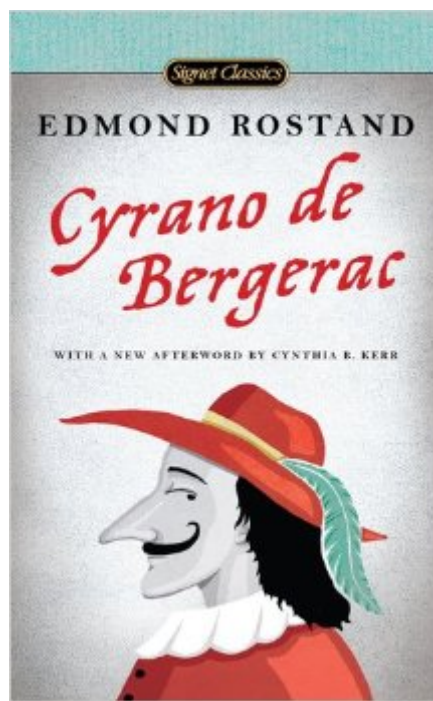


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Cyrano De Bergerac (Signet Classics)



Synopsis

Regarded as one of the greatest dramas ever written, *Cyrano de Bergerac* is the story of the silver-tongued soldier whose unfortunate looks drive him to woo his love by speaking for his handsome but dull-witted rival. *Cyrano de Bergerac* occupies a unique place in the modern theater. Deliberately disavowing realism and contemporary relevance, Edmond Rostand's masterpiece represents a turning back in both time and spirit to an earlier age of high adventure and soaring idealism. Its magnificent hero, Cyrano "noble of soul and grotesque in appearance, gallant Gascon soldier, brilliant wit, and timid lover, alternately comic, heroic, tragic" represents one of the most challenging of all acting roles in its complexity and mercurial changes of mood. From its original production to the present day, *Cyrano de Bergerac* has enjoyed a charmed existence on the stage, its unflagging pace of action and eloquence of language enchanting critics and public alike. Here, in a superlative translation, is the ultimate triumph of the great French romantic tradition "a work which, in the words of the French critic Lemaître, "prolongs, unites and blends" three centuries of comic fantasy and moral grace. • Translated by Lowell Bair With an Introduction by Eteel Lawson and an Afterword by Cynthia B. Kerr

Book Information

Series: Signet Classics

Mass Market Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Signet; Reissue edition (March 6, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0451531981

ISBN-13: 978-0451531988

Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 0.7 x 6.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (153 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #87,132 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Literature & Fiction >

Dramas & Plays > Regional & Cultural > European > French #91 in Books > Literature & Fiction >

World Literature > European > French #2709 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Classics

Customer Reviews

I currently own four different translations of *Cyrano de Bergerac* with another two more on the way. I am truly surprised to see how many new translations are being turned out of this wonderful classic. By far, three of the greatest are Brian Hooker's, Anthony Burgess' and Lowell Blair's. But I wanted

to see what was new in the world of Cyrano. Penguin Books is known for its quality and I have seldom been let down. In this case, I felt let down and disappointed. Carol Clark's translation just doesn't seem to have the feel for the character of Cyrano that so many of us have come to know and love. Though she is one of the few who ends the play with the word "panache'," her translation has too many spots that just don't feel the "white plume of freedom" Cyrano spoke of in rebellion to the elite who wore their beauty, grace and flair on the outside and those who sucked up to them. Also, Carol Clark takes liberty in changing meaning in certain key places that I particularly did not care for at all. Perhaps her only true innovation is the proper gender tense he uses with regard to his sword which he regards as a "she" as in the original French. She gets too many things wrong to be commended for translating a Cyrano that will endure. I believe it is a novelty. Let me emphasize that this is not a "bad" rendering "per se"; I feel strongly that it is just not a good rendering. It's merely AVERAGE, mediocre but as Cyrano believed in striving to be the best in everything, perhaps Carol Clark should have taken a page out of his book? I don't believe it will be any more understandable or accessible to today's reader than older translations and the reader will be losing out on so much with this rendering.

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