

## AUDIO REVIEWS

was originally published in 1969. The program's sturdy case should insure a long life. Highly recommended.—*Susan Hamburger, Virginia State Lib. & Archives, Richmond*

### Four Past Midnight:

#### The Sun Dog

by Stephen King

4 cassettes. unabridged. 6 hrs. Penguin-HighBridge Audio, 375 Hudson St., New York, NY 10014-3657; 800-526-0275. 1991. ISBN 0-453-00757-0. \$23.95. F

Young Kevin Delevan is thrilled when he receives a Polaroid® camera for his birthday. However, regardless of where he aims it, the camera spits out nearly identical pictures of a huge, slavering mutt that draws closer to the picture's surface with each successive shot. This is perhaps King's finest story from *Four Past Midnight*. Maine storyteller Tim Sample offsets an otherwise mediocre reading with a stunning rendition of horse-trading philosopher Pop Merrill. Libraries owning the previous three programs from the collection (*The Langoliers*; *Secret Window, Secret Garden*; *The Library Policeman*, Audio Reviews, LJ 7/91) should purchase as a matter of course.—*Mark Annichiarico, "Library Journal"*

### A Friend from England

by Anita Brookner

6 cassettes. unabridged. 6 hrs. Chivers Sound & Vision, dist. by G.K. Hall Audio c/o Macmillan, 100 Front St., Box 500, Riverside, NJ 08075-7500; 800-257-5755. 1991. ISBN 0-8161-9302-9. \$49.95. F

Listeners will be instantly drawn into Brookner's intimate saga of the Livingstones, a nouveau riche family striving idiosyncratically to adapt to their newfound idleness. Dorrie and Oscar, a doting, loving couple, remain calm in the midst of all the travails brought on by their spoiled daughter, Heather. All events are witnessed through the eyes of Rachel, a friend of the family, whose life becomes inextricably interwoven with the type of people she seemingly disdains. Brookner's superbly drawn family relationships, combined with strong characterizations and beautifully depicted settings, make for absorbing listening. British actress Cherie Lunghi contributes an impeccable reading. Highly recommended.—*Frances Weinstein, SLIS, Indiana Univ., Bloomington*

### Longshot by Dick Francis

2 cassettes. abridged. 3 hrs. Harper-Audio, 10 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022; 212-207-7000. 1990. ISBN 1-55994-345-9. \$15.95. F

When John Kendall is hired to write

the biography of wealthy racehorse trainer Tremayne Vickers, he finds himself on the business end of several suspicious accidents. Kendall, the author of successful travel guides and survival manuals, soon finds that he must use all of his skills to unravel a number of mysteries and at the same time stay alive. Francis has produced another winner in this deftly plotted, suspenseful tale that will keep the listener guessing until the last few minutes. Kenneth Branagh's fast-paced performance and the excellent sound quality make this recording a sure bet for all public library collections.—*Alexander Finlayson, Univ. of Saskatchewan Libs., Saskatoon*

### The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love by Oscar Hijuelos

2 cassettes. abridged. 3 hrs. Dove Audio, 301 N. Canon Dr., Suite 203, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; 800-328-DOVE.

1991. ISBN 1-55800-326-6. \$15.95. F

Hijuelos offers a glimpse into a time and place that few outsiders are privy to: the Cuban nightclubs of New York in 1949. His Pulitzer Prize-winning story documents the rise and fall of the Castillo brothers, from their beginnings in rural Cuba to their triumphant appearance on the *I Love Lucy* show as Desi Arnaz's cousins to their lonely and tragic deaths. Actor E.G. Marshall's stentorian voice is perfectly suited to the text. In turns magical, musical, and erotic, this audio rendition should appeal to fans of Carlos Fuentes and Isabel Allende. While certainly not perfect—near the end, the plot tends to stumble like a merengue dancer who has drunk too much—this honest, vividly told recording is highly recommended.—*Adam Paul Hunt, "California Bicyclist," San Francisco*

### On the Beach by Nevil Shute

7 cassettes. unabridged. 9½ hrs. Recorded Books, 270 Skipjack Rd., Prince Frederick, MD 20678; 800-638-1304. 1991. #91127. \$49.95 (Rental: \$14.50). F

Shute's grim tale, written in 1957, takes place in Melbourne, Australia during 1963. Two years earlier, a short, inexplicable atomic war eliminated life in the Northern Hemisphere. Radioactive fallout is now following the circulatory winds southward and will wipe out this last bastion of metropolitan life. While this presentation is not unique, the subject matter is important. Simon Prebble narrates competently, if somewhat quickly. He does not read for dramatic effect and intensity, which seems appropriate to Shute's style. Recommended for adult fiction collections.—*Karen Sendi, Univ. of Toledo Libs., Ohio*

### The Plains of Passage by Jean M. Auel

23 cassettes. unabridged. 39 hrs. Books on Tape, PO Box 7900, Newport Beach, CA 92658; 800-626-3333. 1991. #2763A&B. \$142 (Rental: \$31).

### The Plains of Passage by Jean M. Auel

24 cassettes. unabridged. 34 hrs. Brilliance Corp., 1810-B Industrial Dr., PO Box 887, Grand Haven, MI 49417; 800-222-3225. 1991. ISBN 1-56100-074-4. \$189.55. F

These programs represent the fourth installment in Auel's popular "Earth's Children" series. Once again, Ice Age Europe is the backdrop for the adventures of series heroine Ayla. Ayla and her mate, Jondalar, set out to cross the continent in search of Jondalar's homeland. Along the way they encounter many difficulties, but Ayla proves resourceful enough to overcome just about anything. The lengthy discussions about geography and natural history, interspersed with steamy love scenes, make for a curiously appealing combination. Both Books on Tape® and Brilliance offer sturdy cases: the Books on Tape® version is packaged in its standard Special Library Edition® case, while the Brilliance version features a picture of the printed book's colorful dust jacket on its cover. Book on Tape®'s Donada Peters does a fine job, but Brilliance's Sandra Burr offers more varied voices. Also, Brilliance wisely differentiates Ayla's dream sequences with sound effects in order to avoid confusion. For a slightly higher price, the Brilliance version offers listeners a better narration, but either would be a suitable purchase for a general fiction collection.—*Lisa Blankenship, Univ. of Northern Colorado, Greeley*

### Private Lies by Warren Adler

2 cassettes. abridged. 3 hrs. Dove Audio, 301 N. Canon Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210; 800-328-DOVE. 1991. ISBN 1-55800-413-0. \$15.95. F

Torn between passions for art and each other, Ken, an aspiring writer, and Carol, a dancer, realize they have to choose. They part with a promise to reunite after the few years it will take to attain success. As the tale opens 23 years later, they meet by accident. Neither has realized their dreams and now they are married to others. By chance, Carol's husband has become the client of Ken's wife. From a sweet beginning, Adler distills a poison of private lies. Allusions to Hemingway shoot the story into the heart of an African safari for a shocking and violent climax. David Dukes's excellent reading sustains the principal characters, even in passages thick with dialog. There is much adventure and romance here, and mature public library patrons will clamor for it.—*Mason West, Austin, Tex.*



Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Copyright of Library Journal is the property of Reed Business Information and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.