

Nana

ÉMILE ZOLA

Read by **Leighton Pugh**

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Nana Coupeau is a beautiful woman, able to attract men of enormous wealth with the crook of her finger. Part-time prostitute, part-time actress, she makes her debut in a mediocre operetta *The Blonde Venus* at the bustling Paris World's Fair of 1867. She can't sing, act or dance, yet she is stunning. Nana soon rockets through elite Parisian society, and, blinded by desire, men crawl to her feet, yielding to her every demand. Affections are manipulated, hearts are broken; fortunes are gutted and inheritances squandered. The poverty and violence of Nana's upbringing have led her to a cold and profligate life – a metaphoric indictment of the excesses of France's Second Empire, and a striking example of Zola's Naturalism.



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*. For Naxos AudioBooks he has recorded *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, unabridged.

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