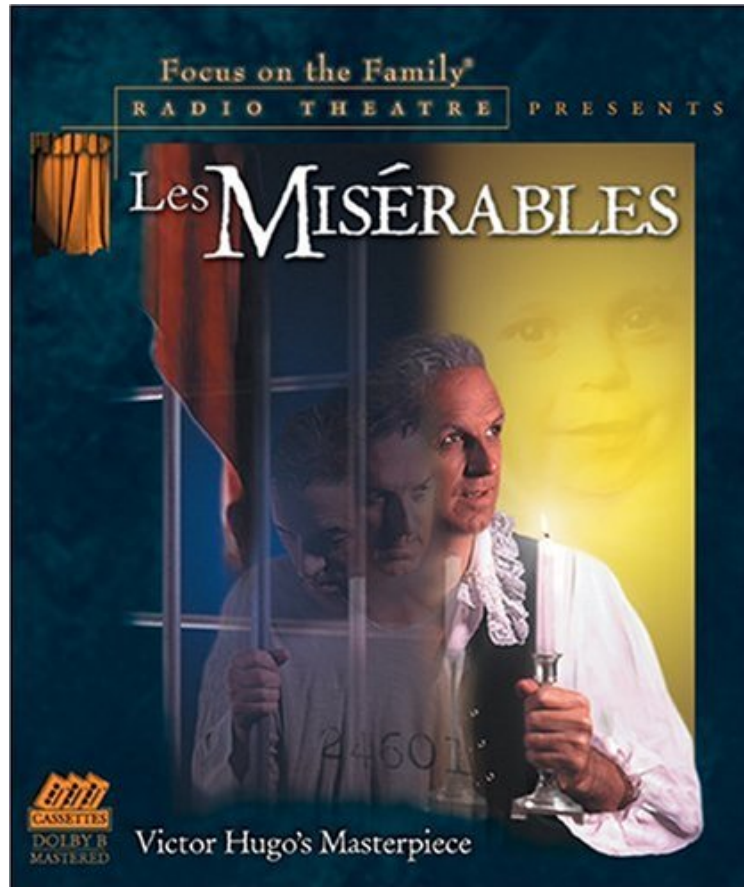


[Library ebook] Les Miserables (Focus on the Family Radio Theatre)

## Les Miserables (Focus on the Family Radio Theatre)

*Victor Hugo*

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**Victor Hugo : Les Miserables (Focus on the Family Radio Theatre)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Les Miserables (Focus on the Family Radio Theatre):

86 of 89 people found the following review helpful. The Definitive Translation of a Powerful Novel By Michael Powell advise those perusing these reviews to take with a measure of salt the dogmatic pronunciations on the quality of Rose's translation. Provenance is important, and one should always "consider the source." (Yes, even with me.) A number of interviews with Rose are available online, in which she discusses her work, and her work on this novel. The novel has a lengthy and detailed Translator's Preface, in which she discusses the novel, the translation process, and her approach to it. You also can find online some independent articles about this translation. The great translator of Spanish language literature, Edith Grossman, said: "I can't say what makes a book translatable, but I do think that all texts can be translated. The question of whether or not a work is "translatable" stems from a mistaken and widely held notion that a translation is really a one-for-one set of equivalences with the original--a straightforward lexical problem--when in fact it is a rewriting of the first text. Some, of course, are immensely difficult (they're usually just as difficult in the original) and challenge the translator's sensitivity to nuance, levels of meaning, and artistic impact in both languages. I

see my work as translating meaning, not words."Rose has spoken similarly about her work."I think the essential difference is that...and I'm not saying that translators always have to do this, there are reasons for departing a little bit further from a writer's text where it just won't work in English. I found on the contrary what really worked better in English was to follow Hugo much more closely than anyone else seems to have done. So I've actually followed his syntax as closely as possible, I've followed the rhythm of his sentences and I've actually broken it up the way he has and stuck more closely to what he says." -- Julie Rose, interview, 2009

She's translated more than thirty French works into English -- plays, poetry, novels, genre fiction. She worked on *Les Misérables* for three years. She has been awarded three international prizes for her translations. I'm willing to take the leap of faith -- she is "fluent in French." I recommend others accept the facts in plain sight, and do likewise. I stopped reading works in translation in the early 1980s, and didn't start up again until around 2005. The reason I stopped was that I concluded that I could not hear the author's voice in the translated work. The reason I started again was that Rose, Grossman, and some others showed that they understood this challenge, accepted it, and that it is possible to capture the author's voice in a translation, by actually listening to the author's intent. According to one account, the Rose translation is almost 100,000 words longer than the 1976 Denny "translation" -- that's how much material he excised from the novel to "improve it." Denny, in fact, is on record as saying that Victor Hugo was a terrible writer, and needed some "tidying up." If you're just looking to pad your reading CV with another of the "great books," then it doesn't matter which one you read. Might as well go with a shorter one. If you're looking to read the translation of *Les Mis*, that will make you feel like you are reading the original, hearing Victor Hugo's voice, then pick up Rose's translation.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A brilliant translation by Christine Donougher. Shed buckets and buckets of tears in the finale. By Chiek

At the time of my review, this was the newest English translation of Hugo's masterpiece offered by Penguin publishing that absolutely compelled me to indulge in my favourite piece of literature a second time told anew. For novices to Hugo's gigantic work it is quite daunting for those who tire of long tales. In addition, confronted with any new book, we wonder whether the book is worthy of our time investment and efforts to cross check with detailed annotations and footnotes. Certainly more difficult these days given the enormous plethora of distractions in our modern living, the smartphone being the chief culprit. But seriously, if we do dare embark on this life changing experience (characters in the book and also the reader's) by reading *Les Misérables*, the correct question we must first ask ourselves is whether we are worthy and knowledgeable enough to turn the gilded pages of Victor Hugo's masterpiece that drips with words of gold in every page. Much to my astonishment after concluding my second read with buckets of tears (I am sentimental but am moved only by giant geniuses like Hugo) it dawned on me that I really have not read it at all 30 years ago. But I remember clearly that I turned to Hugo chiefly to escape my wretchedness (pun intended) in the 2.5 years compulsory military service. Given my youth then, I had not chalked up enough life's hard experiences yet to have full empathy for much of the suffering and the depth of french history especially the french revolution to grasp all the nuances Hugo would have wanted his readers to appreciate. Today, with 30 years of life's heavy baggage accumulated, I am less unworthy and more adequate a reader because I have imbibed so much more of Hugo's spectacular offering of humanity at its worst and best. There are diamonds in every page of his over 1500 pages novel (English version, the French is 1900 pages). I wish I could read Hugo's work in French, but like all illiterates in French, we appreciate the great work of translations. To say the least, *Les Misérables* translated by Christine Donougher is a brilliant new, faithful and unabridged version I believe ( leap of faith since I haven't read it in French) of Victor Hugo's thrilling masterpiece, with an introduction by Robert Tombs. The annotations and footnotes are exceptionally brilliant. Cross checking them all as one reads along is essential to know the historical characters and the circumstantial events revolving the story with the French revolution being the chief most tumultuous and had the most far reaching impact on social divide and inequality. It led to the overthrow of Monarchy and establishment of the Republic. The citizen was born with a new hope in a society based on Libert, galit, fraternit. Hugo left no stone upturned, no plant not described, no object of the barricade unmentioned when he described the French landscape of past. Such was Hugo's meticulous style but welcomed minutia on details, none more so than his detailed description of the Paris sewer system. So convincing was Hugo in portraying the subterranean maze as a treacherous stinking route of escape that it was an impossible escape and rescue mission for any human. Thus heightening the immense task undertaken by our hero in carrying an unconscious full grown man to emerge alive at the end after navigating 4 miles of slimy putrid ditches in pitch darkness most of the journey. In comparison, *Shawshank* would have been a walk in the park. And our hero didn't even like the man he was rescuing because he knew his sole happiness in life would be taken away by this unconscious young man. But he did it because he was superhuman and an angel. My first read nearly 30 years ago was a translation by another fabulous woman, Isabella Hapgood, before kindle and digital books were in existence. Going to the annotations then was a chore and was often neglected which inevitably hampered my level of appreciation for the book. Despite that, my first read shook me to the core by the breadth and depth of Hugo's masterpiece on the wretched human condition and the hand of God in redeeming His elects, Jean Valjean chief amongst many in the book. Desiring a second enjoyment, I researched and sampled the various translations on offer after a 30 years gap, this time round on digital by kindle. For translations I always go to the reliable and more expensive Penguin publishers first before looking at other publishers. *Les Misérables* with the unique English title "The

Wretched", convinced me to be the best after some comparisons of the first chapter of various translations. A Penguin yet again. The audacity of translating the title "Les Miserables" to "The Wretched" was ingenious and original to set itself apart from the other translations. As a genuine connoisseur of literature of the finest kind that I consider myself, I cannot emphasise enough to all non French speaking readers on the careful choice of the best translation and to spare no expenses for the best experience one must have. Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables" is the finest of them all. Its the top notch Beluga caviar and it is the finest of the finest brandy ever distilled. As you would pay top dollar to enjoy them so too should you for the pride and joy of classic literature, the world (Hugo) has to offer to the universe. Hugo's fine work must undoubtedly be also the pride and joy of God since it showcases His will on mankind. God has already shown in the story of Job, the finest men can be inflicted with life's greatest catastrophes and grief, and in the gospels that the most perfect man must walk the hardest road. Hugo's premise in Les Miserables was exactly that providence is responsible for the wretchedness in our lives. Providence can also lift the wretchedness from the most wretched and turn them into the greatest salt and light of the world. There are many wretched characters in Hugo's les miserables. Once you have read them, you can play the game of picking the most wretched of them all. The drama of "road to Damascus" was played out several times in the book. Like the Jew persecutor, Saul transformed into fiery apostle Paul, so too was a hardened ex convict transformed into a loving angel to the world of wretched.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Do you hear the people sing...?By M. FrankI wish I could remember who convinced me to read this, as I would fall on my knees and thank them. It is long, but that only prolongs the joy of the novel, of the history, the arcane argot, and the love between the father and his adopted daughter.I always liked the musical, but had never thought that I would like the book just as much. Two months later I can go back to riding the subway without having a les mis song stuck in my head from reading this book.

Value priced! The story that has thrilled millions comes to life in a brand new way in Focus on the Family Radio Theatre's Les Miserables. This audio drama beautifully portrays the redeeming power of forgiveness through the story of Jean Valjean, an embittered convict whose life is changed by a single act of kindness. Recorded in London with some of England's finest actors, it will mesmerize adults and families alike.