

Tracy Wells

Adapted from the novel by Victor Hugo
Illustration of Cosette by Émile Bayard
from the original 1862 edition of *Les Misérables*

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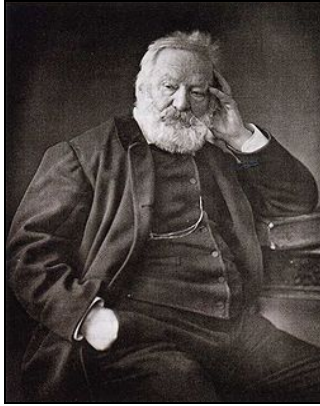
*For Susan,
the most avid reader I know
and the first person to assure me
I could tackle this great work.
Thank you for your years
of support and friendship.*

*A special thanks
to Dr. Janet Webster
for her assistance
with the French translations.*

Les Misérables

CLASSIC. Adapted from the novel by Victor Hugo. Convict Jean Valjean is released from a French prison after serving 19 years for stealing a loaf of bread and for attempts to escape. No one is willing to give him food or shelter because he is an ex-convict until he meets a bishop who treats him with kindness. Valjean repays this kindness by stealing the bishop's silverware. When the police arrest Valjean, the bishop claims the silverware was a gift. After Valjean is released, the bishop gives Valjean two silver candlesticks and asks him to use the money from the candlesticks to make an honest man of himself. In the years that follow, Valjean changes his name, becomes a prosperous factory owner and the town's mayor, struggles to stay a step ahead of a zealous police inspector, and raises his adopted daughter, Cosette, with love and compassion. Easy to stage. A tour de force!

Performance Time: Approximately 120 minutes.



Victor Hugo, 1883

About the Story

Victor Hugo (1802-1885) is considered one of the most respected authors of French literature. Hugo is best known for his collections of poems and his novels *Les Misérables* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Hugo's father served as an officer in Napoleon's army, so much of his childhood was spent in Italy and Spain. At age eleven, Hugo and his mother returned to Paris, where he became interested in literature. Hugo believed writers should defend the less fortunate by documenting social injustice. During his lifetime, Hugo championed free education, universal suffrage, and the abolition of the death penalty. Hugo opposed Napoleon III and was forced to flee France in 1851 but was able to return in 1870. Hugo wrote *Les Misérables* while in exile and it was published in 1862. Hugo referred to himself as a freethinker, and though his writings focus on issues of social injustice, he always espoused optimism for the future of humanity: "In the twentieth century, war will be dead, the scaffold will be dead, hatred will be dead, frontier boundaries will be dead, dogmas will be dead; man will live." Two days before Hugo died he wrote, "To love is to act."

Characters

(26 M, 20 F, 12 flexible, opt. extras)
(With doubling: 21 M, 14 F, 12 flexible. Tripling possible.)

- JEAN VALJEAN/ MONSIEUR MADELEINE (Zhan Val-zhan/Mad-eh-lenn):** Ex-convict who served 19 years in prison for stealing bread to feed his sister and her children; turns his life around after Bishop Myriel shows him mercy and makes him promise to live his life as an honest man; changes his name to Monsieur Madeleine and becomes a rich factory owner and mayor; wears a suit and hat indicative of a wealthy man; male.
- BISHOP MYRIEL (Myer-ree-ell):** Kindly, charitable bishop who gives Valjean two silver candlesticks and makes him promise to use the money from the candlesticks to live his life as an honest man; wears priest's robes; male.
- MADMOISELLE MAGLOIRE (Mahg-glow-are):** Bishop Myriel's cynical housekeeper; wears a black servant's uniform; female.
- INSPECTOR JAVERT (Jah-ver):** Police inspector who strongly believes in enforcing France's strict laws and is obsessed with capturing Valjean; wears a police uniform and hat and modest clothing and a hat during the rebellion; male.
- MONSIEUR THÉNARDIER (Ten-are-dee-ay):** Greedy, underhanded innkeeper who takes great pride in swindling others; wears bright, garish clothing; male.
- MADAME THÉNARDIER (Ten-are-dee-ay):** Monsieur Thénardier's wife and accomplice who takes special joy in swindling others; wears bright, garish clothing; female.
- YOUNG ÉPONINE (Epp-oh-neen):** The Thénardiens' pampered, spoiled child; wears rags until she is given Young Cosette's dresses; female.
- GAVROCHE (Gav-rosh):** The Thénardiens son who they have abandoned and is forced to live as a street urchin; male.
- FANTINE (Fahn-teen):** A poor, illiterate, unwed mother who must leave her daughter Cosette in the care of the Thénardiens, who abuse her and treat her as a servant; works in Valjean's factory until it is discovered she is unwed and is forced to live on the streets; wears a modest dress at first but wears rags on the street; female.
- YOUNG COSETTE (Ko-zet):** Fantine's illegitimate child who lives with the Thénardiens and is forced to work as a servant at their inn; Valjean rescues her from the Thénardiens and adopts her as his daughter; wears a modest dress but later wears rags when working for the Thénardiens; female.

- MADAME VICTURNIEN (Veek-tour-re-ehn):** Fantine's factory boss who exposes her secret; dressed modestly with a matching work apron; female.
- BAMATABOIS (Bam-ah-tah-bwah):** Factory foreman who harasses Cosette on the street, causing her to be arrested; well-dressed; male.
- SISTER SIMPLICITY:** Kind nun who cares for Fantine on her sickbed; wears a white nun's habit; female.
- FAUCHELEVENT (Fosh-luh-vohn):** Gardener at the convent; Valjean saved his life years earlier; wears modest clothes, bordering on rags; male.
- CHAMPMATHIEU (Sham-mat-tyu):** A vagabond who is falsely accused of being the convict, Valjean; wears rags; male.
- MARIUS PONTMERCY (Mar-ee-us):** Wealthy young man who falls in love with Cosette and who joins the rebellion; well-dressed; male.
- MONSIEUR GILLENORMAND (Gee-yuh-nor-man):** Marius's wealthy grandfather who cuts him off financially; well-dressed; male
- MADAMOISELLE GILLENORMAND:** Marius's wealthy aunt; well-dressed; female.
- COSETTE:** 18, Valjean's adopted daughter who falls in love with Marius Pontmercy; wears a fine dress; female.
- ÉPONINE:** The Thénardiens' adolescent daughter who is forced to participate in her parents' illicit schemes; falls in love with Marius Pontmercy; wears rags; female.
- ENJOLRAS (Ahn-jol-rah):** Student leader of the Friends of the ABC who leads the uprising; wears modest clothing; male.
- COURFEYRAC (Ko-fer-ak):** A friend of Marius and a member of the Friends of the ABC who fights in the uprising; wears modest clothing; male.
- GRANTAIRE (Grahn-tair):** Student revolutionary and member of the Friends of the ABC who fights in the uprising; wears modest clothing; male.
- COMBEFERRE (Kom-fair):** Student revolutionary and member of the Friends of the ABC who fights in the uprising; wears modest clothing; male.
- JEAN PROUVAIRE (Proo-vahr):** Student revolutionary and member of the Friends of the ABC who fights in the uprising; wears modest clothing; male.
- BAHOREL (Bah-or-el):** Student revolutionary and a member of the Friends of the ABC who fights in the uprising; wears modest clothing; male.
- JOLY (Zshow-lee):** Student revolutionary and member of the Friends of the ABC who fights in the uprising; wears modest clothing; male.

FEUILLY (Foo-ee): Working man and a member of the Friends of the ABC who fights in the uprising; wears modest clothing; male.

MADAME HUCHELOUP (Oosh-loo): Proprietor of the Café Musain; wears a modest dress; female.

JUDGE 1-3: Preside over the case of Champmathieu, who is falsely accused of being Valjean; wear black robes; male.

FACTORY WORKER 1-6: Workers at Valjean's factory; dressed modestly with matching work aprons; female.

CONVICT 1-3: Convicts who are released from prison with Valjean; wear rags; male.

POLICE OFFICER 1, 2: French police officers; wear police uniforms and hats; male.

SHOPKEEPER: Fruit vendor; wears a white apron; flexible.

TOWNSPERSON 1-5: Poor citizens of France; dressed modestly; flexible.

WOMAN OF THE STREET 1-3: Women of ill repute; they have missing teeth, sheered-off hair, and wear rags; female.

FRENCH SOLDIER 1-6: Soldiers who battle the Friends of the ABC at the barricade; flexible.

EXTRAS (opt): As Townspeople, Students, Soldiers, Convicts, Factory Workers, and Revolutionaries.

NOTE: Costumes should be representative of the early 1800s. Characters are more poorly dressed in Act II than in Act I.

Options for Doubling

CONVICTS 1-3/JUDGES 1-3/FRENCH SOLDIERS 1-3 (3 male)

FACTORY WORKERS 1-3/WOMEN OF THE STREET 1-3 (3 female)

M. VICTURNIEN/MADEMOISELLE GILLENORMAND (female)

BAMATABOIS/MONSIEUR GILLENORMAND (male)

MAGLOIRE/SISTER SIMPLICITY/MADAME HUCHELOUP (2 female)

CHAMPMATHIEU/FEUILLY (male)

NOTE: Many characters may be triple cast, if desired.

Setting

France, 1815-1832.

Set

The representational set requires set pieces that can be moved on and off quickly and easily. Overall, the background should depict a dirty, industrial scene with smoke, silhouettes of buildings, packing crates, etc. The color scheme should be primarily grey, brown, and black.

Streets of Digne, France/Streets of Paris: There is a shopkeeper's cart displaying fruit and a stack of crates. There is a barrel with a "fire" in it (red lighting effect).

Digne convent. There is a brick archway with a cross on top SR. There are three chairs and a table.

The Thénardiens' Inn outside Paris. For the exterior, there is a doorway with a sign above it that reads "Inn." For the interior, there are two small tables with two chairs each, or a long table with benches may be used. In Act II, the second "n" in "inn" is now falling off the sign and the inn doorway has a large sign on the door that reads, "Do not trespass. Bank property."

Valjean's factory in Montreuil-sur-mer, France. Four benches or small tables are set up in rows. Factory workers sit on the benches or stand at the tables.

Jail cell. There is a jail cell with bars. A small desk and chair are positioned next to the cell.

Fantine's bedside. There is a bed with sheets, blankets, and a pillow. Next to the bed is a stool and a small table with a water basin and washcloth on it.

Courtroom. There is a large bench CS that Judges 1-3 sit behind.

Café Musain, meeting place of the Friends of the ABC. There are two or more tables with stools. Crates are assembled to create a platform.

Bridge. The railing of a bridge runs along the back of the stage. There is a bench CS.

Valjean's home. There is a wing armchair with a footstool. Next to the chair is a small table with a lit lamp on it.

Barricade. The barricade divides the stage and is made from chairs, crates, wood, stones, barrels, etc. There is a wood post SR large enough to tie Javert to.

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

Scene 1: Working-class neighborhood, Digne, France, and Bishop Myriel's convent.

Scene 2: The Thénardiens' inn, eight years later. Valjean's factory, a jail cell, a courtroom.

Intermission

ACT II: Streets of Paris, Café Musain, bridge, Valjean's home, barricade.

Props

Handcuffs	Police cap, for Javert
Shackles	Piece of paper and pencil, for Valjean
Chains (to chain Convicts together)	Knitting basket with knitting needles, yarn, and a partially finished sock
Key, for handcuffs/shackles	Doll, for Young Éponine
Yellow release papers, for Convicts	Rag, to wipe down inn tables
Basket	Bucket
Assorted fruit (Including apples)	Doll, for Young Cosette
Bowls, silverware, cups, mugs, for convent	Hat, for Gavroche
2 Silver candlesticks	Letter, for Marius
Coat, for Valjean	Jewels and money, for Éponine to steal from the Gillenormands
Nightgown, for Magloire	Card, for Marius
Nightclothes, for Bishop Myriel	Hat, for Shopkeeper
Assorted money (coins, bills)	Pamphlets
Small suitcase, for Young Cosette	Women's handkerchief with embroidered letter "u", for Cosette
Purse/bag, for Fantine	Hat, for Valjean
Fancy dress (that will fit Éponine)	4 Pistols (toy)
Work aprons, for Fantine and Factory Workers	Knife (plastic)
Parts to assemble to make assembled item	Wig/disguise, for Thénardier
Letter, for Fantine	Citizen's cap and ragged clothing, for Javert's disguise
Papers, for Javert	Wine bottle
Bowls, spoons, mugs, for the Thénardiens' inn	Tray of mugs
Large soup pot with ladle	Suitcase, for Valjean
Dirty sock, for inside soup pot	Bag of clothes, for Valjean
Cart, for Fauchelevent to push or pull	10-11 Rifles (toy)
Bag, for Convict 1	Barrel
Scissors	Matchstick
Pliers	Gunpowder flask
Bag, for Convict 2	Ropes (to tie Javert to wood post)
Wig, for Fantine (wig is removed to reveal short hair)	Muddy clothing, for Valjean and Marius
Men's handkerchief, for Valjean	

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Marius's coat (that Thénardier later wears)	Flower petals
Bandages	Elaborate disguises, for the Thénardiens
Basket of fruit (wedding present)	Blanket, for Valjean

Special Effects

"Fire" in metal barrel (lighting effect)
Crash (candlesticks hitting the floor)
Fake snow
Fake snowball
Black tooth caps or makeup to simulate Fantine's missing teeth
Spray/powder or a wig to make Valjean's hair appear white
Blue lighting to represent nighttime
Bells ringing out
Gunshots
Spotlight emanating from a manhole
Smoke, opt.

“There is a point
at which the unfortunate and the infamous
are associated and confounded
in a single word,
‘les misérables.’”

—Victor Hugo

ACT I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: A working-class neighborhood, Digne, France, 1815. A shopkeeper's cart displaying fruit is SL. A stack of crates are SR. A Shopkeeper is arranging fruit in the cart. Townsperson 1 is slumped against a pile of crates. Townsperson 2, 3 are standing UC, warming their hands over a "fire" in a barrel. Javert enters. He is followed by Convicts 1-3, who are chained together and led by Jean Valjean, whose head is down.)

JAVERT: *(To Convicts.)* Come along now, you scum of the earth. You have served your time and are to be set free.

CONVICT 1: Freedom at last! I never thought I'd see the day.

JAVERT: Quiet, you waste of a man! Your sentence may be over, but the fact is you are a criminal. Nothing you do going forward will change that.

CONVICT 2: I'm going to be good now...I promise I am.

(Javert crosses to Convict 1 and unlocks his shackles/handcuffs. During the following, Javert continues to Convict 2, 3 and unlocks their shackles.)

JAVERT: Your promises mean nothing, convict. Some people are good and some are evil. Your crimes have shown that you are the latter.

CONVICT 3: I just made a mistake. That doesn't make me an evil man. I've changed.

JAVERT: *(Unlocking his shackles.)* People don't change. Our laws prevent us from keeping you locked up forever, which is what you deserve. My only conciliation is that you will receive the ultimate judgment when you die. *(Convicts 1-3 rub their wrists. Javert crosses to Valjean and starts to unlock his shackles but stops and looks at him. To Valjean.)* What about you, convict? Don't you have anything to say before I release you?

(Townsperson 4, 5 enter and start moving the crates. It requires them both to lift one crate, as its contents are heavy.)

VALJEAN: No, Officer Javert.

JAVERT: *(Unlocking Valjean's shackles.)* I suppose you've learned one thing in your 19 years behind bars, convict—and that's to keep your head down and mouth shut. *(Valjean rubs his wrists. To Convicts 1-3.)* You'd all do best to remember that. Society does not want you. Your

families don't want you. So keep your heads down and your mouths shut and let us all forget you ever existed. That is your only chance of remaining free. *(Pulls out yellow papers and hands one paper to each convict.)* Here are your release papers. They are yellow to warn all you encounter that you are, and will always be, a convict. You will be on probation for the rest of your life and must report to your probation officer tomorrow. Do you understand?

CONVICT 1-3/VALJEAN: Yes, Monsieur.

JAVERT: Good. Now get out of my sight, all of you. You disgust me!

(Convicts 1-3 exit SR. Valjean takes a few steps toward the crates and looks down at his release paper.)

VALJEAN: *(To himself.)* Yellow papers. I'm not free. These yellow papers ensure I will have no job, no home...nothing. My freedom is worse than prison.

(Townsperson 4, 5 move a crate and two crates fall on Townsperson 1.)

TOWNSPERSON 2: *(Shouts.)* Look out!

(Townsperson 4, 5 put down their crate.)

TOWNSPERSON 1: *(Cries out.)* The crates! They're crushing me!

(Valjean rushes to Townsperson 1 and lifts the crates off of him single-handedly. Javert watches with interest. Townsperson 2, 3 help Townsperson 1 up. Townsperson 5 crosses to Valjean.)

TOWNSPERSON 5: *(To Valjean.)* How did you lift that by yourself? Those crates weigh nearly half a ton!

VALJEAN: *(With head down, tries to walk away.)* It was nothing, really.

(Townsperson 3 starts to help Townsperson 1 off.)

TOWNSPERSON 3: *(To Townsperson 1 as they pass Javert.)* Did you see that? That man lifted those crates off you like they were as light as a feather. He must be the strongest man in all of France.

TOWNSPERSON 1: I don't think I've ever seen a man as strong.

(Townsperson 3, 1 exit.)

JAVERT: *(To himself, looking at Valjean.)* Nor have I.

(Javert shakes his head in disbelief and exits. Townsperson 4, 5 cross to Valjean.)

TOWNSPERSON 5: *(To Valjean.)* That was something, mister.

TOWNSPERSON 4: *(To Valjean.)* We could use a man with your strength.

VALJEAN: *(Hopeful.)* Are you offering me a job, sir?

TOWNSPERSON 5: Let me just see your employment papers, and we can get you started right away.

VALJEAN: I...I only have these. *(Pulls out his yellow paper and hands it to Townsperson 5.)*

TOWNSPERSON 4: Yellow papers. *(To Townsperson 5.)* He's a convict.

(Townsperson 5 hands Valjean the yellow paper.)

TOWNSPERSON 5: I'm sorry, mister, but we have no work for you.

VALJEAN: But you just said—

TOWNSPERSON 4: *(Sternly.)* He said we have no work. Now, good day.

(Townsperson 4, 5 cross to a crate, pick it up, and exit.)

VALJEAN: *(To himself.)* My life ruined...all because 19 years ago I stole a loaf of bread to feed my widowed sister and her starving children. I have paid the price for my crime. Why can't I now just live my life? *(Puts his hand on his stomach.)* To live, I must eat. *(Empties his pockets.)* But to eat, I must have money. *(Sees Shopkeeper.)* Perhaps that shopkeeper will show pity on me and give me something to eat. *(To Shopkeeper.)* Excuse me, sir, but do you have some food you can spare?

SHOPKEEPER: I have plenty of food, if you can pay.

VALJEAN: I have just come to town, and I have no money.

SHOPKEEPER: Then I have nothing for you. *(Picks up his basket, picks up some fruit, inspects it, and puts the fruit in the basket. Repeats this.)*

VALJEAN: Is that fruit spoiled?

SHOPKEEPER: Yes.

VALJEAN: If you are going to throw it away, then might I have it?

(Shopkeeper stops.)

SHOPKEEPER: *(To Valjean.)* I know who you are. You're one of the convicts who was just released. It's criminals like you who are ruining this country. You do not deserve even the spoiled fruit from my cart. *(Shopkeeper tosses the fruit from his basket offstage. Valjean starts to run offstage to where the fruit was thrown.)*

VALJEAN: No!

SHOPKEEPER: *(Blocking Valjean.)* Now get out of here before I call that officer to take you back to prison for trespassing!

VALJEAN: *(Fearfully backing away.)* Sorry, Monsieur. I didn't mean to anger you. I'll be on my way. *(Crosses to CSL. The Shopkeeper pushes his cart off SR. Lights dim SR. Digne convent. A brick archway with a cross at the top is brought on SR, followed by a table and three chairs. Townsperson 2, 3 enter and stand between Valjean and the archway. To himself.)* But where will I go? Who will take me in? Who will help a former criminal whose only dream is start anew...to make a new life for himself...to be a good man? *(Lights up SR. Valjean turns and crosses to Townsperson 2, who is standing closest to him.)* You, Monsieur? Can you spare a few sou for a weary traveler? *(Townsperson 2 turns away. Valjean crosses to Townsperson 3.)* What about you, Madame? Do you have an empty room where I may pass the night? *(Townsperson 3 turns away.)* Not even a corner of your stable? I can spend the night on a bed of straw. *(Townsperson 3 exits, followed by Townsperson 2.)* Won't anyone help me? Am I not even human? *(Crosses to arch.)* A quiet convent. This is my last hope. *(Calls.)* Bonjour! Is anyone at home?

(Monsieur Myriel enters SR and crosses to the archway.)

MYRIEL: Monsieur, it is late. What brings you to my door?

(Madame Magloire enters and starts to set the table with silverware and silver candlesticks. During the following, she looks up from time to time, listening to what is happening at the door.)

VALJEAN: My name is Jean Valjean. I am a convict. I have been in prison for 19 years, and I have just been sent free. I am on my way to Pontarlier to register for probation. I am hungry and tired, but no one will take me in because of my yellow papers.

(Valjean hands his yellow papers to Myriel, and Myriel looks them over.)

MYRIEL: Madame Magloire, set another place.

MAGLOIRE: But, Monsieur—

MYRIEL: And put some sheets on the bed in the alcove.

MAGLOIRE: But, Monsieur, the yellow papers!

MYRIEL: This is a house of God, Madame Magloire, and as we know from our teachings, God commands us to open our door to those in need. It is apparent to me that Monsieur Valjean is in need of our help.

(To Valjean.) Isn't that so?

VALJEAN: It is.

(Magloire exits.)

MYRIEL: Then you are welcome to share our meal and take shelter in our home for the night.

VALJEAN: Thank you, sir.

(Valjean enters, takes off his coat and throws it on the ground. Lights dim SL. Valjean sits. Magloire enters, carrying a bowl, which she places in front of Valjean. Valjean picks up the spoon and starts eating the soup noisily and greedily.)

MYRIEL: *(Chuckling.)* My, you are hungry, aren't you?

VALJEAN: *(With mouth full.)* I sure am. *(Wipes his mouth with his sleeve and resumes eating.)*

MAGLOIRE: *(Disgusted.)* What manners!

MYRIEL: Now, Madame Magloire, it is not for us to pass judgment on a child of God.

MAGLOIRE: I can't stand here watching him eat like an animal. I'll go and make up the bed. *(To Myriel, speaking quietly but loud enough for Valjean to overhear.)* Are you sure he should stay the night? He's a criminal, after all. We don't even know what crime he committed. How do we know it's safe to have him here?

VALJEAN: Read my papers, and you will know what I have done.

(Myriel hands the yellow papers to Magloire.)

MAGLOIRE: *(Scanning the paper.)* Nineteen years in prison...five years for burglary with 14 years added to his sentence for attempting to escape four times. *(Showing Myriel the paper.)* It says here... *(Reads.)* ..."This man is very dangerous." We have a dangerous man under our roof, Monsieur Myriel. A dangerous, ruthless thief!

MYRIEL: *(Calmly.)* What did you steal, Monsieur Valjean?

VALJEAN: Only a loaf of bread to feed my widowed sister and her starving children.

MYRIEL: This man is our brother, Madame Magloire. It is our duty to help him, and help him we shall.

MAGLOIRE: Very well. I'll make up the bed. *(Exits.)*

VALJEAN: You are too kind, Monsieur. You know I am a convict, yet you don't turn me away from your house.

MYRIEL: I am a priest and this is not my house—it is a house of God. You are suffering...you are hungry and thirsty. You are welcome.

VALJEAN: Oh, noble priest, thank you!

MYRIEL: Do not thank me. This is the house of no man, except he who needs asylum. Whatever is here is yours. *(Stands.)* Now that your belly is full, you must be tired.

VALJEAN: I am.

MYRIEL: As am I. If you will excuse me, I am going to retire to my room. *(Indicates offstage.)* Your room is just through that door when you are ready. May you have a good night's rest. *(Starts to exit.)*

VALJEAN: Goodnight, Father.

MYRIEL: *(Turns.)* I am not your father...but your brother. *(Exits.)*

VALJEAN: *(To himself.)* My brother? How can we be brothers when you are good and I am...not? *(Stands.)* No matter what I do, the world will always see me as a criminal. How can I survive when the world turns its back on me? *(Looks down at the silverware and picks up a fork.)* This silver must be worth a fortune, and a fortune could change a criminal into a gentleman. *(Looks around nervously, picks up his coat, and begins wrapping silverware inside it. As he does, he accidentally knocks a candlestick to the ground, which makes a loud crash.)*

MAGLOIRE: *(Offstage, calls.)* Monsieur Myriel, is that you?

VALJEAN: *(To himself.)* "Whatever is here is yours," that's what the old priest told me, after all. *(Looks down at his coat.)* I guess Javert was right: a criminal can't change.

(Valjean exits through the archway and off SL. Wearing a nightgown, Magloire enters and sees that the silverware is missing.)

MAGLOIRE: *(Shouts.)* Monsieur Myriel! We've been robbed!

(Wearing nightclothes, Myriel runs on and stops when he sees the missing silver.)

MYRIEL: So we have.

(Magloire crosses to the table.)

MAGLOIRE: It was that thief you let into this house! He's stolen all our plates and silverware! Now what will we eat with?

(Myriel bends down and picks up a candlestick.)

MYRIEL: We'll just use the wooden ones then, won't we?

(Magloire cries out and sobs dramatically. Myriel escorts her to the table and they sit. Myriel places the candlestick on the table and looks at it. Lights up SL. Police Officer 1 enters, holding Valjean's arm. Valjean's hands are in handcuffs. Police Officer 2 enters, holding Valjean's coat with the stolen silverware.)

POLICE OFFICER 1: *(As they reach the archway, shouts.)* Police! Open the door!

(Myriel and Magloire rush to the door.)

MAGLOIRE: You've caught him!

MYRIEL: *(Calmly.)* Ah, there you are, Monsieur Valjean. I am glad to see you, as you left so quickly.

POLICE OFFICER 2: *(Surprised.)* You know this man, Monsieur?

MYRIEL: Of course, I do. He is my guest and my friend.

POLICE OFFICER 1: We found him running through the streets, his coat filled with silver. He told us you gave it to him.

MYRIEL: He speaks the truth. Please, Officers, let him go. I am happy he has returned. In his haste, he forgot the silver candlestick I also promised him. Madame Magloire, please bring Monsieur Valjean the candlestick so he can be on his way.

MAGLOIRE: But, Monsieur –

MYRIEL: Do hurry, Madame. Monsieur Valjean has such a long way to go. *(Takes Valjean's arm and draws him in through the archway.)* Thank you, Officers, for returning my friend to me.

POLICE OFFICER 2: Good evening, Monsieur.

(Police Officer 2 gives Valjean the silverware and exits SL with Police Officer 1. Lights dim SL.)

VALJEAN: *(Shocked.)* They let me go?

MYRIEL: Yes.

VALJEAN: I'm not going back to prison?

MYRIEL: No.

VALJEAN: I stole from you, and you had them set me free. Why would you do this for me?

MYRIEL: I see before me a good man who needs help to find his way.

VALJEAN: *(Surprised.)* A good man?

MYRIEL: Yes, my brother.

(Magloire enters and crosses to Myriel.)

MAGLOIRE: Here are the candlesticks, Monsieur.

(Magloire hands Myriel the candlesticks and exits.)

MYRIEL: These are yours. *(Hands the candlesticks to Valjean.)*

VALJEAN: *(Protesting.)* But, Monsieur —

(Valjean tries to hand the candlesticks back to Myriel, but Myriel refuses them.)

MYRIEL: Take them, and use the silver to become a better man, for you no longer belong to evil, but to good. With this silver, I have bought your soul. I am withdrawing it from the darkness and giving it to God.

[END OF FREEVIEW]