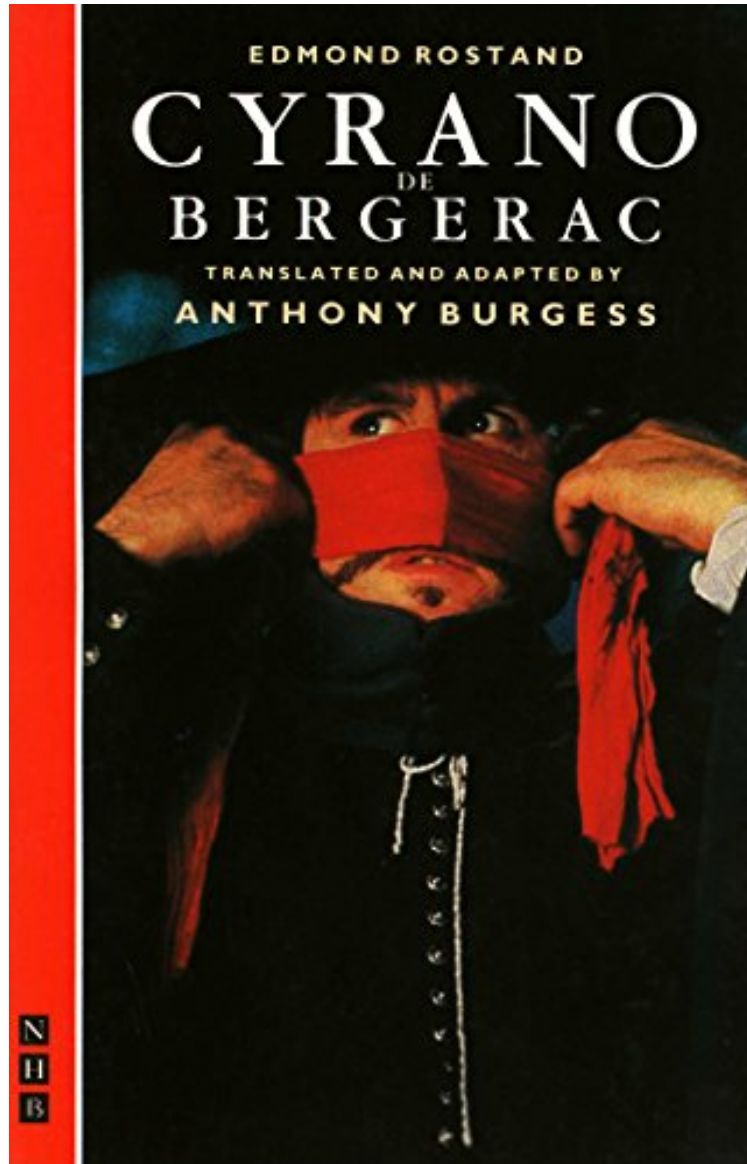


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## Cyrano de Bergerac (Nick Hern Book)

*Edmund Rostand*

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**Edmund Rostand : Cyrano de Bergerac (Nick Hern Book)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cyrano de Bergerac (Nick Hern Book):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not Quite What I Remembered By Adrienne Parks I read Anthony Burgess's translation/adaptation of Rostand's play decades ago, and I'm sorry to say it doesn't hold up to my memory of its brilliance. A lot of the language feels forced to fit into Burgess's rhyme-scheme, and what struck me as witty now feels somewhat contrived. Additionally this edition changes some of Burgess's original adaptations (such as removing Roxane's physical presence from the siege of Arras and substituting a letter from her) back to Rostand's original

version, which paradoxically does more harm than good. If you want to read Burgess's version, get his translation without these later "re-amendments." If you want Rostand's, read the older, blank verse Brian Hooker version...or better yet read it in French! 10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. The only translation that captures the poetry of Rostand's original

By Jack E. Holt, III

As time goes on, I am more and more impressed by Anthony Burgess's translation. Most readers and performers are probably more familiar with the translation of *Cyrano* by Brian Hooker. Hooker's translation has much to recommend it but it fails to capture the poetic power, whimsy or grace of Rostand's play. I feel the Burgess translation better represents *Cyrano* to a modern reader. One previous reviewer suggested that there was something almost absurd about *Cyrano* as he is portrayed by Rostand. Burgess himself had qualms about translating the play into rhyme. But this convention is powerful because it suggests that the men and women of *Cyrano*'s dramatic world (even the lackwits) were impressed by cleverness, grace and beauty. It is set out in the play that Roxanne is one of the literary precieuse. The type of cleverness that *Cyrano* portrays in rhyme would appeal to her. At the same time, *Cyrano* is not a fop but a man of action whose mind is not stilled even by combat. This translation also shows that Christian's "military wit" was something *Cyrano* could appreciate for its poetic appropriateness as well as for its courage. I think in some ways *Cyrano*'s chivalry and heroism, as well as the more unrealistic elements of the play, are actually made more vivid and convincing by the use of rhyme. Burgess transports us to Rostand's imagined world of poetry and chivalry directly. . . and does not relent for a moment in portraying it. I think the real Hercule Savinien *Cyrano de Bergerac* would have appreciated the flair of it all. This version was also used as the basis for a musical starring Christopher Plummer. The musical, unlike this translation, adapts the play freely at points.

Anthony Burgess' energetically witty translation of this well-loved nineteenth-century French classic about the swordsman-poet with the nose too large to be taken seriously. This translation was first acclaimed in the 1985 Royal Shakespeare Company production with Derek Jacobi as *Cyrano*. Six years later Burgess provided the sub-titles for the hit film version with Gerard Depardieu, and the sub-titles won as much praise as did the film itself! Edmond Rostand (1868-1918) wrote several plays which were mightily successful in their time, providing starring roles for the likes of Sarah Bernhardt and Coquelin. But only *Cyrano de Bergerac* still survives. Anthony Burgess was the author of over fifty books, among them the novel, *The Clockwork Orange*, as well as stage plays, screenplays and translations.

From the Inside Flap  
Translated by Anthony Burgess.