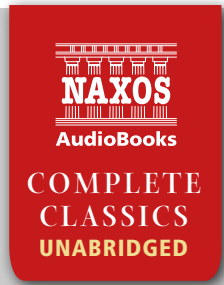




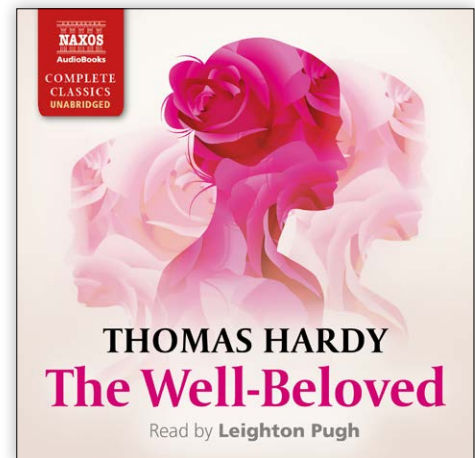
The Well-Beloved

THOMAS HARDY

Read by **Leighton Pugh**



Jocelyn Pierston, a successful sculptor, is helpless in the face of 'the well-beloved': the manifestation of perfect womanhood that seems to move like a will-o'-the-wisp from one acquaintance to the next. It shapes his whole life. Where his artistry involves permanence – cold stone objects – his heart is caught by ephemeral beauty. After years spent in London, a return to his rocky birthplace, the Isle of Slingers, sparks Pierston's extraordinary involvement with three generations of the Caro family. As a reworking of his earlier *The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved*, it is the last novel that Hardy wrote, in 1897 – not a realist work, but instead a rather fantastical exploration of male desire.



Total running time: 6:39:36

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Leighton Pugh trained at LAMDA, after studying Modern Languages at Queen's College, Oxford. Radio work includes the plays *Murder by the Book* and *Scenes from Provincial Life* for BBC Radio 4 and the voice of Heinrich von Kleist in the BBC Radio 3 documentary *The Tragical Adventure of Heinrich von Kleist*. Leighton has been in five productions for the National Theatre, most recently *The Lehman Trilogy* (NT Live 2018–19, New York, West End). For Naxos AudioBooks he has recorded *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, Zola's *Germinal*, *Nana* and *L'Assommoir*, and featured in Walton's *The Compleat Angler*.

1	The Well-Beloved	10:04	21	While they were sitting after dinner that evening...	8:41
2	Chapter 2: The Incarnation is Assumed to be True	13:08	22	Chapter 10: She Fails to Vanish Still	10:48
3	Chapter 3: The Appointment	3:59	23	Chapter 11: The Image Persists	11:11
4	Chapter 4: A Lonely Pedestrian	8:12	24	Chapter 12: A Grille Descends Between	9:18
5	Chapter 5: A Charge	11:41	25	No sooner had the words slipped out than Pierston...	8:03
6	Chapter 6: On the Brink	7:13	26	Chapter 13: She is Enshrouded from Sight	8:20
7	Chapter 7: Her Earlier Incarnations	12:28	27	Part Third: A Young Man Turned Sixty	11:08
8	Chapter 8: 'To Like the Lightning'	14:01	28	The first sensation was to find that she had long...	9:38
9	Chapter 9: Familiar Phenomena in the Distance	8:29	29	Chapter 2: Misgivings on the Re-embodiment	13:25
10	Part Second: A Young Man of Forty	9:47	30	Chapter 3: The Renewed Image burns itself in	14:38
11	That lady remained for the present partially screened...	10:48	31	Chapter 4: A Dash for the Last Incarnation	10:25
12	Chapter 2: She Draws Close and Satisfies	12:29	32	No more was said in argument, and the thing was...	8:52
13	Chapter 3: She Becomes an Inaccessible Ghost	8:17	33	Chapter 5: On the Verge of Possession	8:53
14	He began to divine the truth. Avicé, the departed one...	7:54	34	Half-way up the steepest part of the pass he saw...	8:46
15	Chapter 4: She Threatens to Resume Corporeal...	9:03	35	Chapter 6: The Well-Beloved is – Where?	13:14
16	Chapter 5: The Resumption Takes Place	7:05	36	The second was in a man's hand: 'Dear Mother...'	10:59
17	Chapter 6: The Past Shines in the Present	14:15	37	Chapter 7: An Old Tabernacle in a New Aspect	11:13
18	Chapter 7: The New Becomes Established	13:44	38	Chapter 8: 'Alas for this Grey Shadow, Once a Man!'	12:18
19	Chapter 8: His Own Soul Confronts Him	8:35	39	As soon as he was strong enough he got her to...	11:45
20	Chapter 9: Juxtapositions	6:49			

Edited and mastered by Timothy Brown

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