried to Save Judas of Kiriath	7:03

119	At last, the procurator heard...	8:14
120	Here the guest directed his peculiar stare...	7:30
121	At this point...	4:43
122	Chapter 26: The Burial	7:30
123	As for the woman that Aphranius called Niza...	6:15
124	Judas stood alone for a while...	6:26
125	Nightingales filled the Gethsemane gardens with their singing.	7:39
126	But the better the dream...	7:48
127	'I suspect that the reason was, again, money.'	7:05
128	Matthew Levi was hiding in a cave...	7:33
129	Levi glared hatefully at Pilate...	6:18
130	Chapter 27: The End of Apartment No. 50	4:48
131	Arkady Appolonovich spent the entire evening...	7:55
132	On Friday night...	6:33
133	Chapter 27 (cont.): And so, once again, things dragged on...	8:06
134	At this time, Koroviev and Azazello...	5:24
135	'I challenge you to a duel!' bellowed the cat...	5:49
136	Chapter 28: The Final Adventures of Koroviev and Behemoth	5:50
137	The fat man tucked the Primus under his arm...	7:44
138	We do know, however...	7:41

139	Archibald Archibaldovich surprised the waiters...	8:28
140	Chapter 29: The Fate of the Master and Margarita is Decided	6:09
141	Matthew Levi disappeared.	5:46
142	Chapter 30: It's Time! It's Time!	8:15
143	Then the Master wiped his tears...	7:12
144	Chapter 30 (cont.): When the poisoned victims fell silent...	7:29
145	The Master and Margarita dismounted...	6:26
146	Chapter 31: On Sparrow Hills	7:13
147	Chapter 32: Forgiveness and Eternal Refuge	5:27
148	Thus they flew in silence for a long time...	5:12
149	The mountains turned the Master's voice to thunder...	6:05
150	Epilogue	6:41
151	Proper credit is due, over and over...	7:14
152	As for Stiopa Likhodeyev...	5:42
153	Yes, several years passed...	5:50
154	The professor returns home completely ill.	4:54

Total time: 16:53:20

Mikhail Bulgakov

(1891–1940)

The Master and Margarita

The Master and Margarita is a novel that could not have been published when the author was alive; indeed it was pretty remarkable that it got published when it did, some 26 years after his death. In its energy, inventiveness, fantastic imagery, spirituality and belief in the capacity of the human spirit, it was a dangerously liberating book, and liberating books were not going to be published in the USSR of the 1920s and 30s. It was a world of overwhelming fear and suspicion, where the repressive State machinery made any opposition – real or imagined – punishable by death or imprisonment. This dark brutality infected every aspect of life; and the strict bureaucracy that enforced the State's decrees led to profound social stagnation, quite apart from numbing inefficiency in even the most straightforward of transactions. In this

world, art of any form was a dangerous currency, and the State did everything it could to ensure that only those works of which it approved were published. *The Master and Margarita* would not have been approved.

For a start, it is a satire, and people holding absolute power are rarely amused by being mocked. It pokes fun at the catastrophic absurdity of the system, uncovering the vanity and duplicity of those who operated within it. It makes a point of sending up the pompous literary establishment of the time, which would hardly endear it to publishers. More dangerously, it is also sympathetic to the figure of Christ (if not quite the orthodox one), an attitude the atheistic State would again have been ready and keen to punish. For today's readers, these satirical elements would make the book worth attention. But

what elevates it beyond its time, makes it more than a significant period-piece, is its dizzying, dazzling invention, its vivid fantasy, its complex, ambivalent morality, its humanity and its breadth of humour. It is *Solzhenitsyn* written by Lewis Carroll, Dostoevsky by Vonnegut.

Mikhail Bulgakov was born in Kiev in 1891, a son of a professor at a theological academy. He went on to study medicine, but after the turmoil of the Civil War (in which he served as a doctor) he turned to the area he had always loved – theatre and literature. One day in 1919 while on a train, he had written a story and when the train stopped, he sold it to the first paper he could find. It was never going to be that easy for him again. Over the next ten years, he wrote sketches, stories, novellas and plays which gradually displayed a more critical attitude to the Soviet system. As a result his works began to be banned and were viciously attacked in the press. Deeply frustrated by this official interference, he wrote a letter asking for permission to go abroad. In an irony that Thomas Hardy might have enjoyed,

Bulgakov was telephoned by Stalin himself, who asked if he really wanted to go. The author, quite possibly fearing for his life, rescinded his request, claiming that a writer could not work outside his homeland; and the dictator arranged for him to work at the Moscow Art Theatre adapting Gogol's work for the stage. But even here, his work continued to be banned, as it was later when he was at the Bolshoi Opera House as a librettist. In this atmosphere, *The Master and Margarita* had to be written in secret. He started it in 1928, and it took, in its various forms, twelve years; and nearly never got written at all.

The novel contains several incidents taken from Bulgakov's life. He was married three times, and the figure of Margarita is probably based on his third wife; Pilate's faithful and brave dog is called Banga, the nickname of Bulgakov's second wife. Bulgakov knew what it was like to be rejected and publicly humiliated by the literary establishment, for example – something the Master has to endure. There are also plenty of references to real people

(in disguised form) in the characters. But in perhaps the most significant autobiographical incident, Bulgakov had been so alarmed by the potential threat if his novel was discovered that he had burned the manuscript. When he later decided to carry on, his wife asked how he would manage without all his notes. And just as the Master does, he said he could remember it all. 'Manuscripts don't burn' became something of a catchphrase in the USSR when the book was eventually published, and this personal reflection of the author was recognised as a statement about the indomitable nature of human invention. This incident and its implications echoes through the whole book, as does the expression 'Cowardice is the worst of sins'. It relates to Bulgakov's own fear about the novel and his own attitude to the Stalinist regime; and by extension to everyone else who suffered under it.

He had lost his faith for a while, but regained it in later life, finding comfort in his belief in God. This might also have made him a target for the authorities, since the State enforced atheism. But again,

the capacity of some humans to follow their own convictions despite the threats of the all-powerful State demonstrated a tenacious capacity for individualism. And in the end, even Stalin failed to eradicate faith in the USSR, just as Caesar had failed to eliminate Christianity two thousand years before – the two periods reflected in the book.

The book weaves three separate strands together in its narrative. The first is 1920s and 30s Moscow, visited by the Devil in the form of Professor Woland and his crew of bizarre assistants (including a talking, shooting, bipedal cat). They set about destroying the comfortable pretensions of the jobsworths who superintend apartments or run theatres, and in particular the smug literary world, through displays of impossible, wild, unpredictable, cruel, bloody and sometimes fatal magic. The second is set in Jerusalem (named Yershalaim in the book), where Pontius Pilate is about to sentence a charismatic leader accused of inciting the population against their Roman overlords. Again, the name is

altered, shifted from Jesus to Yeshua; and the characters are different, too. Pilate is tortured by the problem of goodness and obedience, while Yeshua dismisses some of the claims made for him by his followers but remains powerfully, luminously strong yet tender. The third strand binds these two together, and features the Master and Margarita themselves. He wrote the story of Pilate; but dispirited by its rejection by the establishment, he despairs of his work and himself, burning the former and committing the latter to an asylum. Margarita never loses faith in him or the book, and enters into a Faustian pact to save them all.

These interweaving plot lines are told either with extraordinary brio or brilliant control. In the Moscow sequences, the appearance of supernatural characters naturally allows for fantastic imaginings and events, creating an impossible, magic world inside the repressive reality of Moscow. Meanwhile, the discussions with Yeshua are told with a powerfully contrasting directness and simplicity. In both cases, Bulgakov examines the ideas

of goodness, of obedience, of creativity, of courage and of freedom, but never reaches an easy moral conclusion. Woland may be the Devil – but his actions are sometimes beneficial. The Master has created a great work of art, but he is not granted simple or complete absolution. The system is mocked, but not directly. Pontius Pilate is made a human, sympathetic character; while innocents are sometimes punished. Margarita sides with Woland, but there is no retribution.

The Master and Margarita was eventually published in 1966. This was strange in itself – the Communist Party was still very strongly in power. The book came out in serial form, slightly censored and – equally strangely – in a rather conservative magazine. Whatever prompted the publication, it was greeted with a kind of rapturous joy. The boldness of its writing, the breadth and freshness of its imagining, the spirited and vivid characters, the courage to refer to the dire shortcomings of the system so fearlessly and with such humour – these were all inspirational and offered moral and intellectual hope. Since

then, interest has if anything increased. The novel is filled with literary and musical references, especially *Faust* and the opera *Eugene Onegin*, allowing almost infinite academic speculation about its symbolic and thematic intentions, all fully justified by the text's unobtrusive complexity. But whatever these close studies reveal, the magical depth of the book makes it as endlessly rewarding as it is immediately accessible.

Notes by Roy McMillan



Julian Rhind-Tutt is a prominent British actor, working extensively in television, film, radio and theatre. He is a familiar face on both British and American television, having had starring roles in cult comedies *Green Wing* and *Keen Eddie*, as well as appearing in *Marple*, *Black Books* and *Oliver Twist*. Film credits include *The Madness of King George* (1994), *Notting Hill* (1999), *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* (2001) and *Stardust* (2007). In 1992 he received the Carleton Hobbs award, and has since featured in more than 50 radio productions.

Credits

Produced by Roy McMillan

Recorded at Motivation Sound Studios, London

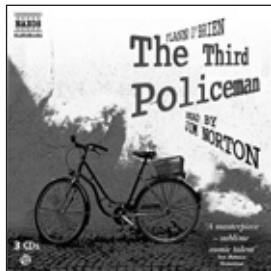
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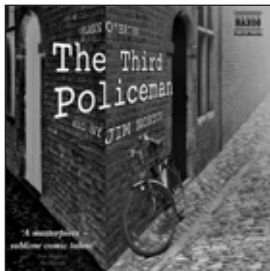
Cover picture: *The magician cat causes the dissident cornered by the KGB to vanish into thin air and sets the Writers' Union Canteen on fire*, illustration to *The Master and Margarita* by Bulgakov, 1988 by Maciej Bieniasz (b.1935), Private Collection, Polish; courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library

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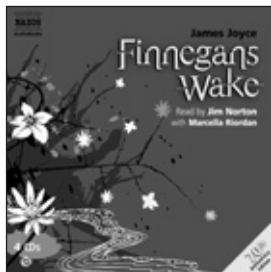
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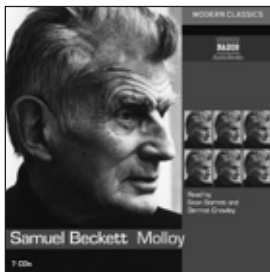
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Finnegans Wake

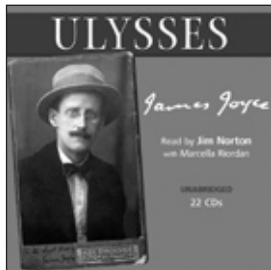
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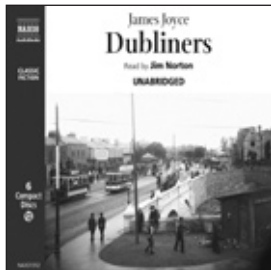
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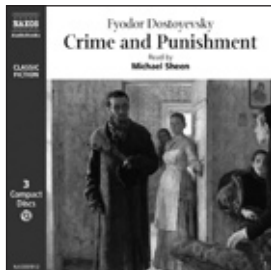
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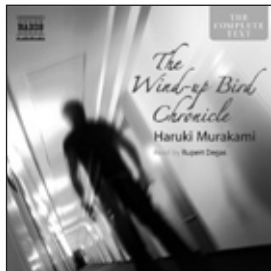


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Mikhail Bulgakov The Master and Margarita

Read by **Julian Rhind-Tutt**

The Devil comes to Moscow, but he isn't all bad. Pontius Pilate sentences a charismatic leader to his death, but yearns for redemption; and a writer tries to destroy his greatest tale, but discovers that manuscripts don't burn. Multi-layered and entrancing, blending sharp satire with glorious fantasy, *The Master and Margarita* is ceaselessly inventive and profoundly moving. In its imaginative freedom and raising of eternal human concerns, it is one of the world's great novels.



Julian Rhind-Tutt has starred in cult comedies *Green Wing* and *Keen Eddie* and appeared in *Marple*, *Black Books* and *Oliver Twist*. His film credits include *The Madness of King George* and *Notting Hill*. In 1992 he received the Carleton Hobbs award, and has since featured in more than 50 radio productions.

CD ISBN:

978-962-634-935-9

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Produced by
Roy McMillan

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