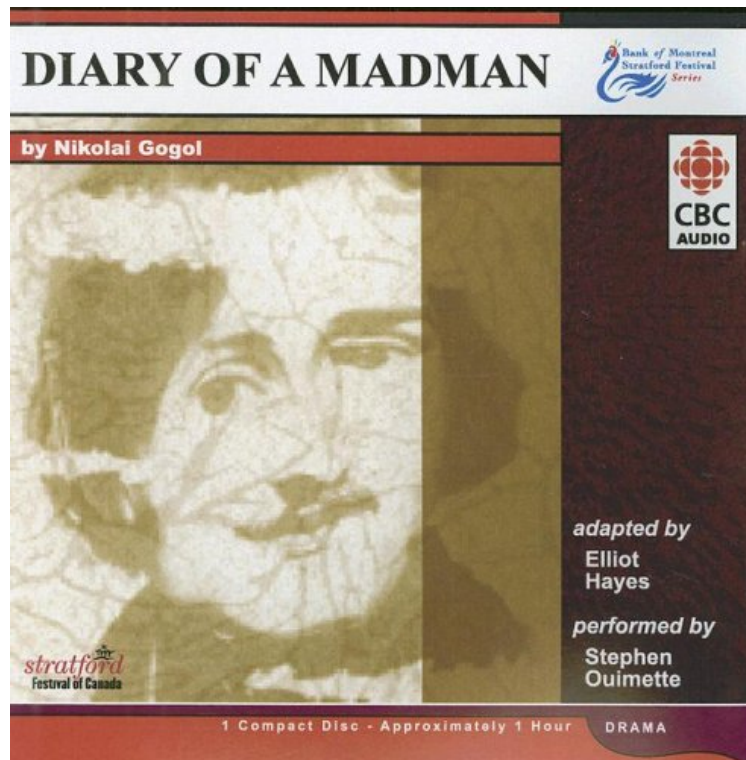


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Diary of a Madman (Bank of Montreal Stratford Festival Series)

Nikolai Vasil'evich Gogol

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Nikolai Vasil'evich Gogol : Diary of a Madman (Bank of Montreal Stratford Festival Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Diary of a Madman (Bank of Montreal Stratford Festival Series):

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Translation leaves something to be desired By Karr Beware of translated works that don't mention the name of the translator. That should have been my first clue. I'm not sure who did the translating of this collection, but he obviously does not have a thorough knowledge/appreciation of Russian humour and literature. I can say this because I'm from Russia and after reading the original version of Diary of a Madman (I didn't bother further with the others) and comparing it to this one, I was disappointed by how lengthy and confusing the passages were. The language was tripping over itself, rather than flowing with the Gogolian humour and absurdity. It was boring and difficult to follow and had none of the finesse that, for instance, Pevar and Volokhonsky's version was able to capture. Most surprising is that entire sentences were missing from certain passages. It seems that whenever there was a phrase the translator couldn't make sense of or see how it fit into the scheme of things, he just omitted it entirely!!! This is really offensive to the writer and unfair to the readers. For goodness sake, he didn't even get the name of the dog right!! It's "Medji," not "Meggy"---just because this sound doesn't exist quite the same in the English language, doesn't mean you can rename the dog! (Unless it isn't read "Meggy" like "Peggy" but most English readers will read it this way anyway) But the dog isn't the most important part. It's really the fact that the translator did not do Gogol justice. He did not treat this work with the dignity and reverence

it deserves and as a result, has put out a shoddy interpretation of a classic tale. I gave two stars because I did notice some attempts to capture the complexity of dry wit, as is often the style of satirical Russian authors. It is indeed very difficult to do this with English. Whoever this translator was, they made a solid effort; unfortunately, he just couldn't carry it. And the publisher should be more selective with the quality of work it puts its stamp on. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Classic Russian Literature By JMack I only became familiar with Gogol through references in the work of Philip Roth. After all, great writers should give their due to their predecessors. Five of Gogol's most celebrated short stories are included in this collection. While I can only classify myself as a fan of three of these stories, this collection is still worth purchasing. "The Diary of a Madman" harkens Kafka-esque images of man versus isolation and the bureaucracy in the story of one man's sometimes humorous spiral into madness. Scorned in love and work, the main character retreats into an alternate reality. "The Nose", the story of a runaway body part, possesses elements of Kafka's "Metamorphosis". A fiction that borders on absurdity can still be frightening. It brings to mind that the superficial image one presents in society is too important. "The Overcoat", having themes of superficiality and prized possessions, is a peculiar tale. Taunted by his co-workers for the condition of his overcoat, the main character makes many sacrifices to replace his coat. To a point, the new overcoat becomes more of an obsession than it should. While "The Carriage" and "Taras Bulba" are also included in the set, I do not believe they carry the same feeling as the other stories. To a degree, "Taras Bulba" almost seemed out of place in the set. The collection of short stories is enjoyable and highly recommended to lovers of literature. It brings the thought to mind of what other works of literature were hidden from American eyes by communism. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A good choice. By Ramirez I purchased this for a study abroad class in St Petersburg on Russian literature. The formatting was good, as was the story and writing quality.

* A compilation of representative stories by Nikolai Gogol. * Contains a new introduction by Anton Boyko. * Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol (1809-1852), although Russian, was born in the village of Sorochyntsi in the Poltava Oblast province of central Ukraine. He was never accepted by the Russian public as being completely Russian in his thinking and political ideology, and indeed he was not. Gogol's Ukrainian upbringing is most evident in his early works which draw heavily from Ukrainian culture and folk history. His later writing was more subversive, openly satirizing the corruption he saw rampant throughout Russia's empire. Gogol was homosexual. At age seventeen he wrote passionate letters to a friend who, being two years older, had graduated before Gogol, leaving him bereft. Gogol eventually exiled himself from Russia, living in Rome. It was here that he enjoyed at least one mutual love affair with a man, but his lover died within a year of their meeting. Two years later Gogol fell in love with the poet Nikolai Yazykov and penned love letters to him, but his efforts came to nothing. Gogol died in Moscow and was buried at Davilov Monastery. His last words were placed on his tombstone: "And I shall laugh my bitter laugh." When Soviet authorities decided to demolish the monastery in 1931 and transfer Gogol's remains, it was discovered his body had been buried lying face down, leading some to wonder if he had been buried alive.

Short story by Nikolay Gogol, published in 1835 as "Zapiski sumasshedshego." Diary of a Madman, a first-person narrative presented in the form of a diary, is the tale of Poprishchin, a government clerk who gradually descends into insanity. At the outset, the narrator records his frustrations and humiliations straightforwardly, rationalizing various affronts to his dignity. Over time, however, reason gives way to delusion. His intermittent encounters with Sophie, the radiant daughter of his official superior, provoke an obsession that leads to his "overhearing" two dogs discussing his hopelessness. As such hallucinations become more frequent, he finds solace--and his ultimate rationale--in a new identity as the rightful king of Spain, whose enemies have engineered his exile. Throughout the story, interludes of sanity provide striking counterpoint to the deepening psychosis. --The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature Language Notes Text: English (translation) Original Language: Russian About the Author Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol (1809-1852), although Russian, was born in the village of Sorochyntsi in the Poltava Oblast province of central Ukraine. He was never accepted by the Russian public as being completely Russian in his thinking and political ideology, and indeed he was not. Gogol's Ukrainian upbringing is most evident in his early works which draw heavily from Ukrainian culture and folk history. His later writing was more subversive, openly satirizing the corruption he saw rampant throughout Russia's empire. Gogol was homosexual. At age seventeen he wrote passionate letters to a friend who, being two years older, had graduated before Gogol, leaving him bereft. Gogol eventually exiled himself from Russia, living in Rome. It was here that he enjoyed at least one mutual love affair with a man, but his lover died within a year of their meeting. Two years later Gogol fell in love with the poet Nikolai Yazykov and penned love letters to him, but his efforts came to nothing. Gogol died in Moscow and was buried at Davilov Monastery. His last words were placed on his tombstone: "And I shall laugh my bitter laugh." When Soviet authorities decided to demolish the monastery in 1931 and transfer Gogol's remains, it was discovered his body had been buried lying face down, leading some to wonder if he had been buried alive.