

Les Misérables Character Breakdown

PRIMARY ROLES

Jean Valjean

Jean Valjean is the hero of the show. It is his life journey that we follow. Jean Valjean is strong, confident, and mature. His capacity for change is his greatest asset throughout the story. The key to his character is his great humanity and compassion. Requires a strong singer.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Tenor/High Baritone

Javert

Javert is the inspector who serves as antagonist to Jean Valjean. Javert is unswerving in his belief that men cannot change for the better. At first glance, Javert might appear to be the villain of the story, but upon closer examination, it is clear that he is not an evil man. He is a dedicated policeman with a profoundly strong sense of duty. Unlike Valjean, Javert's attitudes are rigid and unmovable. He is stern, forbidding, and lacking in compassion. Requires a strong singer.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Marius

Marius is the romantic hero of the story. He is impulsive, passionate, willful, and headstrong. His moods change according to his circumstances. He is sweet and tender but also capable of great courage and compassion. In Act I, Marius plays Romeo to Cosette's Juliet. Marius matures after "The Café Song" as a result of his experiences on the barricade. Requires strong acting and singing.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Tenor

Enjolras

Enjolras is the student leader. He is handsome, brave, and daring, although youthful. He combines his revolutionary ideals with strong, charismatic leadership. Victor Hugo described him as "a thinker and a man of action." On the barricade, he should dominate everyone else physically and vocally. Enjolras must inspire the students to fight and, ultimately, to die for their beliefs. His death at the barricade is one of the dramatic highlights of the show. Strong actor and singer

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Tenor/high baritone

Thénardier

Thénardier is the true villain of *Les Misérables School Edition*. He is the embodiment of evil. That said, he should also possess a wicked sense of humor. He delights in cheating, robbing, defrauding, and blackmailing, and relishes every aspect of his schemes with glee. He is tough, greedy, brutal, lowbrow, crafty and yet irresistible. He hates society and blames it and everyone else for all his misfortune. He is also the comic relief of the production. However, his comedy is based in reality and shouldn't be too exaggerated. He is married to Madame Thénardier and is father to Eponine and Gavroche (although he abandoned Gavroche to the streets of Paris). Requires excellent comic acting.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Gavroche

Gavroche is Thénardier's son. He is left to fend for himself and lives by his wits in the streets of Paris. His archenemy is Javert, the policeman. Gavroche is brave, witty, and arrogant, with a fantastic, unchanged voice. For comparison, think of a young Artful Dodger. Gavroche is best played by the smallest boy available. Gavroche has a very dramatic death at the barricade. Requires a good voice and strong acting abilities.

Gender: Male or Female pants role

Vocal Range: Treble

Bishop Of Digne

The Bishop is a good man who saves Valjean's soul through showing compassion. Don't overlook the importance of this role. The Bishop of Digne's kindness carefully establishes the premise of the show by literally buying Jean Valjean's soul for God. This powerful role requires a strong actor and singer.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Fantine

Fantine is the beautiful, young girl who, abandoned by her lover, is left to fend for herself and her daughter, Cosette. She is rejected by society and forced through circumstances to sell herself. She is a brave woman defeated by life who clings to her dignity and is sustained by her love for her daughter, sacrificing everything for the young Cosette. The audience witnesses her descent through a series of terrible events leading to poverty, hunger, cold, loneliness, destitution, and death from consumption. Excellent acting and singing required.

Gender: Female

Vocal Range: Mezzo-Soprano with belt

Eponine

Eponine is the Thénardiens' daughter. Living hand to mouth, she survives by helping her father in his life of crime. She is a young girl who is streetwise and tough but also sensitive and lonely. This tragic character is hopelessly in love with Marius, knowing that he will never love her. She bravely follows Marius to the barricades in the hope that they will die there together. Strong acting and singing required.

Gender: Female

Vocal Range: Soprano/Mezzo-Soprano

Cosette

Cosette is Fantine's strong-willed, loving daughter. She is an intelligent, inquiring, personable girl; she is not in any sense a sappy, romantic heroine. Once she is adopted by Jean Valjean, Cosette lives a comfortable, if secluded, life. She falls instantly in love with Marius, changing her world and her priorities. Excellent singing and strong acting required.

Gender: Female

Vocal Range: High Soprano

Madame Thénardier

She is married to Thénardier. Together, Madame Thénardier and Thénardier con the world as partners in crime. They were made for each other, and although she complains about him, she loves him dearly. She is coarse and vulgar, unhappy in her existence without knowing why. She is romantic, greedy, manipulative, evil, and larger than life. She is mean and nasty to Little Cosette and able to improvise in nearly any situation. Excellent comedic timing and strong singing abilities required.

Gender: Female

Vocal Range: Mezzo-Soprano

Young Cosette

Young Cosette is Fantine's daughter and the Thénardiens' ward. She has been forced into child labor. She is underfed, beaten by Madame Thénardier, and bullied by Eponine. Requires strong acting and singing, and a younger appearance.

Gender: Female

Vocal Range: Treble

SECONDARY ROLES (Everyone cast in these roles will have AT LEAST two parts in the show)

Young Eponine (MAY be double cast with Young Cosette)

Young Eponine is the pampered daughter of the Thénardiens. Requires strong acting.

Gender: Female

Members of the ABC Society - secret society of students and workers, fighting for the people's revolution.

Grantaire

Grantaire is the opposite of Enjolras. He believes in nothing. Although he admires Enjolras, he loves to mock him. Witty and drunken, Grantaire is happy being with the group, and they put up with him because of his good humor. He also keeps a watchful eye on Gavroche, the mascot of the group, and is the most heartbroken when Gavroche is killed. He is so devastated by Gavroche's death that Grantaire abandons his cynicism and rushes to die on the barricade.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone or Tenor

Combeferre

Combeferre is the philosopher and believer in peace. He is gentle, humane, strong, and brave.

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Baritone or Mezzo-Soprano

Feuilly

Feuilly is a worker who is a self-educated orphan. He is an affectionate, warm, and poetic believer in "nationality."

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Baritone or Mezzo-Soprano

Courfeyrac

Courfeyrac is a youthful, passionate, and fearless student.

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Baritone or Mezzo

Joly

Joly is an eccentric and light-hearted (although sometimes morbid) medical student. His name is derived from the English word "jolly."

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Tenor or Soprano

Prouvaire

Prouvaire is a kind, soft-spoken, and, at the right moments, strong and masterful poet and student of social studies.

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Baritone or Mezzo

Lesgles

Lesgles is a cheerful, laughing-at-life (but unlucky) student. He is a close friend of Joly.

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Tenor or Soprano

Foreman

The Foreman begins Fantine on her desperate, downward spiral. He should be virile, commanding, and a bit sleazy around the edges. Requires a strong actor.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Pimp

The Pimp controls the prostitutes at the docks. He is mean, aggressive, and abusive. The Pimp has a small solo line in "The Docks."

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Bamatabois

Bamatabois is the customer who taunts Fantine into violence. He is a wealthy, dissolute young man who thinks of himself as a gentleman, even dressing in expensive clothes. He is drunk and in a sadistic mood. He chauvinistically feels it is his right to buy anything, even Fantine.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Tenor

Old Woman

The Old Woman is a nice featured role who purchases Fantine's hair. Requires a strong singer.

Gender: Female

Vocal Range: Mezzo or Soprano

Prostitutes (4 Solo Lines)

The Docks are a depressing and dangerous place to be, occupied by prostitutes and their customers.

Gender: Female

Vocal Range: Mezzo and Soprano

Factory Workers (5 solo lines)

The Factory Workers include four characters with solo lines and one factory girl who fights with Fantine. She is mean, spiteful, and selfish. She is jealous of the Foreman's affection for Fantine. Requires strong acting and singing.

Gender: Female

Vocal Range: Mezzo and Soprano

Thénardier's Gang of Thieves**Brujon**

Brujon is physically very strong. He has the body of a bear and a pea-sized brain. A genuine gangster, he is stupid and evil.

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Bass, Baritone or Mezzo

Babet

Babet is physically frail but lean and cunning.

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Baritone, Tenor or Mezzo

Claquesous

Claquesous is tough, dangerous, and secretive.

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Baritone or Mezzo

Montparnasse

Montparnasse is a teenager who is handsome and dangerous (he kills with a knife). He is well dressed, strongly built, and agile.

Gender: Male or Female

Vocal Range: Baritone or Mezzo

Chain Gang (5 soloists)

The Chain Gang consists of Jean Valjean's fellow prisoners. The overall vocal range of the Convicts is low, and they should be able to sing in a rich baritone range if possible.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Constables

There are two solo Constables (Constables 1 and 2) in the show that appear throughout in many scenes.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Farmer

The Farmer has solo lines that are a bit difficult to sing.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Sailors (3 solo lines)

Three sailors begin the docks scene.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Onlookers and Bystanders (4 solo lines)

Gender: Both

Vocal Range: Varied

Fauchelevant

Fauchelevant is the victim of the cart crash.

Gender: Male

Vocal Range: Baritone

Women (4 solos for the Barricade scene)

Vocal Range: Mezzo

Judge(s)

The Judge or Judges are non-singing roles. They appear once in a courtroom to preside over a trial against Jean Valjean.

Gender: Male

Mistaken Jean Valjean And Family

These characters are also non-singing. Mistaken Jean Valjean is the man who Javert believes to be Jean Valjean.

Gender: Both

Nuns

The two Nuns are non-singing and non-speaking roles. They serve to take care of Fantine in her sickness.

Gender: Female

Gavroche's Gang (TBD)

Laborers

Army Officer

Major Domo

Sentries

Revolutionaries

Wedding Guests