In this volume, Arthur Conan Doyle invites us into his library and discusses his favourite literature with the listener: "I care not how humble your bookshelf may be, nor how lowly the room which it adorns. Close the door of that room behind you, shut off with it all the cares of the outer world, plunge back into the soothing company of the great dead, and then you are through the magic portal into that fair land whither worry and vexation can follow you no more. You have left all that is vulgar and all that is sordid behind you. There stand your noble, silent comrades, waiting in their ranks. Pass your eye down their files. Choose your man. And then you have but to hold up your hand to him and away you go together into dreamland. Surely there would be something eerie about a line of books were it not that familiarity has deadened our sense of it. Each is a mummified soul embalmed in cere-cloth and natron of leather and printer's ink. Each cover of a true book enfolds the concentrated essence of a man. The personalities of the writers have faded into the thinnest shadows, as their bodies into impalpable dust, yet here are their very spirits at your command."

Total running time 04:49:26

This LibriVox recording is in the public domain and may be reproduced, distributed or modified without permission. The LibriVox objective is to make all books in the public domain available, for free, in audiorformat on the Internet. For more information, or to volunteer, please visit librivox.org

Cover image: Library of Anichkov Palace, St. Petersburg, 1869 by an unknown artist. Cover designed by Availle. This design is in the public domain.