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The Master And Margarita: 50th-Anniversary Edition (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition)



Synopsis

A 50th-anniversary Deluxe Edition of the incomparable 20th-century masterpiece of satire and fantasy, in a newly revised version of the acclaimed Pevear and Volokhonsky translation. Nothing in the whole of literature compares with *The Master and Margarita*. One spring afternoon, the Devil, trailing fire and chaos in his wake, weaves himself out of the shadows and into Moscow. Mikhail Bulgakov's fantastical, funny, and devastating satire of Soviet life combines two distinct yet interwoven parts, one set in contemporary Moscow, the other in ancient Jerusalem, each brimming with historical, imaginary, frightful, and wonderful characters. Written during the darkest days of Stalin's reign, and finally published in 1966 and 1967, *The Master and Margarita* became a literary phenomenon, signaling artistic and spiritual freedom for Russians everywhere. This newly revised translation, by the award-winning team of Pevear and Volokhonsky, is made from the complete and unabridged Russian text. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

"My favorite novel—it's just the greatest explosion of imagination, craziness,

satire, humor, and heart. • Daniel Radcliffe • “One of the truly great Russian novels of [the twentieth] century. • The New York Times Book Review • “By turns hilarious, mysterious, contemplative, and poignant . . . A great work. • Chicago Tribune • “A soaring, dazzling novel; an extraordinary fusion of wildly disparate elements. It is a concerto played simultaneously on the organ, the bagpipes, and a pennywhistle, while someone sets off fireworks between the players • feet. • The New York Times • “Fine, funny, imaginative . . . The Master and Margarita stands squarely in the great Gogolesque tradition of satiric narrative. • Newsweek • “A wild surrealistic romp . . . Brilliantly flamboyant and outrageous. • Joyce Carol Oates • “Beautiful, strange, tender, scarifying, and incandescent . . . One of those novels that, even in translation, make one feel that not one word could have been written differently . . . Margarita has too many achievements to list • for one thing, a plot scudding with action and suspense, not exactly a hallmark of Russian literature. . . . This luminous translation [is] distinguished by not only the stylistic elegance that has become a hallmark of Pevear and Volokhonsky translations but also a supreme ear for the sound and meaning of Soviet life. . . . It’s time for The Master and Margarita to rise to its rightful place in the canon of great world literature. . . . As literature, it will live forever. • Boris Fishman, from the Foreword

Mikhail Bulgakov (1891–1940) was a doctor, a novelist, a playwright, a short-story writer, and the assistant director of the Moscow Arts Theater. His body of work includes *The White Guard*, *The Fatal Eggs*, *Heart of a Dog*, and his masterpiece, *The Master and Margarita*, published more than twenty-five years after his death and cited as an inspiration for Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses*. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (translators) have translated works by Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Gogol, and Pasternak. They were twice awarded the PEN/Book-of-the-Month Club Translation Prize, for their translations of Dostoyevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov* and Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*. Pevear, a native of Boston, and Volokhonsky, of St. Petersburg, are married and live in Paris. Boris Fishman (foreword) is the author of two novels, *A Replacement Life*, which was one of The New York Times’s 100 Notable Books of 2014 and won the VCU Cabell First Novelist Award and the American Library Association’s Sophie Brody Medal, and *Don’t Let My Baby Do Rodeo*. His journalism, essays, and criticism have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Magazine*, the *London Review of Books*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and other publications. Fishman has taught at Princeton University and New York University. Born in Minsk, Belarus, he moved to

the United States at age nine and now lives in New York. Christopher Conn Askew (cover illustrator) is a painter and tattoo artist whose illustrations have appeared on the covers of books, albums, and magazines. He lives in Los Angeles.

The book itself is a classic- brilliant in every way. Unrelated tales are woven together in a tapestry of mystery, magic, and mayhem. It captures the absurdity of Stalinist Russia with biting satire, allusions, and humor. I will not recount plot details. This is a classic, and anyone interested in 20th century literature should have it on their list to read. It is a great choice for a book club discussion. The translation is very good. I would not, however discount others. Despite a few grammar flubs ("If I was" instead of "If I were"), this translation is solid and very readable. They do capture the fast pace and effortless prose of the author's style. Bulgakov was a master (no pun intended), and despite the length of the novel he has a knack for brevity in his sentence construction. This one packs a punch. The notes are very helpful. Overall highly recommended. Good translation. Brilliant masterpiece. Historically important novel. Humorous, engrossing, and satirical- get a copy for your library. The only pity is that it is not readily available in hardcover.

This book is considered a masterpiece throughout the civilized world, although it is better known in Europe than the US. It is both profound and readable, and actually very often extremely funny. Bulgakov expresses his contempt and rage at life in USSR, by comparing it to the world at the time of Christ when the Emperor Tiberius Caesar forced the civilized world to live in a state of terror and repression under the control of a despot. Both societies survive by refusing to see the truth of their lives and deny the banality of their existence and instead cope by enabling the repression that forces them to turn away from honor, courage and humanity. It is a brilliant book.

Satiric and well written. Not for everyone. Best for those who appreciate Russian Literature and like satire (reminded me of Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses in tone. Impressive work of literature. Beautifully published by Penguin. Wonderful paper, etc. For Literature buffs!

Political satire, black humor, and Fantasy. I think that the Devil is the hero of the book. My wife disagrees. But he sure comes off better than the Soviet bureaucrats. This is the most enjoyable book I've read in ten years or so.

This is one of those novels through which an apparently simple narrative unfolds to expose a

singularly wonderful piece of satirical literature. I had approached the purchase of the book rather obliquely, having read Solzhenitsyn and perusing online other Russian authors. Having come across Bulgakov, this book came highly recommended as his 'masterpiece', and after finding out what the theme matter is I decided to purchase it. The novel deals with the Devil, and how he and his retinue deal with the established soviet literary and state-atheistic powers during Bulgakov's contemporary 1920s/30s Russia, whilst at the same skilfully interweaving the story of Pontius Pilate and Christ's crucifixion. Throughout this narrative, a poet (Ivan Homeless), an unnamed writer (the Master) and Margarita weave their own stories, which combine at the end when the fates of Pontius Pilate and the Master are decided together. I found it a wonderful and thought-provoking read, skilfully translated from its native Russian. Thoroughly recommended.

Russian humor is soaked in sarcasm and irony. A fun read with an unforgettable cat.

I've read the book three or four times. One of my favorite books of all time. Funny, interesting and totally unique. Well written and lots of fun.

It's a great book.

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