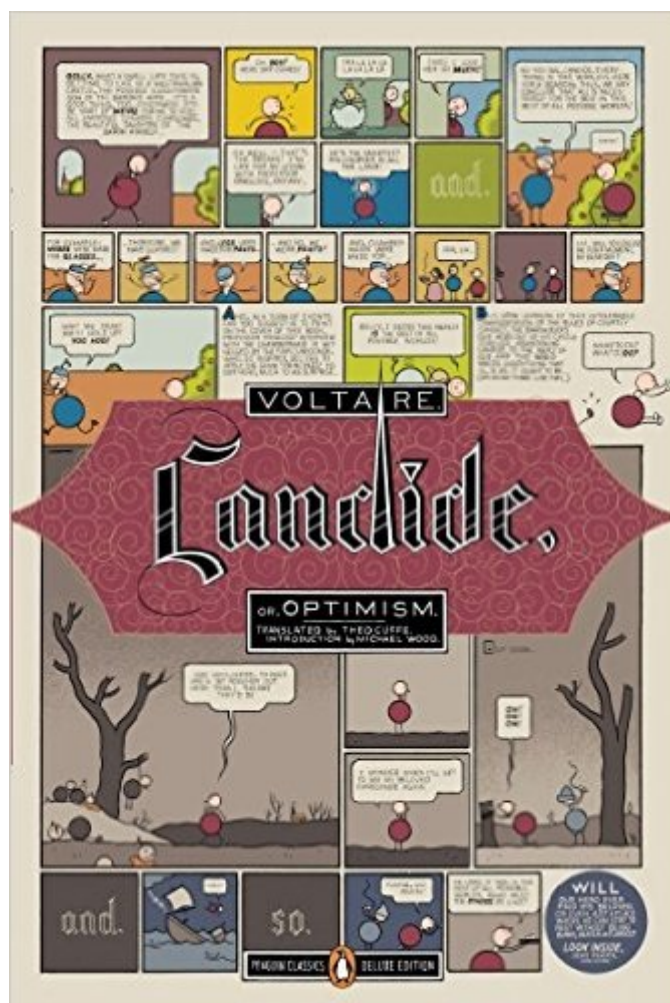


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Candide: Or, Optimism (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition)



Synopsis

With its vibrant new translation, perceptive introduction, and witty packaging, this new edition of Voltaire's masterpiece belongs in the hands of every reader pondering our assumptions about human behavior and our place in the world. Candide tells of the hilarious adventures of the naïve Candide, who doggedly believes that "all is for the best" even when faced with injustice, suffering, and despair. Controversial and entertaining, Candide is a book that is vitally relevant today in our world pervaded by "as Candide would say" the mania for insisting that all is well when all is by no means well.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ever since philosophers began thinking about the meaning of life, a favorite question has been "Why do bad things happen to good people?". In Voltaire's day, this issue was primarily pursued either from the perspective of faith (everything that happens is God's will and must be for Divine purpose) or of reason (What do these events mean to you, as you interpret them subjectively?). Infuriated by the reaction by some members of the church to a horrible loss of life from an earthquake in Lisbon, Voltaire wrote this hard-biting satire of the human condition to explore these questions. Before reading further, let me share a word of caution. This book is filled with human atrocities of the most gruesome sort. Anything that you can imagine could occur in war, an Inquisition, or during piracy happens in this book. If you find such matters distressing (as many will, and more should), this book will be unpleasant reading. You should find another book to read. The

book begins as Candide is raised in the household of a minor noble family in Westphalia, where he is educated by Dr. Pangloss, a student of metaphysical questions. Pangloss believes that this is the best of all possible worlds and deeply ingrains that view into his pupil. Candide is buoyed by that thought as he encounters many setbacks in the course of the book as he travels through many parts of Europe, Turkey, and South America. All is well for Candide until he falls in love with the Baron's daughter and is caught kissing her hand by the Baron. The Baron immediately kicks Candide out of the castle (literally on the backside), and Candide's wanderings begin. Think of this as being like expulsion from the Garden of Eden for Adam.

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