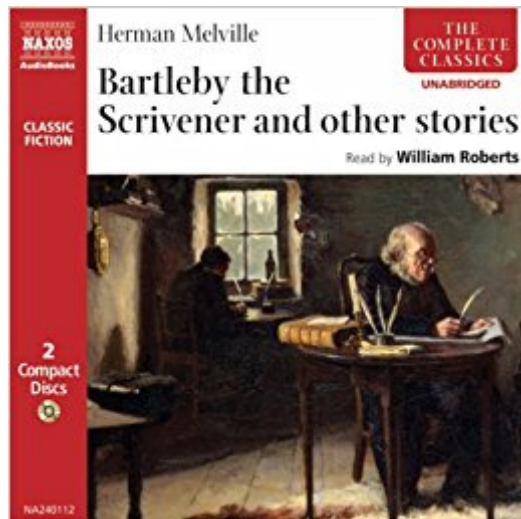




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Bartleby And Other Stories (Classic Fiction)



Synopsis

Melville's "Bartleby" is a classic American short story, a strange tale of an assiduous copyist whose catch-phrase is 'I would prefer not to.' It is joined here by two other stories from "The Piazza Tales", Melville's idiosyncratic collection: "The Lightning Rod" and "The Bell Tower". A companion set to the highly-praised collection "Classic American Short Stories" read by William Roberts including "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" by Ambrose Bierce.

Book Information

Series: Classic Fiction

Audio CD

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Customer Reviews

One of the world's great short stories starts off as a comedy of the workplace, with an emotionally safe, dignified narrator describing the copyists of his law office and their quirky routines. But when the cryptic Bartleby enters the story, the stakes are raised to that of a spiritual drama. William Roberts captures the office comedy nicely and also the mounting anguish of the narrator trying and failing to be his brother's keeper. The narrator's glimpse into the void gives Roberts the chance to create tension in the later scenes by suggesting the apprehensions of this naïve but kindhearted man. Also included are the much shorter stories "The Lightning-Rod Man" and "The Bell-Tower." G.H.
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These are very high quality readings, well produced and recorded with a rich, interesting, and apt voice for Melville the social chronicler. Voice is everything in the droll story of Bartleby of

course--because the enigmatic, silent clerk is really a mirror for the sensibility of the teller, his Wall Street boss. Melville is highlighted here in the best of his city stories, a mode he excelled in as much as his better known sea sagas. The Lightning Rod Man and The Bell Tower, two minor pieces from Piazza Tales, are tossed in for balance to make an interesting set. Here you will meet even more obscure Melville masks--both somewhat exasperating--Melville the humorist & Melville the exotic. All of these stories come out of the period Melville was experimenting and playing with new modes, still gamely trying to make a living as a writer despite a dwindling audience post-white whale. Usually neglected, they are brought excitingly alive in all their patented Melvillian weirdness on this little gem of a CD.

It takes very little time to discover why Melville was a great writer. Even though his writing can seem archaic, you are drawn in by his beautifully crafted sentences. It is too bad that he never found the great success he hoped for before he died.

The kindle book has no table of contents, so if, for example, you want to read Bartleby the Scrivener, you must page (I use the paper-bound term, although I really mean advance through screens) through the 11 works (including Moby Dick) that precede the story you're looking for. I tried using the kindle "location" feature, guessing and putting in numbers that seemed like they might advance me to the general vicinity of where I wanted to be (are they page numbers? I have no idea) but this was impossible, because nowhere on the individual pages is the name of the specific work they're part of. I finally gave up on this edition and ordered the ebook that contained only Bartleby and Benito Cereno. That one actually has a table of contents that actually takes you to the work you want to read.

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