**LES MISERABLES CHARACTER BREAKDOWN**

**PRINCIPAL ROLE REQUIREMENTS AND DESCRIPTIONS: MALES**

**JEAN VALJEAN** is the hero of the story. It is his life journey that we follow. Jean Valjean is supposed to be stronger than other men, and so physically should appear robust. He should reasonably carry himself as mature and paternal. Valjean's ability to change is his greatest asset. The key to his character is his great humanity and compassion. Jean Valjean is a vocally demanding role. Range: Tenor - Low A to High A.

**JAVERT** is the inspector who serves as the antagonist to Jean Valjean. At first glance Javert might appear to be the villain of the story, but on closer examination it is clear that he is not an evil man, but is a man with a profound sense of duty. He sees everything in black and white and is unswerving in his pursuit of justice. His attitudes are rigid and unmoveable. He is stern, foreboding, and lacking in compassion. Must have a very strong and rigid, almost mean, presence and voice. Strong singer and actor. Range: Bass-Baritone - Low F to High F-sharp.

**THENARDIER** is the true villain of this show, but also the comic relief. He is amoral and an opportunist. That said, he should also possess a wicked sense of humor. He delights in cheating, robbing, fraud and blackmail, relishing every aspect of them with glee. He is tough, greedy, brutal, stupid and crafty and yet irresistible. Strong character role. Range: Baritone - Range: C (below Middle C) to G sharp (above Middle C), but does not have to be primarily a singer.

**ENJOLRAS** is the student leader, a young man with an old soul. He is handsome, brave, daring, and very mature for his age. He is described by Victor Hugo as “a thinker and a man of action”. He oozes with charisma and confidence. On the barricade he physically and vocally should dominate everyone else. Must have a very strong, confident presence and voice. His death at the barricade is one of the dramatic highlights of the show. Range: Tenor or High Baritone - A to G above the middle C.

**MARIUS** is the handsome young romantic hero. Very impulsive, awkward, and naïve, but matures by the end of the show. Marius should have a lovely lyrical voice with a contemporary edge. Range: High Baritone-Tenor - Low A to High A flat.

**BISHOP OF DIGNE** is the kind older man who saves Valjean with his compassion. A very strong supporting role. Needs a very lyric, compassionate, and soothing voice. Range: Baritone - Low A to High E.

GAVROCHE is a willful, cocky, charismatic boy (9-11 years) who lives on the streets and hangs out with the ABC gang. Considers himself the leader of the streets. He is brave and witty. Think a young Artful Dodger. He has a dramatic death at the barricade. Note: Says “What the hell” in one song, so parents must be comfortable with that. Range: B below middle C to G.

**SUPPORTING ROLE REQUIREMENTS AND DESCRIPTIONS: MALES**

ABC SOCIETY is a secret society of young students and workers (Vocal ranges: Low A to F). The letters "A" "B" "C", as pronounced in French, make the word "abaisse," which means "the underdog" or "the people below." The members are drawn from wealthy families, and members have chosen to fight for freedom in stark contrast to the poor who have no choice due to their downtrodden circumstance.

* COMBEFERRE is the philosopher and believer in peace. He is gentle, humane, strong and brave.
* FEUILLY is a worker, self-educated and an orphan. A believer in "nationality." Affectionate, warm and poetic.
* COURFEYRAC is a student. His is youthful, passionate and fearless.
* JOLY is a medical student. Eccentric and light-hearted, although sometimes morbid. His name is derived from the English word "jolly."
* PROUVAIRE is a student of social studies. He is kind, softly spoken and at the right moments strong and masterful. He is also a poet.
* LESEGLES is a student. Cheerful, laughing at life but unlucky. His close friend is Joly.
* GRANTAIRE is a student. He is the opposite of Enjolras. He believes in nothing. Although he admires Enjolras, he loves to mock him. Witty and drunken, he is happy being with the group and they put up with him because of his good humour. He also keeps a watchful eye on Gavroche, the mascot of the group, and is the most heartbroken when Gavroche is killed. So much so that Grantaire abandons his cynicism and rushes to die on the barricade.

PIMP controls the prostitutes at the docks. He is mean, aggressive and abusive. The Pimp has a small solo line in "The Docks." Does not have to be primarily a strong singer. Vocal range: Bass - E (below Middle C) to D

FAUCHELEVANT - victim of the cart crash. Does not have to be primarily a strong singer. Vocal range: Baritone B (below Middle C) to E flat

JUDGE presides over mistaken Valjean’s trial – non-singing part.

MISTAKEN VALJEAN is the man who Javert believes to be Jean Valjean – non-singing part.

FOREMAN begins Fantine on her downward spiral of desperation. He should be virile, commanding and a bit sleazy around the edges. Does not have to be primarily a strong singer. Vocal range: Bass - E (below Middle C) to D flat (above Middle C).

CHAIN GANG consists of Jean Valjean's fellow prisoners. There are four soloists (indicated as convicts 1, 2, 3, 4). Vocal range: Baritone - Low F to High E flat.

CONSTABLES guard the chain gang and catch Valjean when he flees from the Bishop’s house. Vocal range: Baritone - E to High E.

FARMER turns Valjean away. Does not have to be primarily a strong singer. Vocal range: Bass - Middle C to D flat.

LABORERS deride Valjean. Do not have to be primarily strong singers. Vocal range: Bass - A sharp to D flat.

SAILORS are interested in the services of the Lovely Ladies. Do not have to be primarily strong singers. Range: Bass - Low C to Middle C.

BAMATABOIS is the "customer" who taunts Fantine into violence. He is dressed in expensive clothes. He is a wealthy dissolute young man who thinks of himself as a gentleman. He is drunk and in a sadistic mood and chauvinistically feels it is his right to buy anything, even Fantine. Does not have to be primarily a strong singer. Vocal range: Bass-baritone - D (below Middle C) to High D.

MONTPARNASSE, BABET, BRUJON, and CLAQUESOUS are all members of Thenardier's gang of thieves. Vocal ranges: Baritone - C sharp (below Middle C) to E.

* BRUJON is physically very strong. The body of a bear and a pea sized brain. A genuine gangster, he is stupid and evil.
* BABET is physically frail. He is lean and cunning.
* CLAQUESOUS is tough, dangerous and secretive.
* MONTPARNASSE is a teenager. Handsome and dangerous. Kills with a knife.

**PRINCIPAL ROLE REQUIREMENTS AND DESCRIPTIONS: FEMALES**

**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 become a prostitute. She is a brave woman defeated by life, sustained by her love for her daughter and clinging to her dignity. Sick with consumption, we witness her descent through poverty, hunger, cold, loneliness and destitution to death. She is a noble and proud character, whose life becomes a series of terrible events that rob her of her pride, character, and ultimately her life. This is a real heartbreaker of a role that requires a mature actress. This actress needs to be comfortable with her emotions out in the open and has to have the ability to convincingly go from wistful to bitter to heartbroken to shouting at God, all in one song. Fantine’s physical and emotional pain needs to be very real. Vocal Range: Mezzo Belt – G flat below middle C to E.

**COSETTE** is the beautiful daughter of Fantine. She is an intelligent, inquiring, personable girl. Once adopted by Jean Valjean, Cosette lives a comfortable, if secluded life. She is strong willed and loving. She falls instantly in love with Marius, changing her world and her priorities. The role calls for an excellent singer with a lovely, lyrical voice. Vocal range: Soprano B flat below middle C to High 2 octaves above middle C.

**EPONINE** is the daughter of the Thenardiers. She is a young girl who is streetwise and tough, but also sensitive and lonely. She is in love with Marius, and knowing that he will never love her, she is very vulnerable when it comes to him. She bravely follows Marius to the barricades in the hope that they will die there together. Eponine is a tragic character, hopelessly in love with Marius. Strong singing and acting. Range: Mezzo Belt - F Sharp below middle C to E.

**LITTLE COSETTE** is Cosette as a child (9-11 years) and the ward of the Thenardiers, who force her into slavery at their inn. She is a trembling little creature, underfed, beaten by Madame Thenardier and bullied by Eponine, but very sweet despite her circumstances. Range: A below middle C to C.

**MADAME THENARDIER** is the drunk and vulgar wife of Thenardier. Madame Thenardier is as "one" with Thenardier. Together they con the world as partners in crime. They were made for each other, although she complains about him. She is coarse and crude, unhappy in her existence without knowing why. She is greedy, evil, and larger than life. She is mean and nasty to Little Cosette and able to improvise in nearly any situation. Strong character actress. Does not have to be primarily a strong singer. Note: She has to swear at the end of “Master of the House.” Range: Alto Belt - G Sharp below middle C to D.

**SUPPORTING ROLE REQUIREMENTS AND DESCRIPTIONS: FEMALES**

**LITTLE EPONINE** is the pampered daughter (9-11) of the Thenardiers and a spoiled brat who taunts Little Cosette. The role requires no singing or speaking.

**FACTORY GIRL** who fights with Fantine. She is mean, catty and selfish. She also is having an affair with the Foreman and is jealous of Fantine. Strong singer and actress. Vocal range: Mezzo Belt - B flat (below Middle C) to C (above Middle C).

**OLD WOMAN** is a nice feature part. This is the character that purchases Fantine's hair. Vocal range: Mezzo - E (above Middle C) to D.

LOVELY LADIES are prostitutes.

FACTORY WORKERS are strong singing and acting roles.

**SUPPORTING ROLE REQUIREMENTS AND DESCRIPTIONS: MALES AND FEMALES**

Street Urchins/Gavroche’s Gang are young street orphans who sing and dance in several scenes in the show. Males or females, age 9-11 years.

Hotel Patrons, Wedding Guests, and People of Paris are adult males and females. (NOTE: From this group several smaller solo roles will also be cast.)