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Les Miserables

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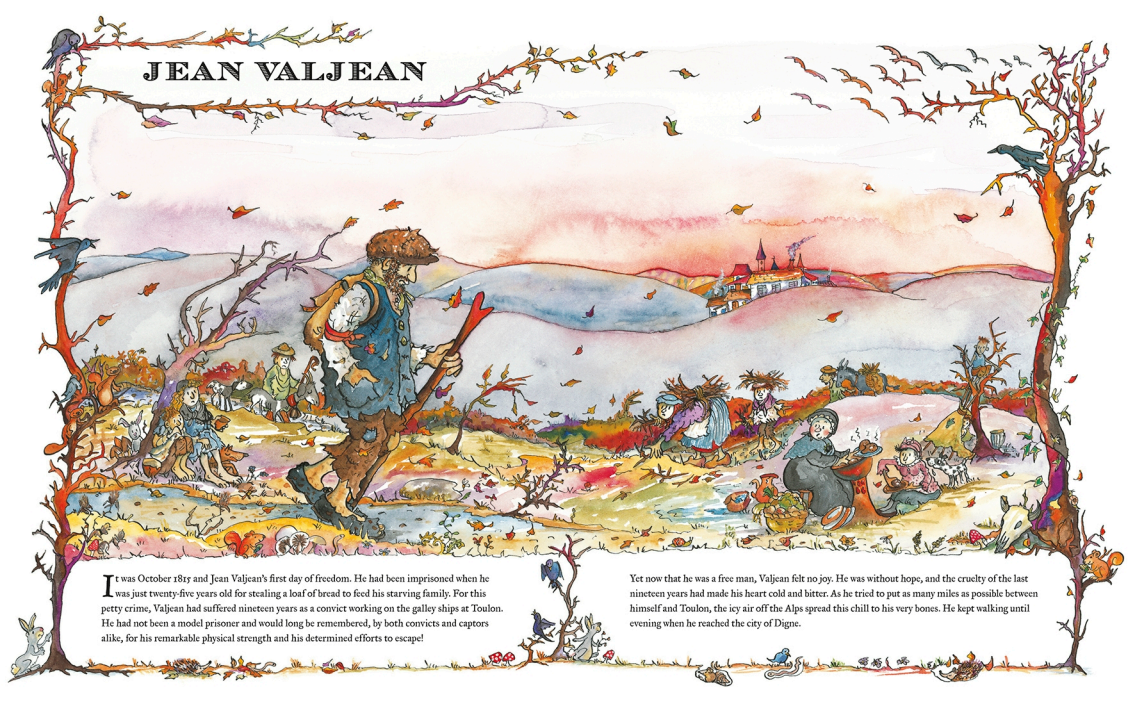
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JEAN VALJEAN



It was October 1815 and Jean Valjean's first day of freedom. He had been imprisoned when he was just twenty-five years old for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his starving family. For this petty crime, Valjean had suffered nineteen years as a convict working on the galley ships at Toulon. He had not been a model prisoner and would long be remembered, by both convicts and captors alike, for his remarkable physical strength and his determined efforts to escape!

Yet now that he was a free man, Valjean felt no joy. He was without hope, and the cruelty of the last nineteen years had made his heart cold and bitter. As he tried to put as many miles as possible between himself and Toulon, the icy air off the Alps spread this chill to his very bones. He kept walking until evening when he reached the city of Digne.