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Les Misérables

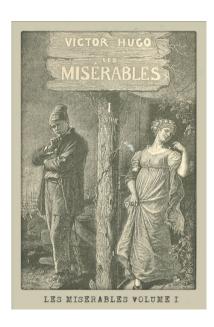
Background Context

The Novel

Les Misérables, a novel written by Victor Hugo in 1862, is a suspenseful story about society's struggle with good and evil, law and grace. This timeless story is built on the premise that anyone can rise above his or her circumstances. The plot is driven by historical events and personal experiences Hugo observed on the streets of Paris in the early 1800's, blended with fictional elements. This powerful story touches on history, philosophy, political theory, religion and social injustice. Les Misérables has been translated into 22 different languages and has become one of the best-selling books in history. This beautiful work of art strikes a chord with readers around the world as it pleads for justice and social change.



Les Misérables is illustrated by Victor Hugo's favourite illustrator, French artist Émile Bayard (1837-1891). Bayard was famous in his lifetime for his portrtaits of Fantine, Éponine, Valjean, Javert and Cosette.



"You are right, sir, when you say that *Les Misérables* is written for a universal audience. I don't know if it will be read by everyone, but it is meant for everyone." Victor Hugo



The Musical

Les Misérables the musical, based on Victor Hugo's novel, opened in London in 1985. Despite critical reviews, the musical, with music by Claude-Michel Schönberg, was a huge success. Les Misérables is the longest running musical in the world having just celebrated 30 years.

Key Characters

Jean Valjean

Dramatic Tenor Role

Character Profile:

Prisoner 24601. After serving 19 years in prison for stealing a loaf of bread (5 years) and multiple escape attempts (14 years), Valjean is released. He breaks parole and steals silver from the Bishop. The Bishop has mercy on him, leading Valjean to turn his life around and become an honest man. Valjean changes his identity and becomes the mayor of a small town and a wealthy factory owner. He eventually adopts and cares for Fantine's daughter, Cosette.

Policeman/Inspector Javert

Baritone Role

Character Profile:

A firm believer in justice and the law. Javert holds the law above all else and shows no mercy. He relentlessly pursues Valjean, wanting desperately to bring the escaped convict to justice. Javert experiences kindness and mercy from the changed Valjean. Unable to resolve his inner conflict between the law and grace, Javert takes his own life.

The Bishop of Digne

Upper Canada Chorus

Character Profile:

A kind hearted, religious man who gives Valjean food and lodging after his release from prison. The Bishop gives Valjean the gift of forgiveness and silver to start his new life. His kindness convinces Valjean to change his criminal ways and become an honest and selfless man.

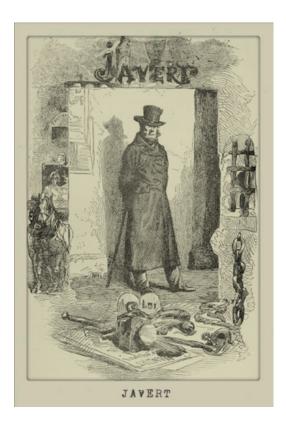
Enjorlas

Choral Ensemble

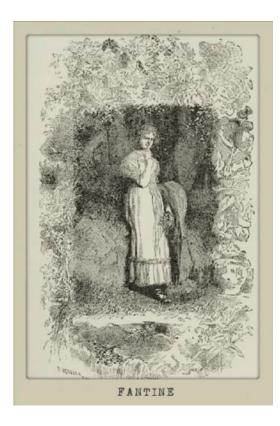
Character Profile:

The leader of the student revolutionary society "Friends of the ABC". He is an idealist with a charismatic personality.





Key Characters Continued



Fantine

Lyric Mezzo-Soprano Role

Character Profile:

An impoverished factory worker. Fantine has a daughter named Cosette. Fantine's husband abandoned her and Cosette when Cosette was very young. Fantine loses her job once the Foreman finds out about her fatherless child. She turns to the streets in order to continue paying the Thénardiers for Cosette's care. As Fantine dies of an incurable illness, she asks Valjean to care for Cosette.

Young Cosette

Choral Ensemble

Character Profile:

Fantine's 8-year-old daughter. Fantine pays the Thénardiers to raise Cosette, however, she is unaware that Cosette is forced to work as a servant and is treated poorly.

Thénardier & Madame Thénardier

Choral Ensemble

Character Profile:

The Thénardiers own a small inn where they constantly cheat and steal from their customers. They have one daughter, Éponine, who they pamper and dote on. Fantine pays the Thénardiers to care for her daughter Cosette. The Thénardiers force Cosette to work and keep the money for themselves. Later on, they move to Paris and start a gang of street thugs and con artists.

Gavroche

Choral Ensemble

Character Profile:

A young, street-wise orphan who knows everyone and everything on the streets of Paris. He joins the revolutionaries and dies on the barricade while attempting to collect ammunition from fallen soldiers.



Key Characters Continued

Marius Pontmercy

Baritone or Tenor Role

Character Profile:

A student revolutionary and a member of the "Friends of the ABC" society. Marius is good friends with Éponine. Éponine falls in love with Marius, but Marius falls in love with Cosette and she with him. Marius is rescued from the barricade by Valjean. He receives Valjean's blessing to marry Cosette.

<u>Éponine</u>

Mezzo-Soprano Role

Character Profile:

Éponine is the only daughter of the Thénardiers. Éponine is a thief and con artist like her father. She secretly loves Marius although her love is unrequited. Éponine decides to join the revolution at the barricade, but Marius sends her away with a letter for Cosette. Upon her return to the barricade to see Marius, Éponine is killed.



Cosette

Upper Canada Chorus

Character Profile:

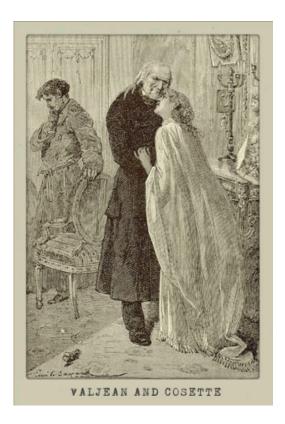
Cosette is the daughter of Fantine. She is adopted by Valjean and lives a life of culture and privilege under his fatherly care and protection. Cosette falls in love and marries Marius.

Friends of the ABC - Combeferre, Feuilly, Courfeyrac, Joly & Grantaire

Choral Ensemble

Character Profile:

A society of student revolutionaries led by Enjolras. These students become martyrs, leading a revolution for the rights of citizens and die defending their beliefs.



Prologue: 1815, DIGNE

Context:

Set in early 19th-century France, *Les Misérables* is the story of Jean Valjean, a French peasant and his search for redemption. Valjean served nineteen years in prison for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his sister's starving child. Jean Valjean, "prisoner 24601", is released on parole and discovers that the yellow ticket-of-leave he must display, labels him an outcast and makes it nearly impossible for him to find work. Only the Bishop of Digne treats him kindly and offers him food and lodging. Desperate and bitter, Valjean steals the Bishop's silver and runs. Valjean is caught by the police and is astonished when the Bishop lies to the police to save him. Embarassed and humbled by the Bishop's kindness, Valjean decides to change his ways and live a life of honesty and grace, free from his criminal past.



Vowel Focus: [a]

Homework:

• Mark all of the [so-do] leaps over the notes C to F in your score (in pencil).



PROLOGUE









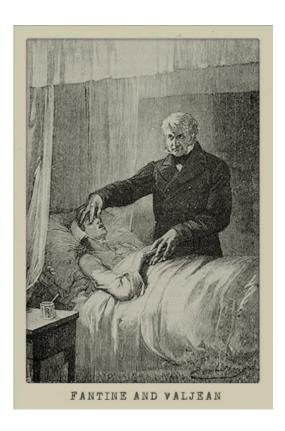


At the End of the Day: 1823, MONTREUIL-SUR-MER

Context:

Eight years have passed. Valjean has changed his identity to Monsieur Madeleine, and become the mayor of Montreuil-sur-Mer and a wealthy factory owner. One of his factory workers, Fantine, has a fatherless child named Cosette for whom she pays an innkeeper and his wife to raise. When the other women of the factory discover this, they demand she be fired ("At the End of the Day").

After her dismissal from the factory, Fantine reflects on her broken dreams and Cosette's father who has abandoned them ("I Dreamed a Dream"). Desperate for money to pay for her daughter's care, Fantine sells her locket, her hair and then turns to life on the streets for survival. Feeling devalued and shameful, Fantine fights back against an abusive customer and is arrested by Javert. About to be taken to prison, "The Mayor" passes by, pities Fantine, and insists that she be released and taken to the hospital for care ("Fantine's Arrest").

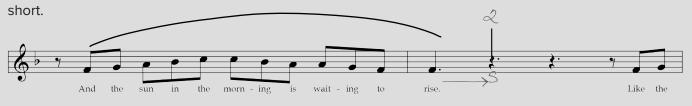


The Mayor rescues a man who becomes trapped beneath a runaway cart. The Mayor's incredible strength reminds Javert of prisoner 24601 - Jean Valjean, who Javert claims has just been recaptured and is about to go to trial for breaking parole. Valjean cannot let an innocent man go to prison, and confesses his real identity to Javert ("Who Am I? - The Trial").

At the hospital, Valjean promises Fantine that he will find Cosette and look after her ("Come to Me"/"Fantine's Death"). Relieved, Fantine gives in to her illness and dies. Javert arrives at the hospital to arrest Valjean. They struggle, and Valjean escapes ("The Confrontation").

Vowel Focus: [a] & [I]

- Mark each phrase in your score with a phrase mark (in pencil).
- When practising, be sure to lengthen the last note of each phrase. Do not "clip" or cut the last note too













THERE'S A

[E] [a]

HUN- GER-

[a] [a]

IN THE LAND,

[I][a] [a]

RECK- ON- ING STILL TO BE RECK- ONED,

[8][a][][a][a]

AND THERE'S

[2] [2]





[a] [i] [e] [a] [a] [e]

Little Cosette: 1823, MONTFERMEIL

Context:

Cosette lives with the deceitful innkeepers, the Thénardiers, in Montfermeil. Cosette is mistreated and forced to work as a servant. The Thénardiers lie to her mother Fantine, telling her that Cosette is sick and requires extra money for medication. Their own daughter, Éponine, is overindulged and treats Cosette poorly. Cosette dreams of a life where she is cared for with love and not forced to work ("Little Cosette").

Valjean finds Cosette and pays the Thénardiers 1,500 francs to adopt her ("The Bargain"). Valjean takes Cosette away to Paris.



Vowel Focus: [a] & [a]

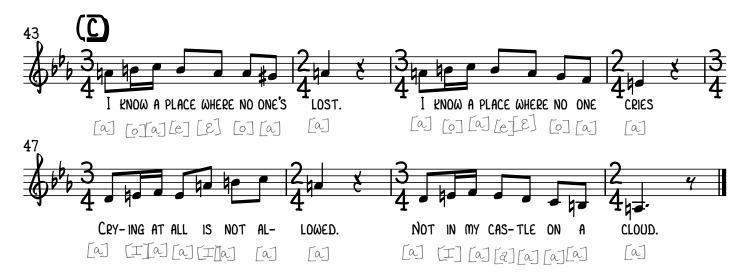
- Find all of the [I] vowels and mark them in your score (in pencil).
- Notate the time signature changes with the appropriate conducting cue above each changing measure in orange pencil crayon.



CASTLE ON A CLOUD







ABC Café - Red and Black: 1832, PARIS

Context:

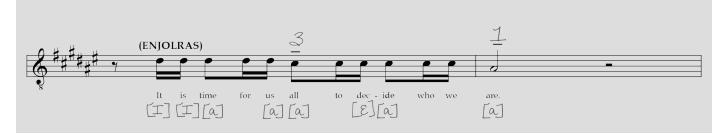
Nine years have passed. There is unrest in Paris due to the anticipated death of a popular leader, General Lamarque. General Lamarque is the only government leader who shows mercy and kindness to the poor. The student revolutionaries are concerned about the effects Lamarque's death will have on the impoverished people of Paris. The Thénardiers have lost their inn and now run a street gang in Paris. Their daughter Éponine has secretly fallen in love with Marius, although he is completely unaware of her feelings. The Thénardiers prepare to rob Valjean and Cosette, whom the Thénardiers do not recognize at first. While the gang is hassling Valjean, Cosette runs into Marius and they fall in love at first sight. Valjean is rescued from the thugs by Inspector Javert. Valjean and Cosette escape before Javert is made aware of their identity ("The Robbery"). Javert makes a vow to the stars that he will capture Valjean and bring him to justice ("Stars"). Éponine reluctantly agrees to help Marius find Cosette ("Éponine's Errand").



Friends of the ABC, led by Enjolras, meet at a small café to prepare for the revolution. Marius interrupts the discussion with thoughts of his new-found love for Cosette. The students find this quite amusing! ("The ABC Café - Red and Black").

Vowel Focus: [a] & [ɛ]

- Find all of the [I] vowels and mark them in your score (in pencil).
- Lean on beats 1 and 3. Place a tenuto marking () over beats 1 and 3 in your score.



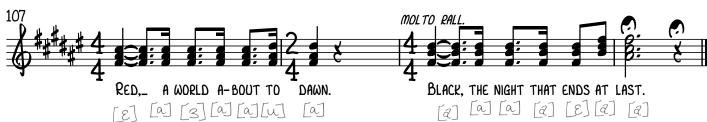
ABC CAFÉ











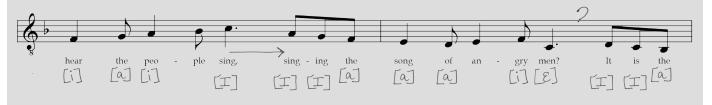
People's Song: 1832 PARIS

Context:

Gavroche brings the news of General Lamarque's death to the students. The news circulates throughout the city causing great heartache and unrest. The students realize that their time has come to ignite a revolution ("People's Song").

Vowel Focus: [a], [i] & $[\epsilon]$

- ullet Find all of the [I] vowels and mark them in your score (in pencil).
- Draw an arrow (*) connecting each dotted quarter note (J.) found in the middle of a phrase to the next note. This arrow will help remind you to carry-through the phrase and to not take a breath mid-phrase!





PEOPLE'S SONG









One Day More: 1832 PARIS

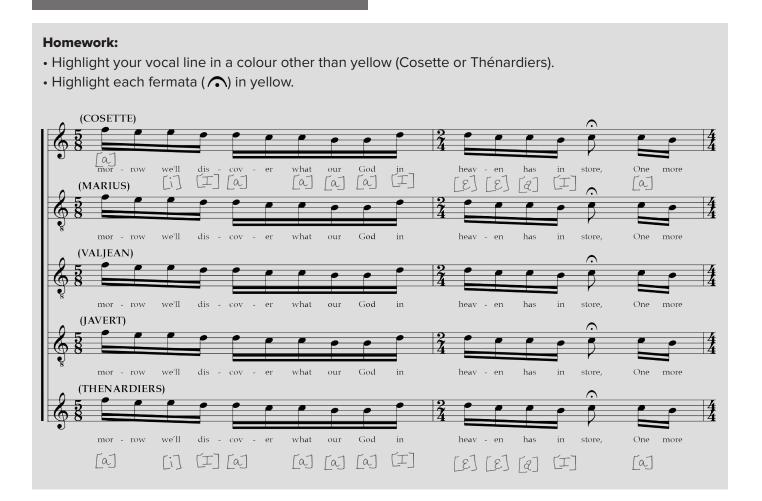
Context:

Thénardier and his gang plan to rob Valjean's house and are stopped by Éponine ("The Attack on Rue Plumet"). Valjean believes the intruders were sent by Javert and warns Cosette that they must once again, flee.

On the eve of the 1832 Paris Uprising, Valjean prepares to flee; Cosette and Marius, heartbroken, part ways; Éponine mourns her unreciprocated love for Marius; Enjolras urges all of Paris to join his revolution; the students prepare for battle; Marius is conflicted whether to go with Cosette or join the battle; Javert plans to spy on the students; and the Thénardiers scheme to profit from the political and social unrest.

Marius decides to join his friends in the battle, and all anticipate the new dawn ("One Day More").

Vowel Focus: [a], $[\epsilon]$, [i], [a], [I]

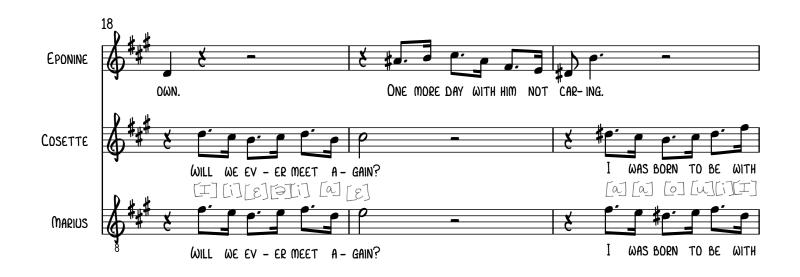


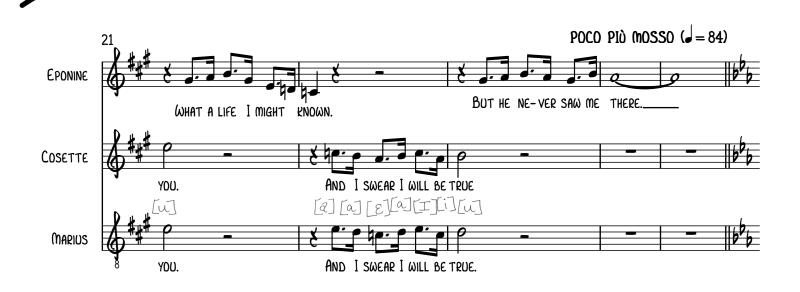
ONE DAY MORE





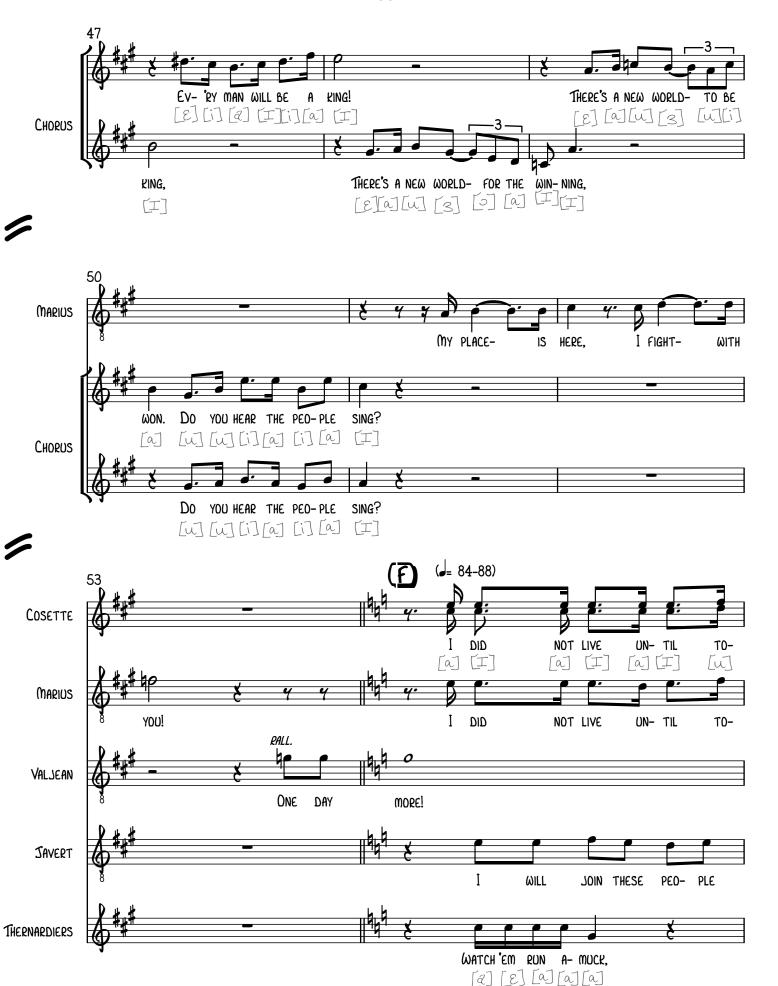


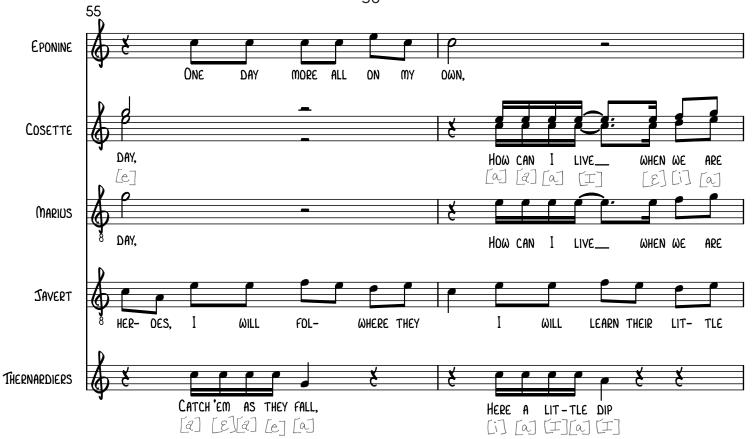




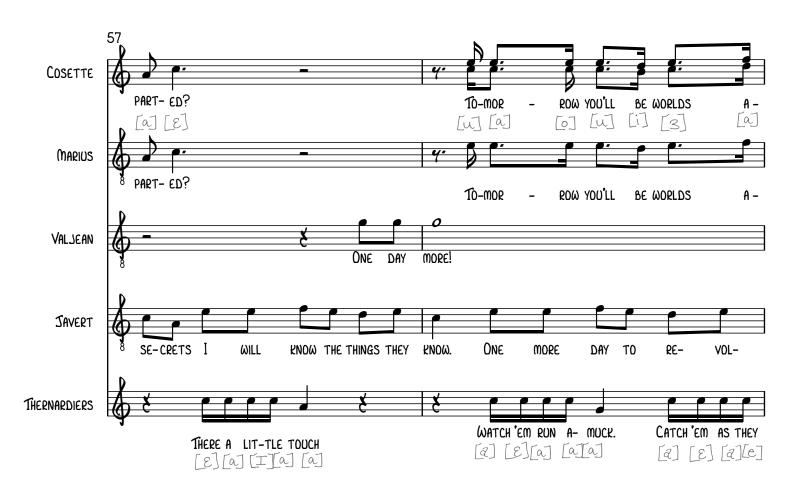




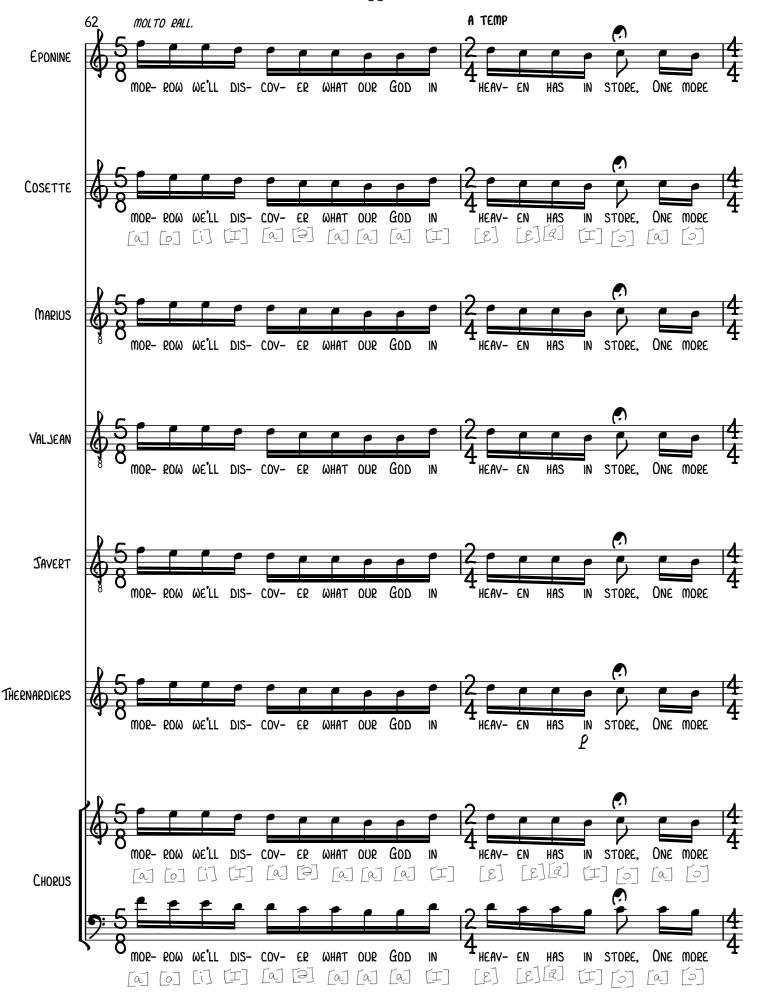


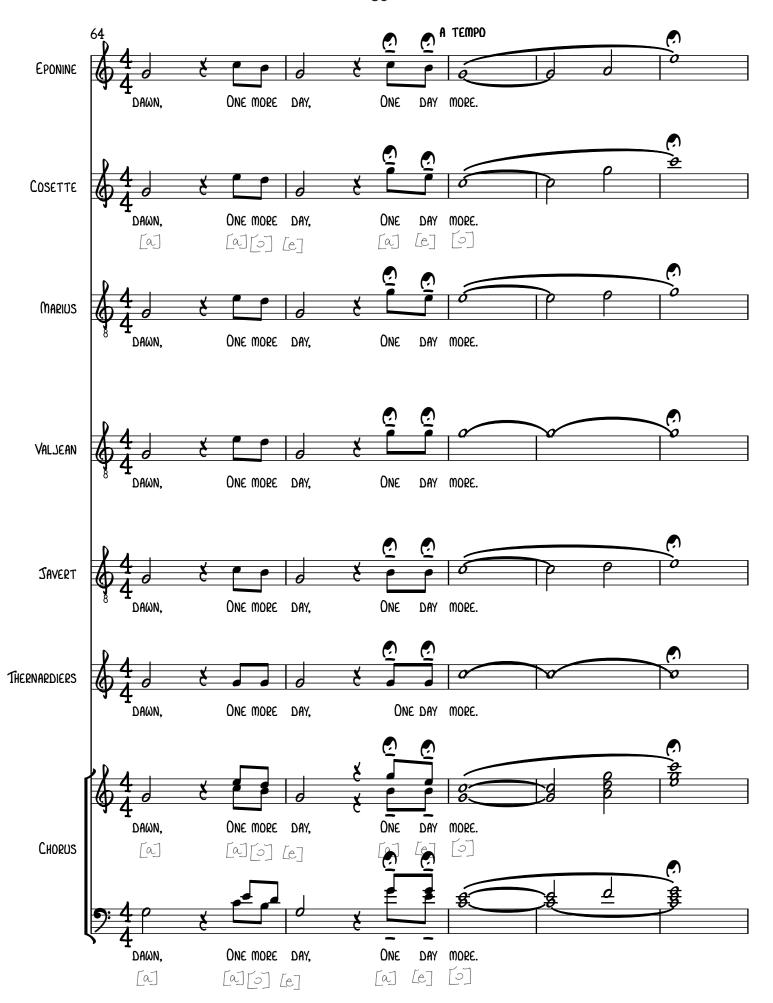












Little People

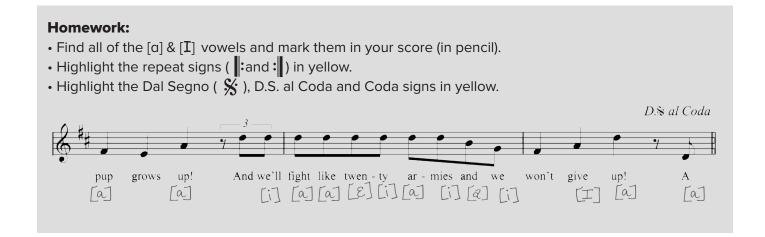
Context:

The students prepare to build a barricade to serve as their rally point. Éponine disguises herself as a boy and joins the rebels at the barricade. Marius sends Éponine to deliver a farewell letter to Cosette ("Building the Barricade - Upon These Stones"). Valjean intercepts the letter, learning of Marius and Cosette's love for eachother. Éponine walks the streets of Paris alone, lamenting her unrequited love for Marius ("On My Own"). Éponine decides to rejoin Marius at the barricade.

The barricade is built and the students disobey a warning from the French army to surrender or die ("At the Barricade - Upon These Stones"). Gavroche exposes Javert as a police spy and the students detain him ("Little People").



Vowel Focus: [ɛ], [i], [a]



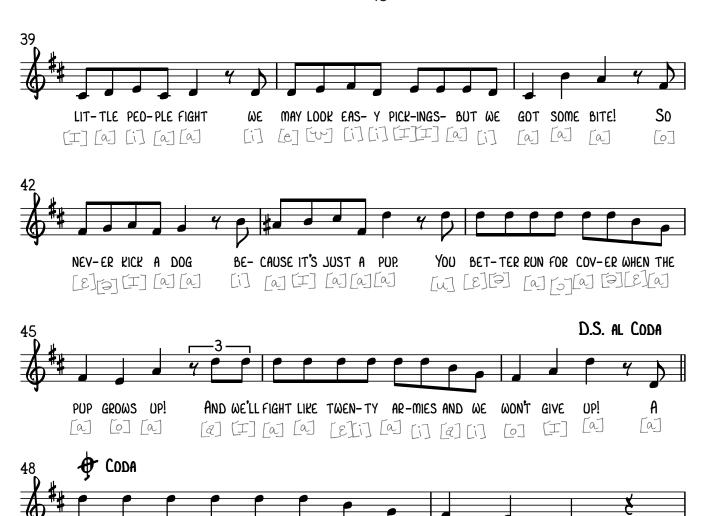
LITTLE PEOPLE





TO PURCHASE A COMPLETE SCORE FOR THIS MUSIC, VISIT WWW.SHEETMUSICPLUS.COM





THE

[a]

FLEA

[i]

CAN

[a] [a]

BITE

THE

[a]

BOT-

[a]

TOM

[a]

0F

[a]

POPE

[0]

IN

[I]

Rome!

[0]

The Night

Context:

The students hope that their act of defiance will spark an uprising and that all citizens of Paris will join them in overtaking the army. Éponine is killed by soldiers as she crosses the barricade. Marius holds her in his arms as she is dying. Éponine professes her love for him ("A Little Fall of Rain"). Valjean arrives at the barricade, disguised as a soldier, in search of Marius ("Night of Anguish"). He wants to protect Marius for Cosette's sake. Enjolras gives Valjean the opportunity to kill the detained Javert, but instead, Valjean has mercy on him and lets him go with no conditions ("The First Attack").

The students rest for the night on the barricade. They reminisce about the past and share their concerns for the future. Marius is devastated over losing Éponine and wonders if Cosette will remember him if he dies ("Drink with Me"). In the quiet and stillness of the night, Valjean prays that God will protect Marius ("Bring Him Home"). The next day, it is clear that the people of

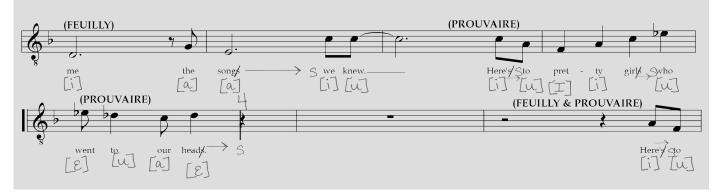


Paris have not joined the rebels in their fight and they decide to fight the French Army despite the odds ("Dawn of Anguish"). Gavroche is killed while attempting to recover ammunition from the fallen soldiers ("The Second Attack/Death of Gavroche"). Everyone at the barricade is killed except for Valjean and Marius, who is badly wounded. Valjean escapes into the sewers carrying the unconsious Marius ("The Final Battle").

Vowel Focus: [i] & [u]

Homework:

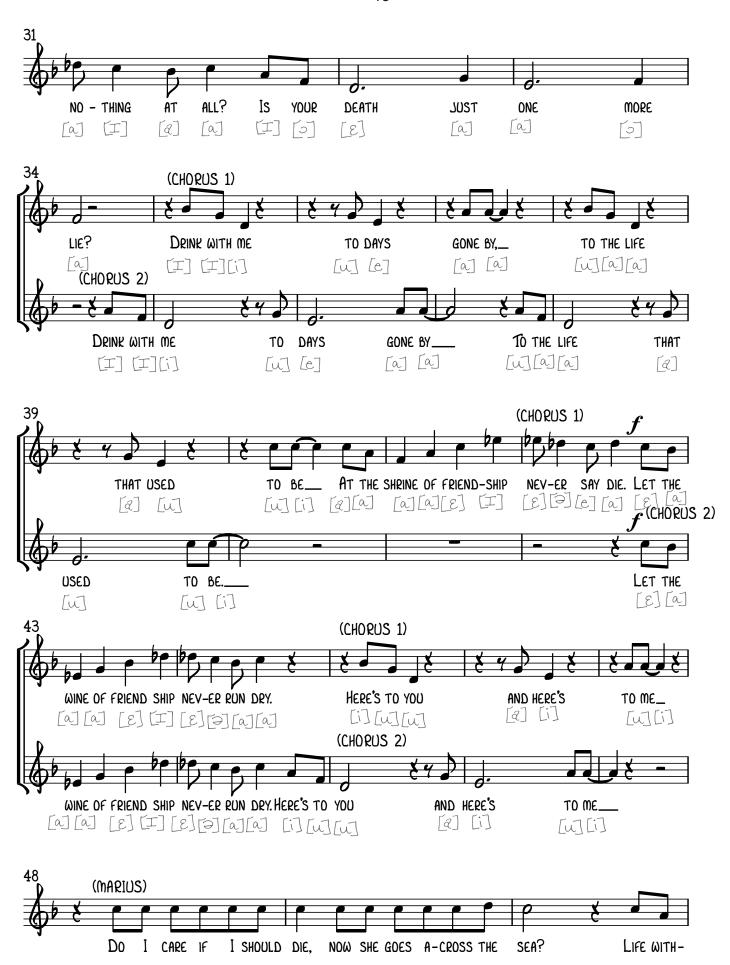
- Find all of the [a], [I] & $[\epsilon]$ vowels and mark them in your score (in pencil).
- For words ending in the letter s, cross out the 's' and move the 's' to the beginning of the following word in your score. This will help you remember to lengthen the vowel and shorten the 's' sound.

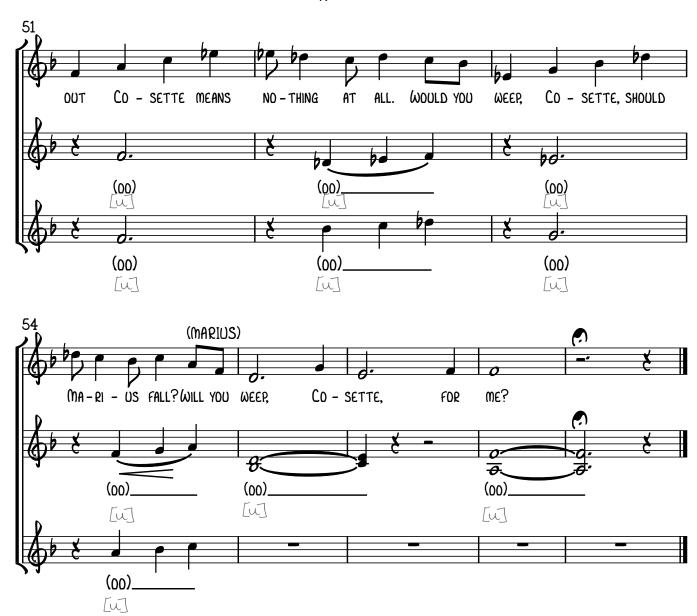




THE NIGHT (DRINK WITH ME)







Epilogue

Context:

Marius and Cosette go to Valjean and find that he is near death. Fantine's spirit appears to Valjean telling him that he is forgiven and soon he will be in heaven. Marius thanks Valjean for saving him. Valjean gives Cosette a letter where she learns of Valjean's past and the truth about her mother. The spirits of Fantine and Éponine guide him to heaven and they are joined by those who lost their lives on the barricade.

Vowel Focus: [O] & [ə]

Homework:

• Find the [u] vowels and mark them in your score (in pencil).





EPILOGUE











